

SEPTEMBER 11th: ART LOSS, DAMAGE, AND REPERCUSSIONS Proceedings of an IFAR Symposium

SPEAKERS

- **Saul S. Wenegrat:** Art Consultant; Former Director, Art Program, Port Authority of NY and NJ
- **Elyn Zimmerman:** Sculptor (World Trade Center Memorial, 1993)
- **Moukhtar Kocache:** Director, Visual and Media Arts, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council
- **Suzanne F.W. Lemakis:** Vice President and Art Curator, Citigroup
- **Dietrich von Frank:** President and CEO, AXA Art Insurance Corporation
- **Gregory J. Smith:** Insurance Adjuster; Director, Cunningham Lindsey International
- **John Haworth:** Director, George Gustav Heye Center, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian
- **Lawrence L. Reger:** President, Heritage Preservation, Heritage Emergency National Task Force

INTRODUCTION

SHARON FLESCHER*

Five months have passed since the horrific day in September that took so many lives and destroyed our sense of invulnerability, if we were ever foolish enough to have had it in the first place. In the immediate aftermath, all we could think about was the incredible loss of life, but as we now know, there was also extensive loss of art—an estimated \$100 million loss in public art and an untold amount in private and corporate collections. In addition, the tragedy impacted the art world in myriad other ways, from the precipitous drop in museum attendance, to the dislocation of downtown artists' studios and arts organizations, to the decrease in philanthropic support of the arts as funds were redirected to help the families and victims of the tragedy. But our focus today, in keeping with IFAR's mission, will be on the art itself, the loss of which became clear soon after the tragedy.

We've gathered eight distinguished speakers from the fields of art and insurance to discuss the art that was lost and damaged on 9/11 and the repercussions.



Left to right: Sharon Flescher, Saul S. Wenegrat, Elyn Zimmerman, Moukhtar Kocache, and Suzanne F. W. Lemakis.



Left to right: Lawrence L. Reger, Gregory J. Smith, Dietrich von Frank, and John Haworth.

* Dr. Sharon Flescher is Executive Director, International Foundation for Art Research (IFAR). The IFAR Symposium took place in New York City on February 28, 2002. The following eight talks are edited from the Symposium proceedings. We thank The Liman Foundation for its support of this Symposium.

Public Art at the World Trade Center

SAUL S. WENEGRAT*

I've had the good fortune of working with a great many important artists in the creation of public works for the World Trade Center (WTC), and I've had the horror of living through two tragedies which occurred at the Center: the 1993 bombing and the recent complete destruction on 9/11. I'd like to review with you what the public works were, who did them, and where they were located. Then I'll take you through what I found when I went down to the World Trade Center after the tragedy and bring you up-to-date on what is left of the works.

The commissioning process of public works, especially with a government agency such as the Port Authority, is very formal. You don't just go out and buy art. In 1969, as part of the planning of the World Trade Center, the Port Authority adopted a "percent-for-art" program allocating up to one percent of the construction costs to be spent for arts inclusion. It established an advisory group of knowledgeable persons in the arts, mainly from museums in the New York/New Jersey area, consisting of directors and curators of many of the leading institutions. This included Dorothy Miller of the Museum of Modern Art, Gordon Smith of the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, Sam Miller of the Newark Museum, Tom Messer, then Director of the Guggenheim Museum, and Tom Armstrong, then Director of the Whitney Museum. It also included knowledgeable lay people like Jane Engelhard. Basically, the Port Authority accepted their recommendations. The first art installation took place in the early 1970s; the last—a memorial for the 1993 bombing of the WTC—took place in 1995.

The following is a description of the art that was incorporated into the Trade Center and was in place on September 11, 2001:

* Saul S. Wenegrat is an Art Consultant and the former Director, Art Program, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which owns the World Trade Center. Mr. Wenegrat commissioned and curated the public art at the Center.

At the Church Street entrance to the World Trade Center Plaza (**FIG. 1**), there was a large, black Swedish granite sculpture by Japanese artist Masayuki Nagare (**FIG. 2**). It was completed in 1972 and measured 14 feet high by 34 feet wide by 17 feet deep. Although it looked like a solid piece, it was actually a veneer of granite over a steel and concrete armature.



Saul S. Wenegrat. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.

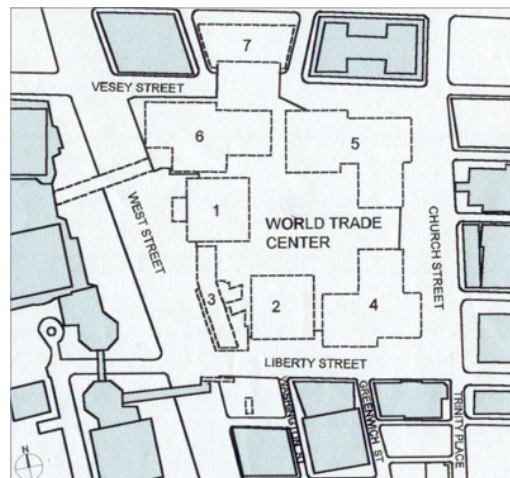


Figure 1. Diagram of the World Trade Center showing buildings 1-7. Courtesy Port Authority of NY and NJ.



Figure 2. Masayuki Nagare. *WTC Plaza Sculpture*, 1972. Black Swedish granite over steel and concrete armature. Photo: Port Authority of NY and NJ.



Figure 3. Fritz Koenig. *Sphere for Plaza Fountain*, 1969. Bronze on black granite base. Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ.



Figure 4. James Rosati. *Ideogram*, 1971. Stainless steel. Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ.



Figure 5. Alexander Calder. *WTC Stabile (Bent Propeller)*, 1971. Red stainless steel. Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ. © 2002 Estate of Alexander Calder/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

The centerpiece of the World Trade Center Plaza was a colossal fountain designed by Fritz Koenig of Germany. The sphere of the fountain (**FIG. 3**) was a globe-like structure, 25 feet high. Made of bronze, it stood on a black granite base out of which flowed sheets of water. Through its shape, the piece was intended to symbolize world peace through world trade, which was the theme of the World Trade Center.

Between the two Trade Center towers, there was a large, stainless steel piece called *Ideogram* by a New York sculptor, James Rosati (**FIG. 4**). Completed in 1974, this twenty-five-foot piece was one of the more interesting commissions on the plaza, because as you moved around it, it took a different shape. It was also one of the most photographed pieces there, since people in the fashion industry seemed to like it and incorporated it into a lot of fashion ads.

Alexander Calder's *WTC Stabile* (**FIG. 5**), also known by other names like *The Cockeyed Propeller* and *Three Wings*, arrived in 1971. It was 25 feet in height and was made out of painted red steel. The piece was originally commissioned for the entrance to 1 World Trade Center on West Street. After Battery Park City was opened, the piece was moved to Vesey and Church Streets where it is seen in this photograph. At the time of the recent disaster, it was located on a plaza in front of 7 World Trade Center.

The World Trade Center Tapestry of Joan Miró (**FIG. 6**) arrived in 1974. It was not really a commissioned piece. I had spoken with Miró about the



Figure 6. Joan Miró. *WTC Tapestry*, 1974. Wool and hemp. Photo: Port Authority of NY and NJ.

