

WTC



WTC

Brian Rose

## Foreword

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## WTC

The World Trade Center was still new when it arrived in New York in the summer of 1977. Just three years before, Philippe Fair had made his famous high-wire walk between the partially completed Twin Towers. The city was struggling financially, and the World Trade Center was a colossal white elephant reared out largely to government agencies. It was the festering summer of the blackout and the serial killer Sam of Sam.

The Twin Towers remained aloof from the passions below. They were the perfect backdrop buildings, immaculate pylons signifying nothing in particular – unlike the heroic Empire State Building – but serving always as inevitable signposts. If you emerged squinting from the subway, momentarily disoriented, the Twin Towers, looming in the distance, visible from almost everywhere in the city, helped you get your bearings.

I remember the day in 1993 when the World Trade Center was first attacked by terrorists. News spread through the streets that a massive bomb had exploded in the basement of the complex. I gazed downtown numerous times that day, worried, but reassured by the presence of the Twin Towers looking as blantly unperturbed as ever.

The odd thing about the Twin Towers was that from afar they often appeared slightly out of focus, to be dematerializing into the sky, an optical effect caused by the steel prisms of the towers' skin. This innovative tube design would prove to be their fatal flaw – the engineers' miscalculation of air mass.



## Image and Symbol

By the turn of the century, the World Trade Center had become accepted, if not loved, as a symbol of the city's endurance and power on the world stage. New York was doing better - crime was down and money was flowing. Tourists flocked to the observation deck on Tower 2, and the complex was now bustling with international financial companies, the kind of tenants originally envisioned for the Trade Center.

For most New Yorkers, it had become another workaday part of the city. Thousands of commuters passed through it daily or stopped in its immense lower-level mall. And its concourses and pedestrian bridges provided the easiest way to get to Battery Park City and the World Financial Center across West Street. It was a city within a city with its own zip code.

Those who masterminded the destruction of the World Trade Center on 9/11 understood the potency of the Twin Towers as image and symbol. They also understood that striking at this image, not to overlook the horrific human cost, would unleash forces that we not easily returned to station, hence the protracted wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Twin Towers as steel and concrete may be gone forever, but their image remains on the skyline, ghostly shimmering.



## Late '70s

Unlike my other book projects where I have exclusively used a full view camera, this body of work was made in a variety of formats at very different times in my career. The earliest photographs from the late 70s, when I was still a student, were made with 35mm Kodachrome. I roamed the city in those days, especially downtown below 14th Street, moving quickly shooting fast. Sometimes I walked the identical West Side Highway down to the World Trade Center and then took the Staten Island Ferry over and back.

There was no attempt at that time to focus on the WTC as a subject. But when I began looking through my slides, I found a very tight series of images ranging from distant views - the Twin Towers on the skyline - to very close fragments inside the lobbies of Tower 2. Alexander Calder's vivid red Benji Popper can be seen in two of the images. The sculpture was later moved to the pedestrian bridge at the front entrance of 1 WTC where it was destroyed in 9/11.



STATEN ISLAND FERRY 1977



BRIDGE LANE 1977



BRIDGE LANE 1977



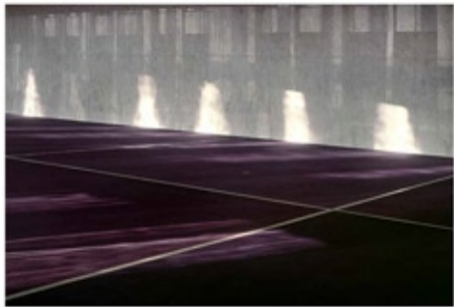
PHOTO © GUY LAWRENCE 2017



PHOTO © GUY LAWRENCE 2017



© 2012, 2011



© 2012, 2011



## Early '80s

In 1980 I began photographing the Lower East Side with Edward Fausty, a fellow graduate of Cooper Union. We worked with a 4x6 view camera documenting the streets and buildings of that uniquely tenacious immigrant neighborhood. The Twin Towers and the other skyscrapers of the Financial District loomed in the distance. From the tenements of the Lower East Side they were omnipresent symbols of New York's wealth and power just out of reach.

