

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

# Where Art Lies in Ruins And Along Urban Streets

**Beyond Ruin Porn**

◆ **Front Room Gallery**  
 147 Roebling St., Brooklyn  
 718-782-2556  
 Through Feb. 21  
 Well-kept and abandoned industrial complexes. The 17 pictures in this group show were selected because the sites, although no longer serviceable, have social, historical or cultural relevance. The three pictures by Sasha Bezzubov and Jessica Sucher were taken in 2006 at the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's ashram in Rishikesh, India, where, in 1968,

the Beatles famously sought enlightenment; it was abandoned in 1997. The first picture shows the decorative metal gate that now leads to a shabby vestibule; the one on the wall and a collapsing ceiling; the third, the overgrown beehive-like meditation huts. Phillip Buehler's three prints are of the Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital in Morris Plains, N.J.; from 1956 to 1961 folk singer Woody Guthrie was a patient there, dying from Huntington's disease. The hospital has since been demolished, but in 2004 Mr. Buehler recorded the rooms with peeling paint, falling plaster and, in one, a sad upright piano. Paul Raphaelson's three pic-

tures from 2013 of the interior of the Domino Sugar factory in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, show the incredible complexity of the equipment used to refine, sort like a monstrous sculpture, and another the engine room of a sci-fi spacecraft. Stephen Mallon's "Throttle" (2009) is on the control panel of the US Airways Airbus A320 that pilot Chesley Sullenberger successfully landed in the Hudson River; it is covered with mud. Like Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey, ruins give us pause.

**The World of Fred Stein**

◆ **Rosenberg & Co.**  
 19 E. 66th St.  
 212-202-3270  
 Through Feb. 12  
 Fred Stein's son, Peter, was in the gallery when I was there, and he told me that his father was a great conversationalist. To be one, you not only need to speak well but to have something to say; it also helps to have a talent for listening. Stein exhibits the visual equivalents in his photographs: clarity, curiosity and sympathy. Stein was born in Dresden, Germany, in 1909; left that country in 1933 to avoid the Gestapo; lived in Paris until 1939, when he was interned as an enemy alien, and escaped and made his way to Marseilles, France, where he embarked for the U.S. In New York, as he had in Paris, he practiced street photography and took portraits of cultural figures. He died in 1967.

Rosenberg is showing 51 prints from Germany, France and New York. Still-lives, such as "Fish Platter, Brittany" (1935), and street scenes, such as "Wrought Iron Staircase, New York" (1945), show a refined Bauhausian modernism. But most of the pictures are of people shot in public, such as the "Vendor, Paris" (1935) sitting outside with goods in her hand; the five women in a "Knitting



'Bin Distributor,' one of Paul Raphaelson's photographs from an old sugar refinery in Brooklyn. The 2013 work is part of an exhibition at Front Room Gallery entitled 'Beyond Ruin Porn.'



Fred Stein's 'Vendor, Paris' (1935)

Circle, New York" (1948) intent on their needles; and the two geezers having a "Chess Game, New York" (1947) on a park bench. Their mundane activities are invested by Stein with enormous dignity. There are wonderful pictures of children, and his photograph of two girls in swimsuits and sun hats caught on a "Swing, Paris" (1934) at its apogee is pure joy.

**PM New York Daily: 1940-48**

◆ **Stevens Kasher Gallery**  
 515 W. 26th Street  
 212-966-3978  
 Through Feb. 20  
 PM, the determinedly leftist New York tabloid daily, announced in its first issue, "PM is against people who push people around." But also, "PM's sole source of income is its readers," and it never had enough to sustain its publication. Although short-lived, it published a distinguished roster of writers and photographers. Weegee (Arthur Fellig) was in the second issue, June 19, 1940, with a photo of a car wreck, and many of his most frequently reproduced pictures appeared in PM, such as "The Critic, Opening Night at the Metropolitan Opera" (Nov. 22, 1943) and "Their First Murder" (Oct. 9, 1941). The images are shown as

prints and in yellowing pages from the paper. At PM, Margaret Bourke-White and Mary Morris became the first female press photographers on staff at a daily paper in the U.S. Several of Lisette Model's portraits from "Promenade des Anglais (Nice, French Rivera)" (1937) ran with an article about prewar European decadence, and Helen Levitt's signature "Third Ave., Upper East Side, Offers no Trees or Cliffs for Kids to Climb, but Porch of Abandoned Building is Excellent

Substitute" (July-August 1940) was used to advocate for more parks. Morris Engel, Irving Haberman and Arthur Leipzig were PM photographers whose reputations continue, but those in the show such as Leo Leib, Max Peter Haas and Gene Badger, competent but forgotten photojournalists, also contributed their share of politicians, crooks, sports figures and babes in bathing suits to PM's pages. Mr. Meyers writes on photography for the Journal.



'The Esposito Episode. Heroic Taxi Driver, Leonard Weisberg, Lying Dead at Deadly "Mad Dog" Shoot-Out in Manhattan' (1941), by Max Peter Haas, is on display at Steven Kasher Gallery.

THE ESTATE OF FRED STEIN/ROSENBERG & CO.

PAUL RAPHAELSON/FRONT ROOM GALLERY

STEVEN KASHER GALLERY, NEW YORK