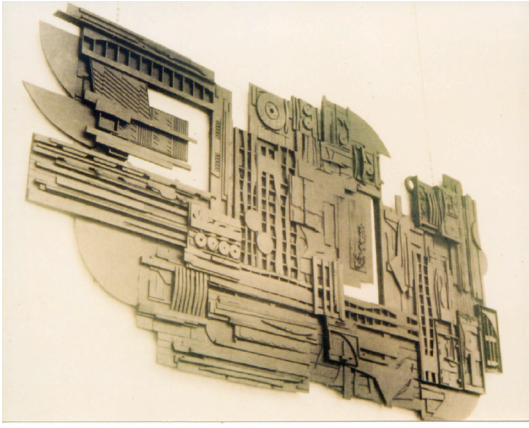


Figure 7. Louise Nevelson. *Sky Gate, New York*, 1977-8. Black painted wood relief. Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ. © 2002 Estate of Louise Nevelson/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

possibility of doing a tapestry, and he had turned me down, saying: “When you do a tapestry, you really don’t do it yourself, and I don’t make any art where I don’t use my two hands.” Then he had a tragedy in his family. His daughter was traveling in Spain and was involved in an accident. She was taken to a hospital. Miró told the nuns who ran the hospital that, “Hopefully my daughter will recover, and if she does, I’ll give you any art work that you would like.” His daughter did recover, and the nuns asked for a tapestry. He said he didn’t do any tapestries. They said, “We have somebody in our village who does tapestries. He’ll teach you.” So, Miró worked with this tapestry maker in their village, and he got to like it. He decided to practice, and he made about 20 little tapestries, some of which were shown in New York. Then I got a communication from his dealer in Paris saying, “Your World Trade Center tapestry is done.” I said, “What?!” He said, “It’s in the Grand Palais [in Paris] in Miró’s retrospective, and it’s yours if you want it, but he made it especially for the World Trade Center.”

The tapestry was made out of wool and hemp and was large—20 feet by 35 feet. It was a unique piece, and after he finished it, Miró said, “It’s too much work making tapestries. I’m not going to make any more.” But then he got a call from the The National Gallery of Art in Washington, which had seen the World Trade Center Tapestry and wanted one for its new East Wing. So Miró did one more, and that was the last tapestry that he did. Ours hung in the lobby of 2 World Trade Center. You would have seen it on the way to the observation deck.

Louise Nevelson’s *Sky Gate, New York* (FIG. 7) also came in late, in 1977-78. Louise had been contacted early

on to do a piece, and she went through many different designs. None seemed to work out, and finally she came up with this wall piece. It was made up of over 35 separate sculptures that were put together to form this particular image. At the dedication, she said that her inspiration had come to her on a flight to New York from Washington. As she looked at the skyline of New York, this is what she perceived. Hence its name. A black painted wood relief, it was located on the mezzanine of 1 World Trade Center overlooking the plaza.

The last public art work that went into the World Trade Center was a memorial fountain for the victims of the 1993 bombing. Six people were killed in that bombing, and the fountain was placed right over the area where the bomb went off, in front of the Marriott Hotel. Its sculptor, Elyn Zimmerman, is one of our panelists and she will talk more about the piece. Besides the fountain



Figure 8. View of Ground Zero, 2001. Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ.



Figure 9. View of Ground Zero, 2001. Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ.



Figure 10. Post 9/11 remains of Calder’s *WTC Stabile*. View of Ground Zero. [NB. The remains were stored by the Calder Foundation, as there was not enough sculpture remaining for restoration. A portion can be found at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum.] Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ.

itself, a little park was created, so that you could sit and contemplate what had taken place.

Those are the seven public art works. In addition, the Port Authority had over 100 other art works at the World Trade Center including *Needle Tower* 1968 by Kenneth Snelson; *Recollection Pond*, a tapestry by Romare Bearden; *Path Mural* by Germaine Keller; *Commuter Landscape*, another large mural by Cynthia Mailman; and *Fan Dancing with the Birds*, a mural by Hunt Slonem.

Besides the Port Authority collections, many World Trade Center tenants had collections of their own. Some of the

speakers here today will be talking about them. One of the more significant tenant collections was Cantor Fitzgerald’s collection of Rodin drawings and sculptures, on view in the North Tower.

After the recent destruction of the World Trade Center, I was asked to join a committee to put together items found at the site for possible use later in an archive or memorial. Together with Bartholomew Vorsanger and Marilyn Jordan Taylor, I was a member of a committee with that grim task. When I went to the site shortly after the bombing, this is what I found (**FIGS. 8 and 9**). It was a horrible sight. Almost 3,000 people had been cremated at the World Trade Center, and even two weeks after the tragedy, the site was still burning. It was an awful experience. This is what remains of the Calder *WTC Stabile* (**FIG. 10**). And this is what remains of the Koenig *Sphere for Plaza Fountain* (**FIG. 11**).



Figure 11. Post 9/11 remains of Koenig’s *Sphere for Plaza Fountain*. View of Ground Zero. [NB. In November 2017, the Port Authority rededicated the unrestored sculpture at a permanent location in Liberty Park, overlooking the 9/11 Memorial.] Photo: Port Authority of NY & NJ.

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The World Trade Center Memorial, 1993

ELYN ZIMMERMAN*

Working on the World Trade Center memorial project in 1994-95 (FIG. 1) was a very different experience from anything else I've done. Artists make small works in their studios, and if they have the interest, they can be commissioned to do large projects for public spaces. What you bring to those projects is very different from what you bring to an experience like the memorial for the 1993 bombing. It is not a typical project to make a memorial.

In 1993, a terrorist car bomb went off below a site between Towers One and Two of the World Trade Center, several levels down in the parking area. Six people were killed, and more than 1,000 were injured. I was one of a number of artists later invited to submit proposals for a memorial to be placed above the exact spot where the bomb exploded. The specific site chosen was 30 feet by 30 feet (FIG. 2). We had a chance to meet with the families who had lost their loved ones. The memorial that I proposed was accepted and constructed.

I'd like to take you through the creative process and my reasoning as to how this fountain came into being. The plaza was really large, and, unfortunately, the amount of money for the memorial was not up to the size of the plaza. Moreover, there were already so many large sculptures on the plaza itself, and trees, and those huge buildings, that it was ridiculous to think of competing with that.

The underlying idea was that there would be an inscription of some sort. I decided to try to make a form that might bring people closer to it. In order to read the inscription, they'd have to walk up to it and look inside (FIG. 3).

Essentially, the footprint of the memorial was a thirty foot square trimmed in black granite. The interior paving was white granite, and then there was a form that

was about 18 feet in diameter and 3 1/2 feet high. The fountain itself was very modest. It was not a huge flowing thing of water, but from the center of the red disk, there was a small hole, from which water came out and flowed evenly over the sides of the disk and into a slot. Around

the red disk was a brief inscription and the names of the six people that were killed in 1993. So, one would walk up to it and look into the center and see the inscription. Also, there was a pool of water that these elements sat in on the interior. The inscription read:

On February 26, 1993, a bomb set by terrorists exploded below this site. This horrible act of violence killed innocent people, injured thousands, and made victims of us all.

And then there were the names. Many of the victims were Hispanic or of Hispanic origin, so the inscription was in both Spanish and English.

Later trees and shrubbery were brought and placed around two sides. Also, people began throwing coins inside the fountain. I had no idea that was going to happen, so we had to shut off the water and install a filter to catch the coins. I think it meant something to the people who worked in the building and knew the people who were killed, and also to the visitors. There were so many visitors to the World Trade Center.

How did I come to design something like this? In 1980, I started doing outdoor sculpture commissions. I was very inspired by geology, and things in nature, and Japanese and Chinese gardens. I became interested in using rocks and water, and I had the very good fortune to do a project at the National Geographic Society in Washington with those materials. It was a huge learning



Elyn Zimmerman. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.

* Elyn Zimmerman is the sculptor of the *World Trade Center Memorial*, 1993, commissioned by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

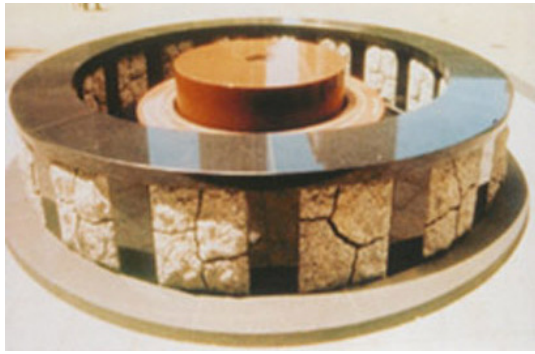


Figure 1. Elyn Zimmerman. *World Trade Center Memorial*, 1993. Red, gray, black, and white granite. Photo: Port Authority of NY and NJ.



Figure 2. WTC site before construction of the *Memorial*, looking west. Tower One is on the right. Tower Two, on the left. Photo: E. Zimmerman.