Soon after completing the Lower East Side project, Fausty and I were invited to participate in a photographic survey of the Wall Street area funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. We began working jointly as before, but eventually made photographs individually.

This group of images describes the monumental scale of lower Manhattan's displacement, the Twin Towers figuring prominently in some, a distant presence in others - but almost always there, somewhere. Few people lived in lower Manhattan in those days, and the weekends were exceptionally still, even desolate. One Sunday morning Ed and I walked up on the rear deck of FDR Drive and took several photographs looking across the rooftops of the Fulton Fish Market.



FROM THE WALL STREET BRIDGE (1980)



FROM THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE 101

©2014 PHOTOFEST



LOWER MANHATTAN 101

©2014 PHOTOFEST



UNDER THE FREE DRIVE 1971

REYNOLDS



ON THE FREE DRIVE 1971

REYNOLDS



WORLD TRADE CENTER PLAZA (1)

© JEFFREY M. HARRIS



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH - CROWN STREET (1)



MANHATTAN (1)

RENDER (1)



MANHATTAN (1)



EXHIBIT 100

EXHIBIT 101



EXHIBIT 102



WASHINGTON STREET AND WEST 17TH STREET 1901



BATTERY PARK 1901



WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE





## 9/11

During the '90s I lived in Amsterdam. Although I continued to make regular trips back to New York to do architectural photography assignments, the city was no longer an active focus of my personal work.

On September 11, 2001 I was in Amsterdam, when the phone rang just before three in the afternoon, six-hour time difference from New York. A friend told me that a plane had hit one of the Trade Center towers. I turned on the TV in time to see the second plane hit, and then watched the whole progression of horrors unfold. I flew back to a nearby deserted JFK airport a week later on one of the first flights in from Europe.

A large part of lower Manhattan was cordoned off, but on the first day that Broadway was open below Canal Street, I managed to break the crowds to take several photographs with the 40D camera on the periphery of what was now called ground zero.

At one point I stepped off Broadway onto a side street, away from the crush of gazers. A man walked up carrying a single camera - no camera bag as I recall - and he asked me if I was a documentary photographer. I said yes, more or less. I looked at him more intently and then realized it was the photographer James Nachtwey. Later that week I saw his extraordinary pictures of ground zero in Time magazine.





PROHIBIT 001



PROHIBIT 001



MISSING PERSON POSTERS



PHOTO COURTESY PARKS (2011)



PHOTO COURTESY PARKS (2011)



## Response

For several years after 9/11, I thought about how I might respond as a photographer to what had happened in New York. Surprisingly, within a short period of time, the city was on the upswing again. People were moving in, not out, crime continued its downward trend, and money began to flow into areas of the city previously impervious to gentrification.

It occurred to me then that I should return to photographing the Lower East Side. The old immigrant neighborhood beneath the bridges and stereotypes of lower Manhattan would serve as a barometer of change and continuity.

As I began to re-photograph the Lower East Side, I discovered numerous images of the Twin Towers in the neighborhood: murals, posters, and memorials. And as I moved about the city I began collecting WTC imagery, either using a digital pocket camera or the view camera.



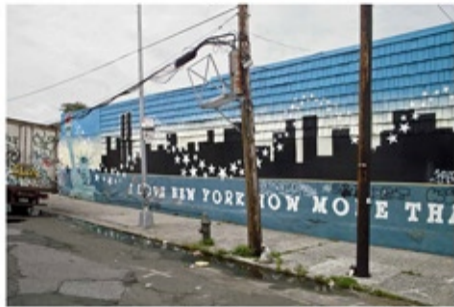
MARKING STREET 2001



LOFT OFFICE | BRONX, NY



LOFT OFFICE | BRONX, NY



910 10TH STREET • BROOKLYN 2011



847 10TH STREET 2011



SHANGHAI STREET 2012



SHANGHAI STREET 2012



CLARKSON STREET 2011



LANAL STREET 2007



LANAL STREET AND NORTHERN BROADWAY - 2008



ONE YEAR TO TRAIN (2011)



