



BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY EXHIBITS KEN RUSH'S PAINTING, *MID-DAY AT CONEY ISLAND*

Evocative painting depicts a summer day on Coney Island's famed boardwalk

[November 15, 2018] Brooklyn, NY— Artist Ken Rush's 1988 oil on linen painting, *Mid-day at Coney Island*, is now on view at Brooklyn Historical Society. The 3' x12', expansive, three panel work captures the people and flavors of a typical summer day on the boardwalk in the late 1980s.

Rush started painting in Coney Island in the 1970s, setting up his French easel on the boardwalk. During the summers of 1987 and 1988, Rush created a series of paintings of Gregory and Paul's restaurant, now called Paul's Daughter, one of the oldest surviving restaurants on the Coney Island boardwalk. Gregory Bitetzakis and his business partner Paul Georgoulakos operated a half dozen restaurants in Coney Island for over 50 years including concession stands and the "sitdown, tablecloth" venue Napoli's Seven Seas. While Bietzakis retired in 2009 and eventually passed away in 2017, Georgoulakos and his family continue to run Paul's Daughter to this day.

"We are delighted to exhibit *Mid-day at Coney Island* at Brooklyn Historical Society," says Deborah Schwartz, president of Brooklyn Historical Society. "This beautiful oil painting captures a particular time and place in Brooklyn. It will resonate with those who knew Coney Island in the 80s, and tease the imagination of those who did not."

Rush's goal was to capture the heat of the mid-day sun, the sounds of the amusement park, the aroma of the hotdogs and fries, and the energy of the visitors enjoying themselves at Coney Island. The painting brings to life a vibrant scene of summer activities: people in conversation, ordering food, enjoying a slice of pizza or a snow cone, working behind the counter at Gregory and Paul's, riding bicycles, casually strolling down the boardwalk and even a police officer walking his beat. To create the painting, Rush set up his easel on location and each day over the course of a month, asked customers at the snack bar to pose.

Rush has had a distinguished career. After training at the Taft School and Syracuse University College of Fine Arts, he joined the Upper School of Packer Collegiate Institute in 1978, where he taught visual arts until 2015. Rush is also the author/illustrator of the popular children's book, *The Seltzer Man*, which is on sale in the BHS Gift Shop.

Visitors can view the painting at Brooklyn Historical Society's Brooklyn Heights location at 128 Pierrepont Street during the museum's public hours, Wednesday through Sunday, 12pm-5pm.

About Brooklyn Historical Society

Founded in 1863, Brooklyn Historical Society is a nationally recognized urban history center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history. Located in Brooklyn Heights and housed in a magnificent landmark building designed by George Post and opened in 1881, today's BHS is a cultural hub for civic

dialogue, thoughtful engagement and community outreach. In May 2017 BHS opened a second site in DUMBO's Brooklyn Bridge Park.

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