

# FORT GANSEVOORT



## A Look Back: 50 Years After Stonewall

By CG Directory Editor

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Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt | Holly Solomon Arriving on 57th Street, 1983 | Mixed-media with photographs | 68.5 x 87.5 in. | Courtesy of the artist and Pavel Zoubok Fine Art, New York

A Look Back: 50 Years After Stonewall unites the work of queer artists living and producing in and around New York City beginning around the time of the Stonewall Uprising in 1969 and leading into the 1980s. This is only a portion of the story, an incomplete history, most especially given that the Gay Liberation movement and its coinciding contemporary art market had not placed transgender voices nor people of color at the forefront of the conversation. The exhibition includes both documentation of the Gay Liberation movement and a look back at the

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work made by LGBTQ+ artists during this time. Central to the work included are the subjects of protest, revolt, celebration, and love. Kate Millett's sculpture, *American Flag Goes to Pot* (1970) provides a blunt protest to government authority, while Joan E. Biren's photograph's document the tenderness of love between two women. The work made during the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, beginning in 1981, becomes entangled in death and remembrance, an epidemic defining this decade most especially in the New York City queer community and resulting in a tremendous amount of loss. Peter Hujar, Paul Thek and David Wojnarowicz's work all reflect this tragic time. Highlighted in the exhibition is the work of Nelson Sullivan, who throughout the 1980s lived at 5 Ninth Avenue where Fort Gansevoort is now located. Sullivan passed away in 1989. Nelson Sullivan documented queer New York City in the 1980s through a dedication to filming everything. His videos focus largely on his neighborhood and the downtown nightlife scene; one full of life and color and regularly including personalities such as RuPaul, Sylvia Miles, Michael Musto, Dean Johnson, Ethyl Eichelberger, and Lady Bunny. A selection of Sullivan's many videos in and around his home in the Meatpacking District are included in the exhibition. The third floor of the exhibition pays respect to Sullivan's legacy through a collection of photographs taken by his friends and a painted portrait of Sullivan himself, momentarily returned to its original home at 5 Ninth Avenue. Featured artists in the exhibition include Joan E. Biren, Jimmy DeSana, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Floydy, Efrain John Gonzalez, Barbara Hammer, Harmony Hammond, Lyle Ashton Harris, Peter Hujar, Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, Greer Lankton, Tom Lohre, Kate Millett, John Simone, Nelson Sullivan, Paul Thek, Paula Gately Tillman, David Wojnarowicz, Martin Wong among others. Also included in the exhibition is ephemera such as pride and protest buttons, Tee Corinne's 1975 *Cunt Coloring Book*, and the 1970s lesbian newspaper *The Furies*.