



PRESS RELEASE

Graffiti NYC

Artists of the Third Rail

Benrimon Contemporary

July 15 - August 10, 2010

For immediate release

Graffiti NYC: *Artists of the Third Rail* features photographs, works on paper, paintings, sculptures, murals and live presentations by Martha Cooper, John Naar, Richard Hambleton, Snake1, Noc167, Jamestop, Stayhigh149, PNUT, Cap1, Tracy168, Futura2000, Dondi, Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Phetus, among other legends of the third rail.

Benrimon Contemporary is pleased to announce a group exhibition that demonstrates the trajectory of the history of graffiti in New York City. *Graffiti NYC: Artists of the Third Rail* is curated by Molly Sampson in collaboration with Mario Ramos (ARE) and Claudia Bumbac (DIA), owners of 1HUNDREDB; a Lower East Side storefront gallery that serves as the mecca of NYC urban art and graffiti culture. Aerosol Art has festooned New York City's concrete facades and steel traincars for over four decades, it began as a humble trend of "tagging" in 1969 and transformed into what is now referred to as street art. The scope of this artistic genre has swelled in size to encompass a myriad of styles ranging from painted murals to wheat pastes and stickers. Graffiti as a fine art form has been the subject of controversy since the first appearance of street art into galleries nearly forty years ago, yet overtime, this rebellious and living art form has become a prominent component of the art historical canon.

As urban art culture has grown in popularity and adapted various forms, art dealers saw an opportunity to promote a new art form within the white walls of a gallery. Graffiti artists began to exhibit works in galleries and museums in the 1970s, and subsequently adapted their graffiti techniques into works that fit the gallery mold. *Graffiti NYC: Artists of the Third Rail* will present a range of canvases and works on paper that tracks the pulse of NYC street art over the past forty years. This paradigm-shifting art genre will be exhibited as a retrospective of NYC's writers' culture.

Photographs are an essential method of documenting graffiti since they are a permanent way to capture such a transient work of art. Photography has prolifically prolonged the short-lived existence of graffiti pieces that were cleaned off, painted over and disbanded, while successfully becoming its own artistic form. In the absence of photographic images, graffiti would be all but a vague memory in the minds of New Yorkers. Photographs from the 1970's and 80's will provide the present day viewer with the opportunity to walk the streets of NYC painted inside out at the height of graffiti's explosion.

Graffiti on subway cars was a phenomenon witnessed by New York City's straphangers during the early 70's and lasting in intensity until 1989. Though the art on train doors today is mostly limited to photographs or black book sketches, the gallery will pay homage to the origins of graffiti by incorporating actual NYC MTA subway doors into the exhibition. These doors will be painted as a live installation to demonstrate graffiti techniques and auctioned off during the exhibition's opening night to benefit **The Bowery Mission**.

Graffiti and street art are normally viewed in public outside of institutional spaces. The gallery acknowledges the natural setting of this art form and will allow the art to thrive in its proper street environment by having two murals painted on the gallery gates for the duration of the exhibition.



Benrimon Contemporary is located at 514 West 24th Street, 2nd floor, New York, NY 10011, between 10th and 11th Avenues. Our hours are Monday to Saturday 10am to 8pm and Sunday 12pm to 6pm.

For further information or images, please contact Molly Sampson at 212.924.2400 or molly@bcontemporary.com.

Editor's Notes

Leon Benrimon is the principal of Benrimon Contemporary LLC. Benrimon Contemporary will use its extensive art world experience and education to present a new type of gallery that focuses on established Contemporary Artists and the homage they pay to their Modern and Impressionist forefathers.

Benrimon Contemporary will expand on the David Benrimon Fine Art LLC network and bring about the next generation of collectors through innovative ideas that merge art history and art world culture to present a new perspective and relationship with art.

Benrimon Contemporary LLC doing business as Benrimon Contemporary does not represent the artists represented in this exhibition. This document as well as others prepared for this exhibition should not be construed that Benrimon Contemporary represents these artists, their estate or their oeuvre.

Please join us for the opening reception for the artists with DJ Toney Tone of The Cold Crush Brothers on Thursday **July 15** from 6pm - 12am.

Please check our website (www.bcontemporary.com) for additional information on upcoming events during the exhibition.