

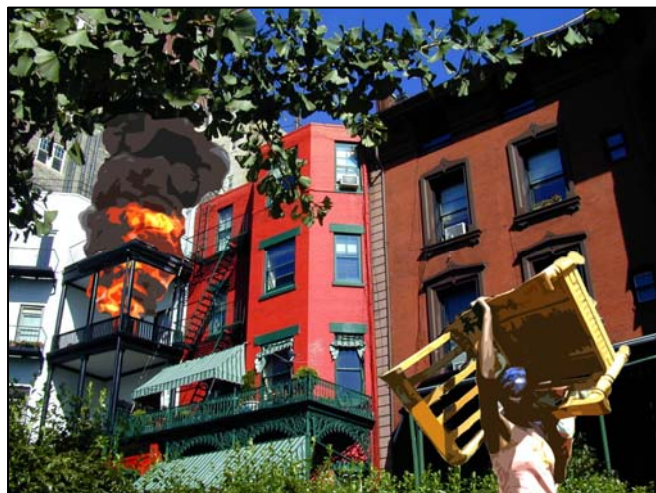
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CONTACT: Allison Auldridge
718-222-4111 x226
aauldridge@brooklynhistory.org



Brooklyn Utopias? Artists consider visions of an ideal Brooklyn at the Brooklyn Historical Society

Brooklyn, NY – The Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) invites the public to celebrate the opening of the fourth season of Public Perspectives exhibits at BHS with the kickoff to the exhibition series' new season. *Brooklyn Utopias?* opens Thursday, October 1 with curator Katherine Gressel and artists.



WHAT: *Utopia*: An ideal place or state, usually imaginary; any visionary system of political, social, environmental, or moral perfection. ***What would a "Brooklyn Utopia" look like? What is the role of artists in shaping a more ideal Brooklyn?***

From colonial settlement to urban renewal, the US has historically been obsessed with utopian communities. Brooklyn is no exception, with its history as a home for Dutch colonial and myriad immigrant settlers, social reformers like Alfred P. White and influential artists and writers from Walt Whitman to Spike Lee. Brooklyn's recent renaissance exemplifies the increased draw of city life and the attempts to build improved urban communities.

The *Brooklyn Utopias?* project invited both professional artists and emerging teen artists to identify and respond to the often-conflicting visions of the most livable and sustainable Brooklyn, and/or imagine their own Brooklyn "utopias." The resulting work of over 30 artists and Brooklyn teens will now be on display in a series of three *Brooklyn Utopias?* exhibits: at BHS, Brooklyn's Old Stone House, and the nonprofit youth art center Starting Artists, Inc. in Fall 2009. The participating artists at the Brooklyn Historical Society exhibit bring diverse approaches to the *Utopias* theme. Artists include Triada Samaras with photos of her "Democracy Wall,"—an interactive mural protesting large-scale development in Carroll Gardens. A second category of artworks include Jess Levey's guerrilla photo projections on condos and Tracy Collins' photographs of Atlantic Yards construction.

Alongside the contemporary artists' work, the BHS exhibit will also display information on the historic role of artists in envisioning a more ideal Brooklyn, connecting past and present. The exhibit opening is **free** and open to the public.

WHEN: Opening, **Thursday, October 1, 2009. 5:30-7:30pm. Exhibit dates:** October 1 – January 3, 2010.

WHERE: Brooklyn Historical Society; 128 Pierrepont St. (at Clinton St.); Brooklyn, NY 11201

Join BHS again on the evening of Sunday, October 25 from 5:30-7:30 pm for a roundtable discussion with the curator and artists from *Brooklyn Utopias?* for a debate on the future of the borough and its utopias of tomorrow.

About the exhibition series: Public Perspectives provides a creative forum for Brooklynites to have an active voice at the Brooklyn Historical Society by presenting community-curated exhibits by individuals and groups selected from our open call for exhibition proposals. The awardees collaborate with BHS staff to develop and mount their exhibitions. Public Perspectives is made possible through the generous support of FHL Bank. Additional support is provided by the Kress Foundation and HBO.

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