



COURTESY POSTMASTERS GALLERY, NEW YORK

TOP Wolfgang Staehle's live-feed video projection of Lower Manhattan, *To the People of New York*, was part of a show titled "2001" when it was installed in Chelsea's Postmasters gallery in early September. **BOTTOM** After the World Trade Center attacks, the projection remained in operation—with a new name, *Untitled*.

Aftershocks

From death and displacement to questioning the role of artists and museums in the face of devastation to the loss of \$100 million worth of art—the repercussions continue **By Kelly Devine Thomas**

The September 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center took the life of Michael Richards, 38, a sculptor and installation artist. Richards was working in a studio on the 92nd floor of the north tower when the hijacked airplane hit the building at about 8:45 A.M.

On that airplane were 81 passengers, among them Berry Berenson Perkins, 53, a photographer, socialite, and widow of actor Anthony Perkins whose photographs had appeared in fashion magazines such as *Vogue* and *Glamour*. Her grandmother was the French fashion innovator Elsa Schiaparelli, and she was, on her father's side, distantly related to the renowned art critic and collector Bernard Berenson.

Richards and Perkins were among the thousands of people who died in the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The week started out as an important one for the art world, heralding the beginning of a new season in an uncertain economy, but by midmorning on September 11,

everything had changed. Opening parties were canceled; exhibitions, auctions, and art fairs were postponed.

"It's been very quiet," said one photography dealer in Chelsea, three days after the attack. "No one's buying art, and if they were, I'd tell them to go do something else. Go give blood. Go help." By Monday, September 17, the city—and those people and businesses that make up the New York art world—had been urged back to work for the betterment of the nation and the economy. From death and displacement to the loss of tens of millions of dollars' worth of art to questioning the role of artists and museums in the face of the devastation, the aftershocks came one after the other. They come still.

"Nobody is confident these days about decisions," says Volker Diehl, a Berlin dealer and managing director of Art Forum Berlin, who decided to go ahead with the contemporary fair as scheduled in October. "We are working from one hour to another."

in Hull, Quebec, postponed a show of works by 25 Arab Canadian artists until early next year. The museum retracted its decision after public and political outcry in Canada called for the exhibition to go on as originally scheduled last month.

Sensitivity about subject matter became an issue at the Baltimore Museum of Art, where a painting by Christopher Wool with the word "terrorist," separated into three lines, was taken down in the days following the attacks. A museum spokeswoman said the work was reinstalled a few days later with additional interpretive text and an area for patrons to comment on the work.

Meanwhile New York's Marlborough Gallery rescheduled for next spring a show of works by Tom Otterness, known for his bold, playful, subversive sculptures, often of animals. Aside from logistical problems caused by the attacks that made it difficult to set up huge works of art, Michael Gitlitz, a director at Marlborough, said, "It did not seem like an ideal time to be presenting art as bold and humorous as Otterness's."

Two exhibitions installed in New York before the attacks struck a poignant note after September 11. Postmasters in Chelsea had opened a show on September 6 by artist Wolfgang Staehle, featuring live-feed video of Lower Manhattan with a view of the World Trade Center. After the terrorist attacks, the installation reflected a drastically changed skyline, and the title of the work was changed from *To the People of New York* to *Untitled*.

At the Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery in Chelsea, an exhibition of works by Nancy Davenport—which also opened on September 6—featured manipulated images of New York City apartment buildings presumably under terrorist attack (see *New York Reviews*, page 173). In both cases, the galleries decided to leave the works in place, while taking pains to note that the exhibits had been installed before the terrorist acts took place.

Images of the World Trade Center, meanwhile, are scheduled in galleries for months to come. An exhibition of pictures of the World Trade Center by Angel Marcos opened at the Alicia Ventura Gallery in Barcelona last month. Dino Pedriali, an Italian artist best known for his black-and-white nude photographs and his expressive portraits of such cultural icons as Andy Warhol and Pier Paolo Pasolini, will show eight Polaroid collages titled *Twin Towers* in his solo exhibition at Rome's Il Ponte Contemporanea in January.

This month (November 3–December 15) New York dealer Ariel Meyerowitz is presenting a selection of World Trade Center photographs taken by her father, New York photographer Joel Meyerowitz, an exhibition that was planned over a year ago. Meyerowitz, who had been taking photographs of Lower Manhattan and the World Trade Center from a studio on West 19th Street since 1981, took his last photograph of the twin towers just four days before the collapse of the buildings. "At first it was an esthetic game of sight, watching the sky move over Lower Manhattan," he says. "But now those towers have become much more meaningful. Those images evoke many of the things that have happened to us."

Eleven images will be available—in various sizes, with some as large as 4 feet by 5 feet, priced from \$3,500 to \$12,000 a piece—with a portion of the proceeds going to the New York State World Trade Center Relief Fund. Joel Meyerowitz has been down at ground zero—on top of the rubble, up in a crane, touring the interiors of adjacent buildings—since shortly after the destruction of the towers, to document the heroic cleanup efforts. "It's so maddeningly powerful," says Meyerowitz, who will donate the photographs to the Museum of the City of New York's archives.

"I grew up in New York and watched the World Trade Center being built. The towers brought out a funny amalgam of feelings. If you took a telephoto lens to them they almost looked trite, like a cheese grater. They were too graphic, too big. But if you saw them in their setting, with space around them, rubbing against each other, their edges glinting, a sliver of pink sun between them, they were an extraordinary phenomenon." ■

Kelly Devine Thomas, the magazine's senior writer, last profiled New York gallerists Lucy Mitchell-Innes and David Nash. Additional reporting by Barbara Pollack and Eileen Kinsella in New York, Hugh Eakin in Berlin, Mery Galanternick in Rio de Janeiro, Simon Grant in London, Nicholas Powell in Paris, George Stolz in Madrid, and Jonathan Turner in Rome.



The photograph *Beirut Opera*, 1996, by Rawi Hage, is in a show of work by Arab Canadian artists in the Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec. The exhibition was postponed—but then restored to its slot on the fall schedule.

***Untitled*, 1990, by Christopher Wool, was removed from view at the Baltimore Museum of Art for a few days after the attacks. It was later rehung with an explanatory label.**



COURTESY: THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART