



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROUGH TRADE

Art and Sex Work in the Late 20th Century

Co-curated by Greg Ellis and Brian Paul Clamp

August 2 – September 22, 2018

ClampArt and Ward 5B are proud to present "Rough Trade: Art and Sex Work in the Late 20th Century." The exhibition explores a little known history at the crossroads of the sexual underground and popular culture. The show is organized to coincide with "David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night" at the Whitney Museum of American Art, and includes work by David Wojnarowicz, along with John Barrington, Mark Beard, Kenny Burgess, Larry Clark, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Fred Halsted, Mark Morrisroe, Joe Parker, Tomata du Plenty, Bill Rice, John Sex, Jane Sherry, Pedro Slim, Samuel Steward, and Tommy Vallette, as well as a rich array of related ephemera.

Propelled by the sexual revolution of the 1960s, as well as women's and gay liberation movements, the boundaries of sexual expression were challenged in the late 20th century. Over the course of several decades constrictive conventions were largely rejected on moral battlefields and ultimately expanded. Many artists found not only employment in the adult entertainment industry, but utilized the social, psychological, and political upheaval of this tectonic shift in their artwork. With

sex work often informing personal iconographies, artists such as David Wojnarowicz and Mark Morrisroe drew on their traumatic early histories in hustling on the streets to create bodies of work that reflected their personal experiences as child sex laborers. Other artists, such as Tomata du Plenty and Larry Clark, documented their friends, lovers, and multiple acquaintances that were involved in the sex trade. In addition, groundbreaking exhibitions such as the Times Square Show in June 1980 were held in massage parlors, go-go bars, pornographic theaters, and strip clubs. The art, ephemera, and artifacts presented in "Rough Trade: Art & Sex Work in the Late 20th Century" offer a glimpse into a hidden history where prostitution, stripping, and pornography played key roles in the struggle for sexual expression and artistic freedom.

As Jean Genet, hustler, heretic, and author, wrote: "She was happy, and perfectly in line with the tradition of those women they used to call 'ruined,' 'fallen,' feckless, bitches in heat, ravished dolls, sweet sluts, instant princesses, hot numbers, great lays, succulent morsels, everybody's darlings... ."





Ward 5B is an archival and curatorial service specializing in late 20th-century urban ephemera and art, with a focus on punk aesthetic, radical spaces, performance art, drag, experimental theatre, camp, queercore, and guerrilla/street art projects.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director, or see www.clampart.com.

Image 1: Mark Morrisroe (1959-1989), "Untitled (Self Portrait Standing in the Shower)," c. 1980-1, Vintage chromogenic print, 20 x 16 inches, © Estate of Mark Morrisroe (Ringier Collection), Fotomuseum Winterthur.

Image 2: © Larry Clark, "Untitled (Hustlers' Handshake)" from the portfolio "Teenage Lust," c. 1981, Vintage gelatin silver print, 11 x 14 inches.