REVISED BY THE AMERICAN (2011)



BY MICHAEL W. BROWN / GETTY IMAGES



BY MICHAEL W. BROWN / GETTY IMAGES



RENOVATED TERRACE | CENTER ISLAND 2012



SIXTH STREET | BROOKLYN 2012



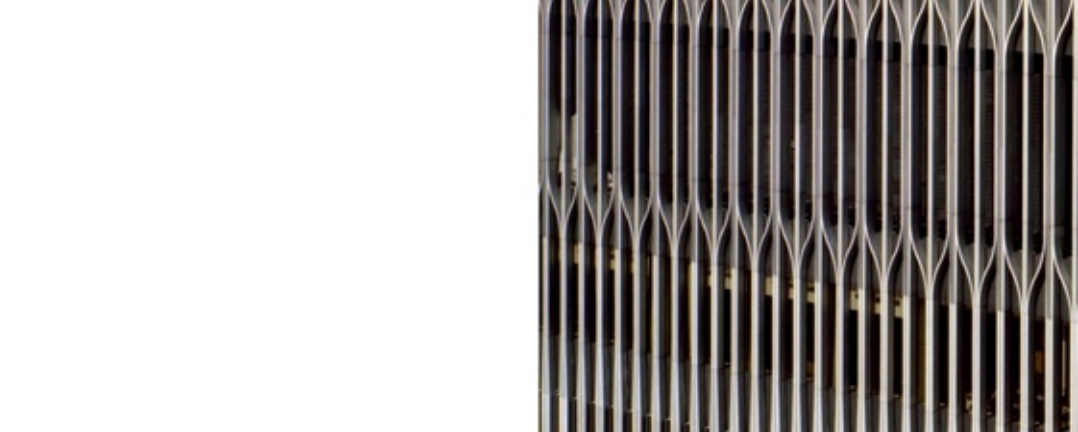
MARK LUTHE/STREET STORIES



REBECCA BARRON/STREET STORIES



BRICK WALL MURAL - BOSTON 2011



## Ground Zero

A decade after 9/11, ground zero remained a battleground of interests and a potent political symbol. To some it was hallowed ground, a graveyard. Today it is both a memorial and a museum. The footprints of the towers have been preserved and animated with waterfalls. It is commercial real estate. The new skyscrapers house shops and offices. And it is a hub of transportation, Santiago Calatrava's soaring winged station.

I began photographing the site in 2007 after an exploratory walk with the FBI camera. After years of excavation and underground foundation work, there was evidence, finally, of progress being made above ground. The site reminded me of the reconstruction of Potsdamer Platz in Berlin after the Wall came down when it was the largest construction site in Europe as well as a major tourist attraction.

I decided to make periodic trips downtown to document the scene. With no special access I stuck to the periphery of ground zero setting up my camera where I could, often running up against security guards who enforced an arbitrary ban on my view camera even as dozens of tourists snapped pictures around me. The zones of public and private property had become so blurred - at ground zero and elsewhere - that I was often unsure where one ended and the other began.





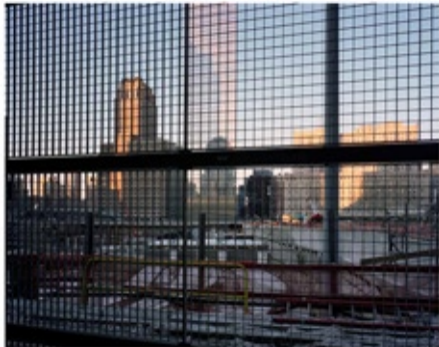
LIBERTY STREET 2012



LIBERTY STREET 2012



LIBERTY STREET 2010



LIBERTY STREET 2010

## Deutsche Bank Building

Although each of the Twin Towers collapsed nearly straight down, pancaking onto themselves, there was still significant damage to adjacent buildings. 7 World Trade Center was consumed by fire, and collapsed approximately eight hours after the Twin Towers. The Barclay-Vesey building, a gem of Art Deco architecture, and 90 West Street, designed by Cass Gilbert, the architect of the Woolworth Building, were badly damaged by falling debris. Both have been restored.