Figure 3. Overhead view of the *Memorial* showing the inscription and the names of the six people killed in the 1993 WTC car bombing. Photo: E. Zimmerman.

experience. A few years later, I got interested in archaic architecture, the very beginnings of architecture, and thought a lot about ancient temples and sites that incorporated natural rocks and had man-made platforms built around them. I visited the site in Greece of the oracle of Delphi, and that stayed in

the back of my mind. I take a lot of pictures and keep a lot of reference files. When the cancer center at the University of South Florida had a competition for an outdoor sculpture next to their new building, I thought of the site as a sanctuary and a place for long-term hospital residents to come outside and sit. So, the form of my sculpture referred back to the plan of the sanctuary at Delphi, but reinterpreted. It includes a fountain and a small pool and a place for people to sit, which is important. It is a very quiet place.

A plaza I designed in San Francisco off Market Street also refers back to archaic architecture. I had recently visited the Incan ruins in Peru and was taken with the large stonework and articulated blocks they had used. For my San Francisco project, two waterwalls face each other in a garden just off Market Street in front of an office tower.

These projects were all done before 1993, and there were many others as well. They show that I already had this vocabulary of stone and water. Stone has cultural references as monuments and tumulus mounds. I didn't feel intimidated by that; rather, I felt it adds dignity to a work. So, when I started thinking about the World Trade Center memorial competition, I went back to some of the books I had looked at and thought of these tumulus mounds and how from time immemorial, people captured the experience of passage, entombing people who were important in their culture. They would do it in these mound-like structures. Very early on you had things like Stonehenge and those kinds of mound structures. But around the first millennium BC, you get not just mounds of earth but actual constructions of cut stone mixed in with rubble and earth. I was inspired by these. I was also attracted to their minimalist form. I came out of a period in the art world when there was a strong influence of Minimalism. I found these forms very powerful, very engaging. They're iconic. That's what I began to think about, and I developed the World Trade Center form. It has a combination of very rough white granite that's broken into large chunks forming the walls, and it's topped and finished and held in place by polished granite pieces.

I saw what happened on September 11th; I was there. I live half a mile from the site, and my studio is there too. We saw the planes go over and the buildings collapse. One of the first things that came to my mind was that this memorial had been an art project for me. It meant a lot, but for me, it wasn't a shrine the way it was to the families who had lost loved ones in 1993. The press recently has been saying the same thing—that those families had a double loss: they lost their family members and now they lost the memorial to them. What occurs to me is that you can build a lot of stone memorials, and if people are determined, they'll be destroyed along with everything else.

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The Artist Residency Program in the Twin Towers

MOUKHTAR KOCACHE*

I feel like the representative of “unofficial” art at this Symposium, not only because of the nature and the value of the art that I will talk about, but also because of the context and framework in which it was made. In fact, what I would like to do tonight is reexamine or, perhaps, expand our notions of loss or what was lost on September 11th, and in so doing, explore our notions of what the purpose of art is; its value, or its use. What is cultural production? What is visual culture? What is an artist? Who is an artist? What is an art experience? I will try to do that by illustrating some of the projects that were executed during the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council’s (LMCC) artist residency program in the WTC.

The program was initiated four years ago and provided emerging artists with studio space on the 91st and 92nd floors of the North Tower. Artists worked in painting, sculpture, new media, photography, and art installation and were selected by a jury for residencies that lasted six months. At the end of each six-month period, the studios were opened to the public. Thousands of people came to the Open Studios each year. The LMCC also organized public performances in the large plaza of the Trade Center for thousands of audience members. . . a venue often noted as one of the city’s most democratic public spaces.

I’d like to focus initially on what was lost in terms of the Towers themselves—the architecture, the icons, and, for us, the “subjects” for over one hundred and fifty artists and cultural workers and producers. Slowly, I will highlight what has been lost in terms of opportunities, possibilities, context, and a whole world of references in the form of visual but also conceptual and political material. You have to remember that we did not go to work every

day into the buildings simply because our offices and studios happened to be there, but precisely because they were located in the Twin Towers and our desire was to analyze them from within. Let me start for instance with Martina Gecelli, who in the year 2000, photographed abandoned office spaces at the Trade Center that were left in complete disrepair. For Martina, the architecture, the space, and the psychology of the space became her subject matter (FIG. 1).



Moukhtar Kocache. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.



Figure 1. Martina Gecelli. Suite 4047. Long View Table-Sink, 2000. 120 x 100 cm. Photo: LMCC.

A project by the E-Team, a performance art group, also dealt with the building itself. In *Quick Click*, the E-Team attempted to make photographic portraits of people in the studio from a helicopter that was hovering outside the building. Two members of the E-Team were in the helicopter, another in the studio space, and people were lined up along the windows to have their portraits taken. In another project (*127 Illuminated Windows*), the E-Team attempted

* Moukhtar Kocache is Director of Visual & Media Arts, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC). The LMCC administered two artist studio programs in the North Tower of the World Trade Center (World Views and Studioscape) in space temporarily vacant and donated by the Port Authority of NY & NJ, with support from a number of corporations, foundations and government agencies. The studios and several hundred works of art were destroyed on 9/11. One artist-in-residence, Michael Richards, was killed. LMCC’s offices at the World Trade Center were also destroyed, along with 30 years of archives and approximately 150 works of art.



Figure 2. E-Team (Hajoe Moderegger, Franziska Lamprecht, Dan Seiple). 127

Illuminated Windows.
The appearance as it was supposed to be on the World Trade Center. New York, March 2001. Photo: LMCC.

to write their names on the exterior of the Towers themselves (FIG. 2).

Many other projects dealt with the specificity

of the Trade Center site. In a performance entitled *The Land of Far Beyond*, Susan Kelly embarked on a pilgrimage up the staircase from the first floor to the 91st floor. For *My America (I am Still Here)*, Emily Jacir documented purchases from every store of the Trade Center, which revealed the mechanics of power in global trade and production. Taketo Shimada envisioned a project on the escalator steps entitled *Meeting*, for which he would write poetry on the escalator steps describing a love affair that arises after a chance meeting.

Kevin and Jennifer McCoy, new media artists, created a fictive company called *Airworld*, which, eerily, has a logo of two airplanes flying in each other's directions and joined at the wings. Their company Web site had absurd advertising banners that critiqued the sterile language used by corporate America. One banner read *Safe Ascent*, another, *Welcome We Are Air*. During their residency the McCoy's also broadcast from their studios an FM radio signal that you could hear if you were driving on the West Side Highway.

Another important loss on 9/11 was access to the views, this particular vantage point on the city. These views and that particular vision of the city, its topography and geological profile provided a unique opportunity for individuals, whether at work in their offices, visiting the observation deck or dancing at Windows on the World. Subject matter for numerous paintings created in the residency programs, such as Joellyn Duesberry's *Cloud Over Mid-Town Brooklyn and Manhattan* and Sonya Sklaroff's *WTC Series*, these views of the city were also central to many sculptural, installation, or performance-based projects. Matthew Bakkom, in *1 WTC Cinema*, explored issues relating to the building, the city, and architecture in film screenings that

were open to the public. It was a beautiful experience to watch cinema and art films with the skyline of New York City visible through the windows. For *Picture Motion*, Douglas Ross installed motorized blinds on the windows, which, in a darkened room, created a stroboscopic effect—the city looked like a film projected in slow motion. The last work that was produced in the WTC studios, on September 4th, was a project by Naomi Ben Shahar. She invited her friends to a party and provided everyone with headlamps. The room was covered with mylar so the city lights and the movement of the partygoers intermixed in a sort of a liquid, reflective environment.



Figure 3. Christian Nguyen. *A Thousand Peaks and Myriad Ravines*, 2000. Drywall and studs. 180" x 85". Photo: LMCC.

Countless projects were destroyed. Micki Watanabe's, *Floorplan Collage: WTC 91st floor and 15 Park Ave.* A project by Christian Nguyen referencing the Asian panel landscape painting tradition, *A Thousand Peaks and Myriad Ravines*, had been installed in the Port Authority's offices (FIG. 3). Jeff Konigsberg's untitled work in progress that he had worked on for four months—carving, painting, peeling—creating an incredible three-dimensional experience out of dry-wall. Simon Aldridge's minimalist wall sculptures that reference skateboard and BMX structures, and *Hot Fun in the Summertime*, a piece which illustrated his struggle in rendering the towers as light structures that emphasized verticality but at the same time allowed light to come in and reflection to take place.

