

Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Unlocks the Doors Once Again, 1000 Wait In Line

WHAT: “Access Restricted” – A wildly popular, free, nomadic lecture series with an idiosyncratic bent to rarely visited, often prohibited spaces. Tour guides include the creative minds of artists, urban archeologists, writers, and international policy makers. Presented by Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

WHERE: New York Surrogate's Court / Hall of Records, home of the municipal archive.

WHY: Visit the vaults of the Hall of Records housed inside the spectacular New York Surrogate's Court, lead by Assistant Commissioner Kenn Cobb and artist Matt Bakkom. Bakkom is the creator of The New York Museum of Complaints, a collection of complaint letters addressed to the Mayors' office, culled from The Hall of Records dating as early back as 1751.

WHEN: Friday February 16th, 2007 - 3PM

LOCATION: With an unfurling baroque marble staircase inspired by Garnier's Paris Opera House, and an extensive sculptural program depicting important moments and personalities in the City's history, the New York Surrogate's Court Building was heralded as the most Parisian monument in New York upon dedication in 1907. Although practically a repository of municipal and personal records, as well as, the court that addresses problems pertaining to estates, architect John R. Thomas' dignified monumental design was intended as a grand civic gesture to make ordinary people feel important. This first offering was originally part of a larger plan for a coordinated civic center to be built around City Hall Park. This center, following the dictums of the prevailing late 19th century City Beautiful Movement, would counteract the perceived moral decay of a derelict New York with a grandeur able to create a harmonious social order improving the lives of the inner-city poor. Upping the ante, William DeLeftwich Dodge's lavish mosaics depicting the signs of the zodiac was meant as the centerpiece of this showcase for public art.

TALK: Matt Bakkom works at the fringes of art- and event-making. His work often plumbs public archives, from orphaned films to local libraries or complaint letters written to New York City's mayors, bringing them to life through investigations, production, distribution and display.

Matt Bakkom will be joined Kenn Cobb of New York City Department of Records, who will lead us on tours of the archives during the talk.

UPCOMING ACCESS RESTRICTED TOURS

Leading international maritime lawyers discuss stowaways, shipping rights, and the issues of contemporary piracy in the US Customs House, a happening in the Woolworth Building. Currently in negotiation are events within the Federal Reserve Bank, The Woolworth Building, and Trinity Church.

PAST ACCESS RESTRICTED TOURS

November 1, 2006

The abandoned City Hall Subway Station with Julia Solis

Location: Described as the most beautiful subway station in the world, the City Hall Subway Station was meant as a way to show off the splendor and glamour of New York's first subway line -- the Interborough Rapid Transit Company. Succumbing to its unique design, which could not accommodate longer trains, the station saw its last day of passenger service on December 31, 1945, 41 years after it was inaugurated. It has been closed to the public ever since.

Talk: Julia Solis is an urban archaeologist who explores the subterranean mysteries and ruins of New York City and other locales. For years, she's chronicled her adventures through photographic evidence and essays posted on her Dark Passage website. Now, Routledge has published New York Underground, a stunning monograph of Solis' journey into the underworld.

Presented in partnership with the New York Transit Museum.

November 29, 6:30 PM

The Tweed Courthouse, The Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank Building rooftop, and the Municipal Building rooftop with Andrea Geyer

Initial talk takes place in one of the courthouse's monumental landmark meeting rooms. Guests are then guided across the street to the roof of the Municipal Building, one of the largest government buildings in the world.

Location: Located on a site previously occupied by the public common, a poorhouse and various cultural institutions, The New York County Courthouse--better known as the Tweed Courthouse--was the brainchild of municipal power-monger and crook, William Marcy Tweed--the "Boss Tweed" of New York City's Democratic 'machine.' Tweed's manipulation of public opinion and embezzlement

of funds in connection with the construction of this building ultimately led to his imprisonment and to Tammany Hall's loss of political clout. Following a talk inside one of the courthouse's monumental landmark meeting rooms off the central Romanesque rotunda, a guide will then take guests across the street to the roof of The Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank to look into the eyes of the heroic figure of Adolph Weinman's "Civic Fame" in copper, 20 feet high, poised on a large copper ball. The model for this statue--New York's largest public statue--was Audrey Munson. Guests will again cross the street and go to the roof of the Municipal Building, one of the largest government buildings in the world and model for Stalin's University of Moscow. This skyscraper, the first one for firm McKim, Mead, and White, culminates in a central tower and is ornamented by the "Civic Fame" statue. From here guests can peer down and view what the statue sees--**which is one of the most commanding views in all of New York.**

Talk: Andrea Geyer, former Lower Manhattan Cultural Council resident-artist, is the author of an upcoming publication on Audrey Munson (commissioned by Art in General), which honors the life of one of New York City's most famous artist's models. Geyer, a German-born, New York-based artist, has conducted extensive research on Audrey Munson, whose likeness can be found throughout Manhattan allegorically representing concepts like freedom, purity, peace and truth. Geyer's book is not a biography, but a contextualization of Munson's life within the larger struggle of women trying to find their voices and fair representation in the records of New York City history.

Presented in partnership with Art in General.

Continuing its unique slant at seeing the art in unused, abandoned or hidden places, this series expands on Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's programming theme of *Amnesia*, which draws audiences toward the hidden and overlooked narratives of downtown Manhattan.

Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (the Council) is the leading voice for arts and culture in downtown New York City, producing cultural events and promoting the arts through grants, services, advocacy, and cultural development programs. For more information, visit www.lmcc.net.

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