The Deutsche Bank Building across the street from the World Trade Center was ripped open by shards of steel peeling off of Tower 2. Demolition was decided upon, a more complicated process than usual because of extensive asbestos removal. In September 2003 human remains were found on the roof of the building, and again in 2006, delaying demolition.

In May 2007 a section of pipe fell 35 floors from the building and crashed through the roof of Ten Housa, the fire station located on Liberty Street just below. Two firefighters were injured. And in August 2007 a fire broke out in the Deutsche Bank Building, and two firefighters died in the chaotic mass of plastic sheathing meant to contain asbestos dust. Almost ten years after 9/11, the reconstruction of Deutsche Bank was finally concluded.



DEUTSCHE BANK - LIBERTY STREET 2011



SHIMIZU LABORER WINDOW 2011



INFORMATION BUREAU - GREENWICH STREET 2011



ONE WORLD TRADE CENTER - WEST STREET 2011



WEST STREET 2011



WEST STREET 2011



CHURCH STREET 2011



CHURCH STREET 2011



## Philippe Petit

In 1974 when the WTC was just being completed, Philippe Petit, a French street performer clandestinely strung a cable between the Twin Towers and proceeded to tightrope walk back and forth 110 stories above lower Manhattan. Thousands watched in amazement from below. Eventually he surrendered to the waiting arms of the police.

In the end, public sentiment ruled in his favor, and charges were dropped in exchange for a performance by Petit for children in Central Park. His breathtaking walk between the Twin Towers has become part of the folklore of New York, made all the more poignant by what happened on 9/11.

Shortly after the destruction of the Twin Towers, I sifted through my archive for photographs of the buildings. One of the pictures I came across was taken from the observation deck on 2 WTC. I did a high-resolution scan of the 4x6 negative and discovered something I had not seen before, Philippe Petit's signature and tightrope icon etched into a steel crossbeam.



BOB D'AMICO 2002



REPERATION-BUILD 100

REPERATION



PHOTOS REPT BARRIUM 100

REPERATION

## General Slocum

In 1904 over 1,200 members of the St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church located on East 6th Street in the heart of Klondutchland, the German immigrant community, set out for their annual picnic trip on the vessel the General Slocum. As the boat set out while steaming up the East River approaching Hell Gate near the present location of the Robert F. Kennedy (Ditmars) Bridge.

The ship quickly became engulfed in flames, and over a thousand perished – mostly women and children – burned to death or drowned in the south current of the river. The loss of life and subsequent drama surrounding the investigation of the event was unprecedented. The German community of the Lower East Side was decimated, never to recover. It was the worst disaster in the city's history prior to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in 2001.

The Slocum memorial in Tompkins Square Park is exteriorly modest given the scale of the calamity, especially in comparison to the huge memorial and museum on the World Trade Center site. When photographed in 1980, it was covered in graffiti making its inscription almost unrecognizable. At that time, despite living in a building directly across the street from one that had housed four of the victims, I had never heard of the General Slocum.



GENERAL SLOCUM MEMORIAL | TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK | 1980

## Berlin Wall

For about twenty years most of my attention was focused on Europe where I photographed the landscape of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall. After the fall of the wall in 1989, and its quick dismantling, I continued to make photographs in Berlin, documenting the redevelopment of the former border zone.

In 1996 I photographed a billboard standing directly where the Wall once ran - a cigarette ad with Fall Wall Light printed over an image of the Twin Towers. The Wall had once been regarded as a permanent feature of global politics - now it was gone. Little did I know that in just a few years, the Twin Towers would also crumble, and geopolitics would be similarly transformed.