Just a week before the attacks, Justine Cooper moved all of her work from the past two years to the WTC studio. Everything was stored there during the attack, including her three-dimensional luminous sculptures of gene sequences, a sculptural MRI of her hands, and numerous photographs



Figure 4. Justine Cooper. *Lamine*, 1999. ACE gene sequence, film, acrylic, stainless steel, halogen. Ht: 96". W: 8". (Base 14" W) Photo: LMCC.

from electron microscopes (FIG. 4). Kara Hammond also lost many, many paintings and drawings. Again, she had stored some of her work from the past two years in the studio,

including *Showroom Floor*, *Voskhod Interior*, and *Concrete Warehouse* (FIG. 5).

The value of the work that the artists lost in the studios on the 92nd floor is approximately \$500,000, with equipment valued at around \$50,000, and materials totaling approximately \$20,000. On the 91st floor, we lost art work valued at \$150,000, and equipment and materials valued at about \$10,000. Also destroyed were works at the LMCC's offices. We are still assessing what exactly was lost, but we estimate over 150 art works—paintings, drawings, sculptures, and photography, including pieces by Komar & Melamid, Tim Hailand, Daniel Kohn, Taylor Spence, and Takashi Murakami.

Beyond tangible art objects or opportunities for creation, I want us to think and evaluate what else was lost on 9/11. I am thinking of the company archives, for instance, the World Trade Center's construction archive and architectural history, incredible sources of documentation, drawings, writings and historical artifacts. Many individuals had valuables, jewelry, photographs and documents in safe deposit boxes in banks; these items are gone. One incredible loss for instance is an estimated 10,000 photographs taken by the official Kennedy family photographer: they were being stored at a bank in the buildings. An informal memorial at the third floor basement that the union members had built for their friends and colleagues who had perished in the 1993 attack, that too is gone. Beautiful graffiti in the bathrooms and on the basement walls, love poems, manifestos to the world—these are gone. The wad of red chewing gum that performance art group Gelatin had stuck outside the building on the 91st floor after remov-

ing one of the windows, signing or marking the building from the outside, this is an art work that's also gone. Office workers had built personal altars on and around their desks with photographs, images and letters. These are gone. The views of the clouds at such a height, the sounds of the wind and of the city from that height, all of this is gone.



Figure 5. Kara Hammond. *Showroom Floor*, 1998. Oil on wood. 24" x 48" Photo: LMCC.

In the last century, we expanded the definition of art-making and artists; we have come to think of them as shamans, healers, activists, social workers, and revolutionaries. What was the loss in terms of intellectual and creative energy and human potential? Why not consider as artists, the chefs, cocktail masters, the elevator guy, Billy, with his funny performances and stories, the window washer and ultimate romantic Rocco, perched on top of the buildings full of amazing revelations and narratives. . . he could see the curvature of the Earth from where he worked . . . how about the computer geeks who wrote code and dreamt of new machines and technologies? All of them contributed to the social experience and cultural fabric of the Center, making it a unique environment to make art and enjoy life. And in terms of the ultimate purpose of art, which to me is experiential and phenomenological, we lost random and banal things like the exhilarating ride up the elevator, the intense wind in the plaza that would on certain days lift you from the floor, and the symphony created by the creaking revolving doors near the Custom House during rush hour. What about all of the very private and ephemeral moments like, for instance, smiling at someone in Tower One when you're standing in Tower Two and they smile back at you . . . or the white plastic bag that one evening took my breath away as I was watching the sunset from the 91st floor. I will remember forever how it fluttered and fluttered and fluttered.

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The Art Lost by Citigroup on 9/11

SUZANNE F. W. LEMAKIS*



Suzanne F. W. Lemakis. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.

As curator of the Citigroup Collection, my responsibilities are similar to that of a museum curator. I oversee the development of the art collection and its management. However, unlike a museum, the primary purpose of the corporate collection is not

to educate and preserve, but rather, and more importantly, to enhance the corporation's image and environment while providing visual stimulation for both staff and customers. Of course, the corporate curator is responsible for setting standards for the preservation of the collection, as the collection is always considered to be a valuable corporate asset.

In October 1998, an historic merger took place—Citicorp and Travelers Group merged to form Citigroup. Citigroup is today the preeminent global financial services company offering a range of services from investment banking, insurance and asset management, to consumer banking, credit cards, mortgage loans, and consumer finance. Among the companies that became one were Citibank N.A., Travelers Insurance, Salomon Smith Barney, Primerica, and Commercial Finance Corp. Soon after the merger, I requested that copies of all existing records for artwork, including any photo documentation, be sent to my office so that I could better understand the scope of the merged collection. On September 11th, Citigroup lost over one million square feet of office space when Seven World Trade Center collapsed in late afternoon. Fortunately, all of our employees (as well as all other occupants) in the building had been evacuated earlier, but unfortunately, all our furnishings, records, and artwork was lost.

Seven World Trade Center originally served as the corporate headquarters of Salomon Brothers, an investment bank founded in 1910, and the predecessor of Salomon Smith Barney. Investment banks handle big deals; in other words, their clients invest millions of dollars with the company. Because investment banking is about client relationships, investment banks have traditionally had offices characterized by an upscale ambience, suitable to their business needs. Salomon Smith Barney occupied close to twenty floors. Seven World Trade housed executive dining rooms, back office facilities and very dignified and conservative (but not luxurious) offices to conduct business. These offices were enhanced with art, with the most valuable works installed in dining rooms and executive offices.



Figure 1.
Robert Henri.
Alice Malley,
1924. Oil on
canvas, 31" x 27".
Property of
Citigroup.

As I mentioned, we lost all art and archival records relating to Salomon's history. Losing the history of this old banking firm is a real tragedy. Fortunately, there had been a history written for Salomon's seventy-fifth anniversary. But, while copies of the history still exist, future historians will be left with scant original sources for the history of one of the most important American financial institutions.

Although Salomon's rivals, such as Goldman Sachs, had well-established art programs, Salomon did not have a comprehensive or focused art program. The collection's mission

* Suzanne F. W. Lemakis is Vice-President and Art Curator, Citigroup.



Figure 2. Edward Curtis, platinum print, 1903. *Chief Joseph, Nez Perce*. Photo: Citigroup.

was to decorate the offices in a way that set a comfortable and conservative tone for business; the art challenged neither the clients nor the employees. The design department, headed by a very talented designer, selected some of the art for the premises and handled the art collection. A number of other people were involved in the purchases, and, as I researched the history of the collection, one man's name was mentioned over and over again: Charles Simon. Mr. Simon was a managing partner of Salomon Brothers, an art collector, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Whitney Museum of American Art, and a supporter of the Museum of the American Indian. His taste was instrumental in many of the significant artworks that were purchased for the Salomon collection. I am pleased to report that many of his purchases have survived, and here is why:

A year before 9/11, the executive dining rooms at Seven World Trade Center were refurbished and a number of the artworks were placed in storage. Subsequently, Citigroup's corporate headquarters were being relocated in Manhattan and so accordingly, I, as curator, removed some of these Salomon pieces from the warehouse and placed them on the new executive floor. Among the artworks "rescued" in this way were a Robert Henri portrait of a young Irish girl from 1924 (FIG. 1), a 1911 William Glackens landscape, an Ernest Lawson paint-

ing titled *New York Bridge*, a 1926 Else Driggs painting of St Bartholomew's Church, an Andrew Wyeth watercolor titled *My Dog*, and a Ralston Crawford painting titled *Electrical Energy Number Two*. These were among the important American paintings in the collection. There was also a small collection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century marine paintings purchased by Mr. Simon. Among the gifts given to Mr. Simon were two Frederic Remington bronzes and a wonderful Edward Curtis platinum print (FIG. 2) of *Chief Joseph, Nez Perce* dated 1903, which he donated to the Salomon collection. These artworks would have been welcomed in any museum, and it is just pure luck that they were not in the building when it fell.

