



Press Release

Contact : [Sheryl Weinstein](#)
Information : Public Relations
 973-596-3436

Old Essex County Jail Ruins Featured in Show of 33 Area Artists Opening at NJIT

NEWARK, Oct. 18, 2006



The Essex County Jail is a forgotten, historic gem tucked behind massive stone walls in Newark's University Heights District. Although the jail has landmark status —dating back to 1837—the area has been neglected to the point of ruin. “Jailhouse Revival,” an eclectic exhibit of works by 33 area artists opening Oct. 21, 2006, 5-9 p.m., at New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), promises to breathe the new life into this landmark, said Newark resident Matthew Gosser. Gosser, an adjunct professor at the New Jersey School of Architecture at NJIT, was the curator as well as a contributor.

The public is invited to view the exhibit weekdays, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., through Dec. 2, 2006, in NJIT's New Jersey School of Architecture Gallery, 116 Summit St. The show features photography, poetry, painting, video installation, furniture design and more. Most works were created by artists who spent time at the ruins. Opening night features a reception and 2 live bands. **ATTENTION EDITOR: MEDIA MAY PREVIEW SHOW 3 P.M. FRIDAY. FOR DETAILS, CALL SHERYL WEINSTEIN 973-596-3436.**

“The exhibit also includes an architectural presentation to raise the public conscience about saving the ruins,” said Gosser. “A sculpture garden and art school number among ideas for future use.” **Seven Newark residents are participating artists: Anker West, Ernie Walker, Jaime Alvarez, Les Ayre, Seth Goodwin, and Emma Wilcox.**

Gosser's work includes a series of old and new black and white photos, architectural models and renderings, jail bar sculpture, a cabinet collage and a dog carcass under plexiglass. Gosser, as an artist, appreciates the interplay of man, nature and the built environment. Ruins interest him. “I like vestiges of the built environment abandoned by man and gradually being reclaimed by nature,” he said. Last year, an exhibit by Gosser at NJIT focused on found materials from an old Newark brewery which he fashioned into art. “I like exploring the past, creatively recycling found objects and raising public awareness about our disappearing heritage,” he said.

“The Devil's Cathedral,” an acrylic on paper artifact by artist Maria Mijares typifying Mijares' view of life and art, will be on view. Mijares, an artist working closely with Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, a leading international planning, engineering and construction management firm, created the four large-scale porcelain enamel murals recently installed at street-level in the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Transit System. The murals, now at the Union City Bergenline Avenue Station, feature an oversized marquee with three vent stack murals.

“Every random moment contains the elements for perfect harmony,” Mijares said. “I work to arrive at

the painted marks that will reflect an intuitive truth, as the tile patterns of the Alhambra represent mathematical theorems. After willy-nilly confetti of experience, paint orders a complex mesh of inherent paradox. Order reverberates. I observe the power.”

A work on paper by Gilda Pervin showing the Essex County Jail Keepers Daily Wing Records will be on view. “I found these papers in heaps inside the jail,” Pervin said. She printed on each sheet two photo images—one illustrating the jail as an overgrown ruin, the other manipulated to show the jail as she imagined it looked when it was functioning. “My work has always dealt with time and memory,” Pervin said. “In this work she represents the passage of time, the dreariness of prison life, and the insistence of nature to grow and reclaim territory.”

Pervin, who was trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, has received an art grant from the New York State Council, a Penny McCall Foundation Grant, an Artists' Fellowship Grant in sculpture from the New York Foundation of the Arts, and a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant. The Queens Museum, Brooklyn Museum and Gray Art Gallery have exhibited her work. The Jewish Museum, NYC; Burchfield-Penny Art Center, Buffalo; Noyes Museum, Oceanville; Old Jail Art Center, Albany, TX, all own pieces. Pervin teaches at the New School.

Anker West will have four works on view including a charcoal drawing on paper, acrylic on plywood, stoneware and an assemblage of found objects. A graduate of Philadelphia College of Art, West has worked as an architectural designer and artist in Newark since 1974. Community issues in Newark have long been a part of his work, including the saving of Riverbank Park, and the conceptual design of a continuous waterfront park along the Passaic River. For the last three years, he has designed four built projects in Newark's Lincoln Park section, including 16 units of artists' work and living space, an art gallery, and continuous linear sidewalk parks linking the projects. His current artwork deals with threatened sites and is manifested in large-scale drawings done from life, paintings, and ceramic sculptures of threatened buildings and landscapes.

For further information, contact Gosser at 973-482-0523 or www.gosser.info. More featured artists in the show are: Ginger Andro, Chuck Glicksman, Gerard Barbot, Elisa Decker and Rob Dobi. Also on view are Heather Fromkin, Asha Ganpat, Natalie Giugni, and Sandra L.M. Gosser. More include Sandra Indig, Mark Johnson, Adele Kenny, Rebecca Major and Leslie McCullough-Payne. Others are Judy Negron, Ruth Neustadter, Alexandra Pacula and Julliette Pelletier. Also showing are Boris Petropavlovsky, Moshe Rub, Rupert Ravens, Jon Schlunz, Dave Smith, Joan Sonnenfeld, Charlee Swanson and Troy West.

New Jersey Institute of Technology, the state's public technological research university, enrolls more than 8,200 students in bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in 100 degree programs offered by six colleges: Newark College of Engineering, New Jersey School of Architecture, College of Science and Liberal Arts, School of Management, Albert Dorman Honors College and College of Computing Sciences. NJIT is renowned for expertise in architecture, applied mathematics, wireless communications and networking, solar physics, advanced engineered particulate materials, nanotechnology, neural engineering and eLearning.

[Press Release Archive](#) | [Newsroom](#)

[Printer Friendly Version](#)