FIRST MEMORIAL HALL - BRADENTON STREET 2007



WILSON WOODS CEMETERY - BRADENTON 2007

## Frieze

For the 10th anniversary of 9/11 I created a montage of close-ups of the Twin Towers taken from my early 1990s images. I scanned the 4x5 inch negatives, and put the tightly cropped pieces together in the computer to produce a 25-foot long frieze.

The frieze was printed on vinyl and mounted on a temporary construction shed on East 66 Street between the Bowery and Second Avenue. The arts group FAB (Fourth Arts Block) sponsored the installation as part of their program to make use of construction sites and other underutilized spaces on the Lower East Side.



NYC FRIEZE | EAST 66 STREET 2011



ONE CITY MONUMENT / JUNE 7 2011



THE WATER WALKWAY / SEPTEMBER 1 2011



MANHATTAN STREET, 2011



MANHATTAN STREET, 2011



## Hurricane Sandy

In October 2013, a category 3 hurricane rolled up the Atlantic Coast making landfall just to the south of New York. By the time Hurricane Sandy reached the city, its winds had dissipated substantially, but it pushed a storm surge into the harbor that flooded streets and tunnels, blocked out most of lower Manhattan, and in the end, resulted in 33 fatalities.

Even Liberty Island in the Upper Harbor failed to escape the floodwaters, which inundated the caretaker's cottage, part of group of support buildings not usually seen by visitors to the Statue of Liberty. In 2013, I photographed the scene and grounds for the architect in charge of renovations. I climbed the stairs leading to the statue's crown, and I made pictures of the waterlogged caretaker's house with the tower of One WTC standing imperiously in the distance.

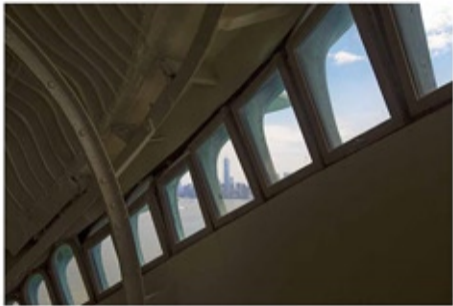
Two tragedies visited New York in just over a decade: one, a diabolical plot engineered by a shadowy figure of human malignancy - the other, a natural force of supreme indifference exacerbated by global warming. New York will exhibit its characteristic swagger, but both events exposed a vulnerability that, caught unawares, can be gazed in the long, hurried eyes of its citizens.



LIBERTY ISLAND CARETAKER'S COTTAGE - LIBERTY ISLAND, 2013



LIBERTY ISLAND - LIBERTY ISLAND, NY



STATUE OF LIBERTY CROWN 2011



LIBERTY ISLAND 2011

## City of Spires

There was a time during the 20th century when the skyline of lower Manhattan had a romantic storybook aspect. It was a city of spires, most notably the neo-gothic Woolworth Building from 1913, and later, the Art Deco styled Citicorp Building. The first significant disruption to the romantic look of lower Manhattan was the Chase Manhattan Bank building, a modernist slab inserted among its Gothic neighbors. The building itself, arguably, is one of the best early modernist office towers in Manhattan. But it began a trend of ever bulkier boxes that eventually obscured many of Manhattan's most iconic skyscrapers.

Nevertheless, when the Twin Towers went up in 1974 they dominated the skyline in almost every direction. When I did my pictures of lower Manhattan in the early '80s they were ubiquitous, poking up and between other buildings visible from countless different vantage points. It helped, of course, that there were two of them, and the vertical pinpricking of the sky – the vulnerable exhalation of the towers – seemed always to lead the eye upward.

One World Trade Center, despite its height, seems lost in the crowd compared to its double progenitors. And while the Twin Towers often visually lined up with the ornate street grid of downtown Manhattan, the new tower seems rarely to do so. One exception is Fulton Street where I photographed it juxtaposed with a richly articulated cast iron building from more than a hundred years ago. And as before with the Twin Towers, One WTC appears at its most commanding from across the Hudson in New Jersey.