But to return to the works that were lost. The dining rooms had, in addition to paintings and prints, some first-rate English and American antique furniture and Asian porcelains. (We are fortunate that a Tang Dynasty camel was among the works relocated.) The most expensive painting in the collection was a large mural that was installed in one of the dining rooms. This mural had been relocated to Seven World Trade



Figure 3. Jim Dine. *Pink Strelitzia*. Etching on black paper, 1980. Edition of 12. Photo: Pace Editions.



Figure 4. Jacob Lawrence. *The Builders*, 1974. Screenprint on wove paper, 30" x 22 1/8". Photo: DC Moore Gallery. Artwork © 2002 Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence, courtesy of the Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation.

from Salomon's previous offices. The mural depicted Wall Street, including some Salomon bankers. The work, purely decorative, by an unknown designer, was commissioned from a famous wallpaper company. This mural was very beloved by the employees, so its loss is deeply regretted.

Among lost paintings were some good works by artists such as Carl Schrag, Louis Bouche, John Heilker, William Thon and a number of paintings by American Realists painted in the 1980s. Like most corporate collections, three-quarters of the artworks consisted of prints, both nineteenth-century decorative American prints and contemporary works. In fact, over half the print collection consisted of decorative American prints purchased from the Kennedy, Hirschl & Adler, Graham

Arader, and Donald Heald galleries. Among the prints lost were a number of plates from Hudson River Portfolio, John Backman's *Bird's Eye View of New York and Brooklyn*, 1851, George Caleb Bingham's engravings of the Country Election and Stump Speaking, and a number of Currier and Ives lithographs. Most of these prints were originally printed in large numbers; many are replaceable, but their loss is very sad.

Among the contemporary prints lost were works by Alex Katz, Bryan Hunt, Wolf Kahn, and a wonderful Jim Dine series (FIG. 3) that decorated the cafeteria. There had been no effort to create a collection of contemporary prints, and the collection had not been expanded until 1999, when I placed five Jacob Lawrence (FIG. 4) and two Romare Bearden prints in the executive area. These, too, were lost.

In the private offices there were the expected inexpensive corporate office prints by artists that are known to corporate curators but not to art historians. Every corporate collection seems to have some of these landscapes and floral images done in etching, lithography, and screenprinting, and they serve their purposes in the offices.

Altogether, one thousand one hundred and thirteen works of art were lost by Citigroup on 9/11.

The lessons learned were very simple: keep good records and keep them off site. I am fortunate that we are in the process of getting an up-to-date imaged-based system, so that tracking the collection will be easier. I initiated upgrading of our database and 9/11 has made the upgrade urgent. One always anticipates for thefts and fires, but there was never any thought that one terrorist act would result in the loss of the whole building.

A final note: Since the IFAR Symposium, the rare and wonderful Edward Curtis photograph that I showed in my talk has been donated by Citigroup to the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian. The initial contact for this donation was made at the Symposium.

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The Response from the Insurance Industry

DIETRICH VON FRANK*

As IFAR noted in its invitation, the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon in Virginia, and the crash of the passenger plane in Pennsylvania were and still are a tragedy of epic proportions.

Like the two devastating world wars in the previous century, September 11, 2001 will remain a historic event for generations to come, especially for the United States, especially for New York.

Given the enormous human aspect of this tragedy, insurance and art related matters pretty much remained in the background, at least in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, and rightly so. Now, nearly six months later, as Ground Zero is being cleared possibly ahead of schedule, and tourists are flocking to the site in droves, the financial picture of the attack becomes somewhat clearer. Globally, \$60-\$70 billion in loss reserves are being put up by primary insurance carriers, reinsurance carriers, and other pooling arrangements to deal with insurance claims that range from property and casualty policies environmental insurance policies, business interruption insurance policies, life insurance policies, etc.

Now this is all probably confusing, because if you have an insurance policy, you deal with your insurance company or your insurance broker. There is a contract, and there is a limited dollar amount in the policy. When you have a loss, you basically deal with the insurance carrier. I am part of this primary insurance carrier league. We, in turn, are reinsured by large reinsurance companies, and these reinsurance companies again are reinsured, thus providing layers of risk. It all goes into an insurance pool, one global insurance pool that is financed by global investors.

Why are these \$60 billion put up as a reserve? Because all of the insurance policies that were affected by the attacks share a finite reinsurance, a finite pool of liability. This has an impact on the financial markets, obviously, and vice

versa; the financial markets have an impact on insurance capacity, which I will address.

My parent company, the AXA Group in Paris, estimates its share of the \$60 billion to be around \$550 million, predominantly through its AXA Reinsurance

Company as well as its insurer of international commercial risks, AXA Corporate Solutions.

My company, the AXA Art Insurance Corporation here in the U.S., has put up \$17.2 million to pay for the loss of three corporate collections that were destroyed when the towers fell. Amongst them, the corporate collections of Cantor Fitzgerald and Silverstein Properties, including the 'public' art works that Saul Wenegrat assembled specifically for the World Trade Center site:

- *WTC Stabile (Bent Propeller)* by Alexander Calder
- *Sphere for Plaza Fountain* by Fritz Koenig
- *World Trade Center Tapestry* by Joan Miró
- *World Trade Center Fountain* by Masayuki Nagare
- *Sky Gate, New York* by Louise Nevelson
- *Ideogram* by James Rosati
- *Union* by Lancelot Samson, and
- *World Trade Center Memorial, 1993* by Elyn Zimmerman, who is here tonight.

The collection owned by the trading company Cantor Fitzgerald predominantly contained drawings, casts, and sculptures by the French sculptor Auguste Rodin. Some of you may remember the photo in the *New York Times* depicting a bronze foot from one of the Rodin sculptures [*The Three Shades*] found in the rubble at the Fresh Kills Landfill on Staten Island. I was told that bits and pieces of other works of art are being found, but how important are such items in comparison to wedding rings, identification cards, engraved



Dietrich von Frank. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.

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watches, etc. that symbolize the human tragedy behind, or rather, ahead of all these monetary losses?

I have been asked many times how much art was destroyed on September 11th in total, and I have always said, “I don’t know!” We still don’t know, and we probably will never know unless accurate record keeping of all perished pieces exists, which I very much doubt.

AXA Art’s three clients kept accurate records, and checks to the insured will go out soon.

This straightforward commitment to stand behind our clients prevails throughout the entire insurance industry. Insurance companies deal with and manage risk on a daily basis, and from an insurance point of view, a total loss is always the most straightforward claim. In such cases, the insured object is gone or is destroyed beyond repair or restoration—is simply unrecognizable as a piece of art work.

However, since acts of terrorism as a named and insured peril were part of commercial property insurance policies up to September 11th in the U.S, terrorism coverage will be and already is being excluded on commercial insurance policies going forward.

Why?

Because there are simply no investors in global insurance capacity left who are willing to put up funds for the coverage of manufacturing plants, office towers, and nuclear reactors, that is, commercial enterprises in the U.S., as they believe that another act of terrorism may happen in the U.S. Paranoid overreaction perhaps, but even all State Insurance Departments—usually looking out for the customer—had no choice but to approve the exclusion of terrorism coverage on U.S. commercial insurance policies.

A Federal Indemnity Program—the Homeland Insurance Fund—which for six consecutive years would pick up all terrorism losses in excess of \$25 million to be paid by the insurance industry in the future, is deadlocked in Congress, and the chances for its creation in 2002 are dim.

You may have heard or even experienced it in regards to your own insurance policies: premiums are going up

across the board, and many of these rate increases are blamed on September 11th. It is the cause for such “consumer unfriendly” acts by the insurance industry.

The truth behind higher insurance premiums for meaningful coverage, however, is a little more complicated. The global insurance industry—like all financial markets—moves in cycles. Insurance experts call a cycle of robust premium rates a “hard market,” just as a cycle of falling rates is labeled a “soft market.” And as in any other capitalist system, the trigger is supply and demand. Supply: investors provide insurance capacity; demand: claims and losses are frequent and high.

Over the last five to seven years, up to about the beginning of last year, insurance rates, especially for industrial risks and, incidentally, for art insurance, fell steadily. The years 1998 and 1999 were extremely consumer friendly, as annual rate reductions rose to double digits, especially in the London Market, still the world’s largest insurance pool.

But then, we had earthquakes in Japan, we had Swissair III, as well as the Concorde loss in Paris, and investing into insurance capacity became far less lucrative. Hence, reinsurers raised their rates for primary carriers who then turned around and raised rates for their coverage of the “end-consumer,” and all this started well before September 11th. With rates now quickly climbing, insurers rush to set up new capacity to profit from the “hardening” market, and the cycle starts again. Yes, insurance provides protection for unforeseeable events, but it certainly is a business.

Two heavily destroyed pieces of public art have been found at Ground Zero: the Calder *Stabile* and Koenig’s *Sphere*. I went to see both pieces, which was extremely moving. If we agree that art, and especially art publicly displayed, helps us to connect to the world we live in, these two pieces should definitely become part of the design of a September 11th Memorial, and, notably, in their current state. As both works of art have been rescued from the debris, their damaged and nearly destroyed condition will be the perfect vehicle to remind the public in the future of what has happened, and, therefore, will remain true public art, art for everyone to remember.

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Art Damaged on 9/11: The Insurance Adjuster's Role

GREGORY J. SMITH*

Dietrich von Frank has just explained the financing end of the insurance industry. I'm an insurance adjuster, the person in the trenches. If you've ever had a car accident, the adjuster is the person who examined the damage and wrote you a check. Only, I specialize in the art field. An adjuster goes out, finds out what has happened, then decides what to do and how much it's going to cost. Dietrich von Frank, an underwriter, has the checkbook; I write the check. I tell him how many zeros to put on it. This is unfortunate in the case of the World Trade Center, because two fabulous buildings and many others collapsed.

On September 11, 2001, I was on the train going to the office when I learned about the attack. My first thought, like most other people's, was that the plane was a Cessna; it couldn't be a commercial airline. Two newscasters were with me. Mine was the only phone that worked. I called my office and learned to my amazement that it was actually a passenger airline. As an insurance adjuster, I was confronted with an interesting situation. It wasn't a tragedy just yet, because I didn't understand it yet. When I got to my office, the second plane hit. I went to a restaurant, and while there, I actually saw both buildings collapse. Startling. My first thought was about my family. Once I found out they were okay, my next thought was, "Oh my God, this could be something amazing that the insurance industry has never faced in the United States." As an insurance adjuster who specializes in art, I also wondered, "How much art was in the two World Trade Center towers that have just collapsed?"

A bad day for an underwriter is a tragedy. Unfortunately a bad day for an underwriter is a blessing for someone like myself, because it creates my job, it creates work. In the World Trade Center, there were many losses, but many of these were total losses. So, as an adjuster, my first thought was, "God, there are going to be a lot of losses." When I realized that they were all total losses, my usefulness was

somewhat diminished. But lo and behold, there were many other issues: there were neighboring buildings: 2 World Financial Center, and Liberty Plaza. There are many buildings within an area of approximately three-quarters of a mile south and a mile north, where clouds of debris either broke or seeped through windows. Many items were affected.



Gregory J. Smith. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.

In front of 2 World Financial Center, there used to be a very large blue stainless steel sculpture [*Modern Head*, 1992] by Roy Lichtenstein. Two days after the World Trade Center collapsed, I got a call saying, "Greg, that's my two-million-dollar Roy Lichtenstein, and it has all this debris on it. What are you going to do?" The first thought was, "That's simple, we'll just get it out of there." That's what they pay me to do—to figure these simple things out. Well, it took us three months to get the sculpture *out* of there, because of all the technicalities of getting *in* there. We couldn't find a rigger who could get a pass from the FBI and the Office of Emergency Management. During those three months, the FBI used the sculpture as a bulletin board, a Bobcat parked on it, and many other things happened to that beautiful piece. But, thankfully, it was unharmed structurally. Eventually, we were able to get it out of the area. We brought it to the foundry and had it repaired. It's now sitting in the Nassau County Museum, and it looks great.

One of our clients is a very large Japanese bank, Nomura Securities, which had more than 110 works of art that were damaged. Again, the first priority was to get the works out of there. Why couldn't we just repair them there? For one thing, the building was contaminated. Secondly, we were concerned about pilferage. The securities company

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actually lost a lot of computers and other electronics, but, thankfully, the artwork was intact. We were finally able to get the works out with the assistance of the Office of Emergency Management and brought them to restorers.

There were other claims: one from a book dealer, another from an artist. A window in the artist's studio was open when the buildings collapsed, and the cloud of debris damaged 289 works, every piece of art that that man had ever created. We had to get all of the art out of his studio to a safe haven. It was very difficult, because truckers couldn't get there. Restorers were concerned about the air quality and what they were going to touch (e.g., does this item have asbestos on it?). There were amazing issues that arose that I would never have imagined. We knew we couldn't get the truck in. Thankfully, with the artist's help, we were able to get a restorer with a staff of ten people to go down there, and over a period of approximately nine weeks, all the works were cleaned.

The tragedy presented the insurance industry with many other issues, some of which I handled, some of which I didn't. The damaged art works were set up either under corporate policies or collection policies. You'd be surprised how many corporate people from nearby buildings such as 2 World Financial Center came to me and said, "Oh, just clean that." Someone with a sponge probably making around \$4.50 an hour was ready to oblige. Thankfully, someone with a cooler head realized that that couldn't happen. We were called in on many cases where we merely facilitated the restorer going down to the site to find out what was wrong and how we could clean it. There were different types of issues, because there were all different types of media, so we needed multiple restorers. The truckers had a difficult time down there. It would take them, literally, four hours to get through checkpoints in order to pick up one painting to bring to a restorer. They didn't want to do the job because of the hassle of getting in and out. Thankfully, we have relationships with the FBI and the New York City police, and we were able to get detectives to sit on the trucks to move them through the checkpoints quickly, so that we could get the art works out in an efficient manner. 9/11 was a startling, startling thing for all Americans. I think the insurance industry ini-

tially assumed these items were all destroyed, but there were also thousands of works that were damaged.

I've seen fires. I've seen explosions. I've seen many types of loss. I have never in my life experienced the devastation that I saw three days after the World Trade Center. I went down there to look at that Roy Lichtenstein *Head* because my client forced me. I was afraid to go. I didn't know what was going on in the world at the time, and I was definitely hesitant. The devastation took a lot out of me. The people I was speaking to, even restorers and truckers, looked almost punch-drunk, because they were all stunned by the dramatic events. It was hard for me to get people to react. When I asked restorers, "Where do I go with this?" they would just stare at me with almost blank faces. It was scary, because these are the people who, a month prior, had I asked them that question, would have been right on the spot; they had always helped me in these kind of situations.

So, this event taught me as an insurance person that when you examine a situation, you have to look for all the alternatives to move art. You have to have an emergency plan in place for crises like this. You have to have contacts with the Office of Emergency Management, which many people did not even know existed until this occurred. That one office basically ran the entire show. Once you learned about those contacts, they were very helpful in getting things done. 9/11 was a tragedy. Even though we thankfully got some losses from it, which is not a good thing, we were able to help artists and dealers get their items back into saleable condition. We were able to help the artists get their lives back. Anything we could do to help made them so appreciative. The one artist I mentioned earlier, whose 289 pieces were damaged, called me every time a piece was restored and said, "You won't believe how great that came out!" It made me feel good that I was helping another person in a time of tremendous distress, while I was also helping my client, the insurance company.

So, in closing, I would like to say that what happened to the art works at the World Trade Center will teach us that we have to be prepared for the truly unexpected and be ready the next time to get everything out, and not just in one building, but in all the surrounding buildings.