FULTON STREET 2011



604 FULTON STREET - BROOKLYN 0111



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SOUTH SIDE - SPRING STREET 2011



NORTH SIDE - SPRING STREET 2011

## One WTC

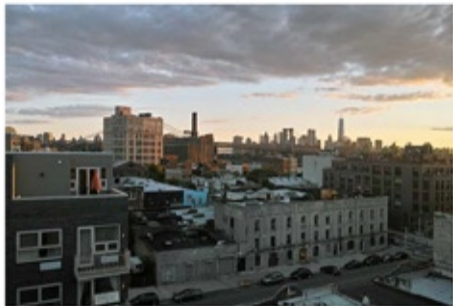
The Twin Towers, powerful when seen from afar, had an uneasy relationship with the vibrant streets of the city. So, too, the crystalline bunker of One World Trade Center - a strangely beautiful, but chilling presence, the glowing sunlight reflected onto Fulton Street, the segmented rows of steel balustrade, the striping of the colored glass behind the revolving doors, the solitary black-suited sentinel assisting anyone brave enough to step forward with the idea of entering.



FULTON STREET 2010



BLANKENHORN + BRONKHORST 2012



BLANKENHORN + BRONKHORST 2012



ARND BRONKHORST 2011



ARND BRONKHORST 2011



PHOTO BY LARRY J. BRONSTEIN/BRONSTEIN PHOTO ARTS

## Reflection

In bringing this narrative to a close, I find myself equipped only with the most recent and tentative images, not yet resonant with the past, I circle what was once called ground zero with my camera, dodging the drift of tourists who have made it a place of pilgrimage.

It seems sometimes, disconcertingly, that I am in the business of photographing things that precipitously cease to exist - the Berlin Wall, the Twin Towers.

New York moves forward, new towers climb upward, and a new generation claims the old neighborhoods. The rapidity of change settles even the newcomers who feel history slipping through their fingers as they fumble for their keys.

Here is New York, E. B. White wrote about the city in another time of great anxiety. The subtlest change in New York is something people don't speak much about but that is in everyone's mind. The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructive. We who live here know that all too well.

Let us then look back at what is gone - reflected towers in a pool of water. Philippe Petit on a slender wire. The names. The faces. Things absent. The beginning of what comes after.



## History

Growing up in Williamsburg, Virginia, I wanted to be an urban planner to have an impact on the way cities live and breathe - and how they look. At the same time, however, I became passionate about photography, and at age 16 got my hands on a wonderful Kodak Instamatic Brown camera. I began, like most everyone back then, working in black and white. But during the summer of 1975 in Washington, D.C., when I did not have access to a darkroom, I began shooting color slide film. With little awareness of the early practitioners of color art photography, I quickly found a visual language of my own.

That interest in color led me to Cooper Union in New York where Joel Meyerowitz, one of the pioneers of color photography, was teaching. Initially, my work was informed primarily by street photography, fleeting glimpses of the urban landscape, and the ebb and flow of city life. After graduating, I engaged in a somewhat different and more considered approach, making use of the view camera and color film to document the Lower East Side, the neighborhood where I was living, a place of visual richness, alive with the resonance of its immigrant history and the emergent cultural life of downtown New York.

The project extended over a year and established a way of exploring and mapping the built landscape as seen over time. From the Lower East Side I moved on to other parts of New York including the Financial District and its skyline punctuated by the Twin Towers. In 1981 I shifted my attention across the Atlantic and began to photograph the former Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall. I made several trips along the border, and had just about brought that project to a conclusion, when political events led to the unexpected opening of the Berlin Wall. I then photographed the dismantling of the Wall and have continued, up to the present, to document the redevelopment of Berlin, particularly in the former border zone.

On September 11, 2001, an event of global significance, once again, intervened, when terrorists destroyed the Twin Towers. As a response, however indirect, I returned to my earlier New York projects, reexamining the fabric of the city, retracing my steps through the Lower East Side, and following the rebuilding of the World Trade Center. This book is the culmination of that response - a tribute to New Yorkers and all who carry a piece of the great city with them.



BRAND'S EARLY WORK WAS DONE IN NEW YORK  
A HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITIES AND THE TWIN TOWERS

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