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The Downtown Institutional Impact

JOHN HAWORTH*

This past weekend my museum had Native American storytellers read to capacity crowds. The National Museum of the American Indian's Heye Center in lower Manhattan is on the rebound. Let me start by reading from the story *Coyote in Love with a Star* by Marty Kriepke de Montano. This children's book published by the museum tells the tender story of Coyote coming to New York. On the cover is a picture of Coyote with the shirt "WTC [World Trade Center] Rodent Control."

Coyote the trickster had an idea—he would change himself into a sunflower! He did and, sure enough, one of the flower sellers picked him up and put him in his basket. Safe among the flowers, Coyote boarded the train. When the train reached the last stop, everyone rushed out of the doors. Coyote changed back into himself and followed the crowd. Soon he was staring up at two huge towers that stretched to the sky. The lobby of the tower was packed with people going to work. Surely someone with all his skills could get hired too.

Coyote was right. He found a job, and it was in his field, too. He became the Rodent Control Officer in the World Trade Center. But he was always homesick. On clear nights, Coyote would escape the noise and hurry of the city by going up to the observation deck to watch the stars as they danced across the sky. Once, when the stars came very close, he noticed one star that was more beautiful than all the rest. She was so beautiful that Coyote fell in love with her. (p. 14)

Here is the "quick history" to put my museum in the context of New York City history and downtown:

My own "sound bite" is that the National Museum of the American Indian is about the People Who Were First Here, and—looking across the waterway—Ellis Island is about the People Who Came Here. The downtown New York cultural community—with significant museums focused primarily on history, architecture and cultural ideas—is second as a group only to our colleagues on Fifth Avenue [uptown]. Downtown itself is the third

largest central business district in the country, and as we are recovering from 9/11, we need to celebrate, honor and support this cultural cluster. As the city, state, Mayor's Office, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, Regional Plan Association, and Municipal Arts

Society, the American Institute of Architects, and others work through "What Next?", it is critical to have the cultural groups front and center in the rebuilding effort.

The building that houses my museum, the United States Custom House, itself was empty for about two decades. The custom agency itself moved into the World Trade Center.

In the 1980s there was considerable public discussion about the future of the Museum of the American Indian, once located at Audubon Terrace. Several options were put on the table, including moving the institution to Dallas, Texas. The compromise was a remarkable public-private partnership. The United States Congress passed legislation in 1989 to create the National Museum of the American Indian, and we currently are building a major museum on the National Mall in Washington. The Attorney General's Office in New York assured us that there also would be an ongoing—permanent—presence in New York. David Rockefeller was a strong advocate for the use of the U.S. Custom House as our New York headquarters. With the financial help of then Governor Mario Cuomo and then Mayor Ed Koch—certainly in difficult times financially for both the city and state—over \$17 million was provided by the New York State and New York City governments toward the capital renovation of the Custom House to accommodate the museum. The architectural firm of Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Kuhn did the renova-



John Haworth. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.

* John Haworth is Director, George Gustav Heye Center, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. The Museum is located four blocks from Ground Zero.

tions—with considerable national recognition and kudos. Though we have federal operating support—allowing us to be one of a handful of NYC museums with a free public admission—there is an expectation that we raise private sector funds to support educational programs and exhibitions.

EFFECTS OF 9/11 ON OUR GALLERIES AND COLLECTIONS

Fast forward to 9/11: Our building is four blocks from Ground Zero. Fortunately, our facilities staff moved swiftly to clear the building systems and close the air vents, thus minimizing infiltration and damage to our collection on exhibit. As an institution dealing with “organic” materials (textiles, Plains Shirts and so forth), our concern about dust and possible environmental contaminants was very high. In addition, because we are an institution with a Native American cultural base, the respect of traditions, including ceremonial protocols, informs the way we work. Major concerns about the air quality in lower Manhattan are well reported. We relied officially on the Environmental Protection Agency reports, which were posted throughout the museum in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

Post 9/11, there was a massive neighborhood clean up, and inside our building, there was an extraordinary cleaning effort, as if we were asbestos contaminated (which we were not). Our landlord, the General Services Administration, cleaned the historic interior on a highly professional level. A Seth Eastman watercolor exhibit was on view 9/11 in an open area that was, fortunately, out of harm’s way. (The exhibit was extended thanks to our lending partner, the Afton Press in Minnesota). The Reginald Marsh murals and the Tiffany work in the Collector’s Office was all fine. The Rotunda and Collector’s Office were part of a massive interior clean-up effort.

SECURITY

Our security measures have been stepped up significantly since 9/11. Security officers now do routine bag checks, and magnetometers have been installed. We are working very hard, however, to ensure that the visitor experience will continue to be positive and engaging. We are training not only the security officers, but also other staff members who interact directly with the public. The Smithsonian has an extensive design review process to deal with Fire Safety, egress and signage—and all of these issues are being given considerable attention. How shall I say this? We’ve always been focused on these matters, but now, even more so.

HOW THE MUSEUM’S STAFF RESPONDED

Staff responses to 9/11 on various issues were diverse—from perceptions about air quality and security, to how best to address individual employee issues and overall staff morale in the context of such difficult circumstances. Indeed, staff members at all levels had a broad range of responses! From a management perspective, dealing with those concerns—along with the urgency of all that was going on last Fall—was complicated and extremely challenging.

On September 11th, one staff member was near the World Trade Center and was hit by building debris. Another person was coming to work from New Jersey and was in the PATH train station at time of impact. Another had a child in a neighborhood school. Others have had terrible commuting problems for months (and still do). Some staff have lost what counselors might refer to as a “sense of boundaries and what is appropriate.” Others responded to 9/11 by going overboard with communication, while still others became unusually silent. Many people were in a “panic” mode for weeks. Overall, the staff has been strong, capable, professional and dedicated to the museum’s mission throughout these difficult months.

The museum welcomed the staff back with a special lunch and had regular and frequent meetings, especially those first few weeks after 9/11. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services with both one-on-one and group counseling have been provided. All of this has been extremely tiring and has tested my own capacities as a museum professional and manager. There have been departmental jurisdiction questions, complicated by our residing in a building with other tenants (for example, the General Services Administration, Federal Protective Services, and Bankruptcy Courts). We are still ironing out how best to handle a myriad of policies to address emergency responses, fire drills, disaster preparedness plans (which take into account both people and collections) and even the protocols of employee telephone trees, the need for quality time for staff with discussions, and, of course, trying our best to listen to one another’s concerns and issues.

LESSON LEARNED

I was asked by IFAR to address what lessons were learned as a result of 9/11:

- From watching visitors, I have learned that people really are “paying attention”; they are really looking at our exhibits on a far deeper level with greater focus and concentration. That’s good!

- I have learned that staff considerations should always inform what we do and how we do it.
- I have come to appreciate more fully who has the commitment to do museum work, and especially, who is committed to the public service role that museums have.

My downtown museum colleagues and I continue dealing with enormous “downtown” issues, concerning both employees and public. With a lot of help from our community and staff, however, the museum was able to reopen the doors on October 1st.

When the museum opened in 1994, the projections were an annual audience of about 250,000. In reality, we attracted roughly 300,000 the first year, 400,000 the second year, and at least a half million in subsequent years. The National Museum of the American Indian has become one of the most popular family destinations in the New York metropolitan area, clearly establishing itself as one of the cultural anchors downtown. Our attendance—due to cutbacks in school visits and the public’s apprehension about coming downtown in the aftermath of 9/11—was off by more than 50% in both October and November; however, December was more encouraging, though still lower than the previous year by about 25%—with about 25,000 visitors! Yes, indeed, visitors are coming to “The Platform” [World Trade Center viewing platform] to pay their respects; the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island have reopened, and the downtown community—with tremendous and focused support from the Alliance for Downtown NY and NYC & Company—is on the comeback trail, though we still have a long way to go.

How about our programs? What about our facility? We are developing a raw ground—floor space—the Pavilion, which is directly underneath the Rotunda—as a family destination complete with active public programs, residencies, and exhibitions. The City of New York came through with \$1 million in capital funds this current fiscal year (FY 2002), and we are moving forward with plans to open this facility in early 2004. Given the severe losses in public spaces from 9/11—although I do speak with my own institutional bias!—this space is especially for downtown right now.

CURRENT PROGRAMS AND RESPONSES

What now? What programs are planned? This spring, we’ll have a significant program focused on the Mohawk Ironworkers (complementing the current Iroquois beadwork exhibit “Across Borders: Beadwork in Iroquois Life”—which was positively reviewed recently by the *New York Times*, among others) with an accompanying photography exhibit. The Mohawk Ironworkers helped build many NY skyscrapers, including the World Trade Center, and they also are involved in clearing Ground Zero. Our Mohawk friends have been coming frequently to the museum these past few months. We also have a major Mexican exhibit opening in the summer, a residency by a Native American cultural leader, Walking Thunder, this spring, and a vibrant exhibit program. We were slowed down by 9/11, but frankly, the Show Must Go On, and it does, and it will.

In sum, life in lower Manhattan has new and different challenges, and certainly, public safety and security are key issues. I envision a future that puts cultural institutions in the limelight as entities to attract a global audience to our neighborhood. Lower Manhattan is very much on the rebound; however, the positive cooperation of people at every level—from the community board to the board room to the street to our cultural institutions—is critical to assuring success.

In closing, I will again read from *Coyote in Love with a Star* :

Every night when the stars came out, Coyote waited until the beautiful star came near the observation deck, and then he howled and howled, begging her to take him up into the sky. He wanted to dance with her. At first she just ignored him. But one night, after he pleaded and begged, the star danced over and pulled him into the sky, and they began to dance together. As they danced across the sky, he was so happy he thought his heart would burst.

I look forward to days when all of us will again be so very happy that our hearts will burst. Thank you for inviting me to be on this panel.

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The Heritage Emergency National Task Force

LAWRENCE L. REGER*



Lawrence L. Reger. IFAR Symposium, February 28, 2002.

The Heritage Emergency Task Force was created in 1995 in recognition that no one agency or organization can alone provide assistance, expertise, and resources for the cultural community

in a time of disaster. Co-sponsored by the nonprofit Heritage Preservation and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Task Force is composed of more than 30 federal agencies and national service organizations concerned with protecting the nation's cultural heritage.

It seeks to help museums, libraries, archives, historical societies, and historic sites protect their cultural and historic resources from natural disasters and other emergencies by promoting preparedness and mitigation measures and by providing expert information on response and salvage. The Task Force also provides information to individuals about what they can do to salvage treasured heirlooms damaged by a disaster.

In October 2001, the Task Force set out to conduct an assessment of the impact of the September 11th events on cultural properties in lower Manhattan and at the Pentagon. Not only did we want to document the extent of damage, but also to evaluate how prepared institutions were to deal with emergencies of any kind. Support for this project was provided by the Bay Foundation and National Endowment for the Humanities.

Survey forms were mailed to approximately 120 museums, libraries, archives, and exhibit spaces

located mainly south of 14th Street in lower Manhattan. To date [February 28], we have received responses from 52 institutions, for a response rate of 43%. We anticipate the following figures will vary slightly in the final report as the data is analyzed more thoroughly.

As you probably know, with the exception of institutions located within the World Trade Center complex, there was a minimum of permanent physical damage to cultural institutions in the area. 96% of the respondents to our survey reported no structural damage to their buildings, and 88% reported no damage or soiling to their collections. Dust, smoke, and falling debris were cited as the primary causes of those that did report damage or soiling. Less than a quarter reported subsequent damage or problems related to the disaster.

However, a full 78% reported their institutions were forced to close as a result of September 11 and that their communications systems were disrupted, some for as long as four months.

Since our survey did not concentrate primarily on economic attendance issues, I will only briefly note a few findings in those areas:

71% reported that public visitation decreased after September 11. Again, this figure so far exceeds the number of institutions reporting damage that we conclude the decrease was primarily due to problems arising from the aftermath of the disaster, including restricted public access to the area, transportation difficulties, and disruptions in communications.

Comments we received from many respondents indicated that economic impact was among their chief concerns. Loss of income was directly related to the decrease in public visitation, as many of the organizations saw a sharp decrease in admission fees and revenues from shop sales. In addition, many

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saw contributions diverted to the rescue and recovery effort at the World Trade Center.

Some of the most interesting information the survey revealed regarding emergency management issues showed that although most organizations escaped long-term damage on September 11, it is clear that less than half were minimally prepared for any type of emergency. Just 44% had a written emergency response or emergency communications plan. Similarly, only 42% had staff trained in disaster response procedures. 60% indicated they had an emergency evacuation plan.

Several respondents indicated in comments that no plan would have been adequate for the events of September 11. However, that view only holds true if institutions were located in the Trade Center itself or immediately adjacent to it, such as the archives of the Helen Keller International Foundation housed at 90 West Street. In a number of instances, institutions located just blocks away from Ground Zero escaped serious damage due to previous emergency planning and immediate response measures.

When asked if there was time on September 11 to implement response plans:

- 40% indicated they were able to put at least part of their plans into effect
- 56% said their buildings were evacuated in an orderly way
- 46% said doors, windows, and other openings were closed or sealed
- 33% shut down their building's other systems

Given the nature of the disaster, such simple steps as sealing openings and turning off ventilation systems probably accounted for the lack of reported damage to collections in the area surrounding the World Trade Center site. In all probability, these measures were taken in response to the smoke and fire when the planes first hit the Twin Towers and not in anticipation of the buildings total collapse. However, such preventive action later proved invaluable when the clouds of debris spilled over lower Manhattan.

While most institutions had first aid supplies on hand on September 11, only 38% had emergency communications equipment and even fewer, 30%,

had the tools necessary to document damage for insurance claims. A mere 10% had supplies or equipment needed for the salvage of collections.

Perhaps the most disturbing finding was that only slightly more than half of the respondents had a current collections catalogue or inventory (58%). Of those with catalogues less than five years old, only 41% described them as complete. Even more alarming, 53% reported keeping no off-site copy of their catalogues. Had the destruction of September 11 been more widespread, many cultural organizations would have been left with no complete record of what had been lost.

On a more encouraging note, the survey found that cultural organizations recognized many of their previous shortcomings and were prepared to take steps to improve their emergency management capabilities. Here is a preview of areas the report will discuss:

- 70% of the respondents said their emergency plan should be revised in light of September 11.
- When asked to describe the most important elements of a new plan, the most common answer was to create or update a complete collections catalogue and to keep a copy stored off-site. Other priorities included improving communications strategy and revising insurance coverage.
- Respondents considered emergency management training for employees to be a high priority. 68% said such training would be of value to their staff. It is clear from the survey that access to professional emergency management training should be increased, and further, be made available to all staff, not just those charged with security responsibilities.

Also, standard training curricula should include "continuity of operations" models adapted from business. In the aftermath of September 11, a number of cultural institutions experienced fewer problems with damage to collections than with interrupted communications, lack of public access, and loss of business.

- The survey showed that most institutions lacked a basic understanding of how government disaster support is structured. Only 53% of respondents said they were familiar with sources of government financial recovery assistance prior to September 11. The most frequently recognized sources were FEMA (55%) and city or state agencies (44%). Only 30% cited the Small Business Administration, believing that non-profit organizations are ineligible for SBA assistance.

They need to know that, in fact, private non-profits, such as museums and libraries must apply for a SBA loan first before approaching FEMA for the remainder of the damages. And in New York and Virginia, nonprofits affected by the events of September 11 are now eligible for Economic Injury Disaster Loans as well.

The Task Force, working with FEMA, NEA and SBA, made this information available through our brochure Resources for Recovery. However, it is clear that we must distribute it even more widely.

- Finally, we must find ways to encourage organizations to keep complete and updated catalogues or inventories of their holdings and to store copies off site. With destruction of the magnitude experienced September 11, these catalogues may be the only record we have left of important artistic and historic treasures.

Some respondents noted that there was little or no funding for such efforts. Proper documentation and off-site storage of backup copies should be regarded as disaster mitigation measures. The Task Force will examine how it can be helpful in encouraging private and public support for this kind of work.

Complete results of our survey, together with expanded findings, will be included in a report to be issued in April. I would be pleased to provide copies to those of you who are interested. The website is www.heritagepreservation.org.



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