

STORE WINDOWS AS PUBLIC ART:
FRANKLIN FURNACE AND THE WINDOW WORKS SERIES, 1976-1984

BY

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Introduction

I think universally artists saw the window as having the same potential as a broadcast medium as an artist book which could be mailed and bought cheaply by anybody. You didn't have to be a rich person to buy this kind of art. The whole concept being that the purpose of art is to change ideas and the way to get to regular people is through cheap publications, or maybe postering or maybe street actions or maybe broadcasting the idea through the window.

– Martha Wilson¹

It was 1976 when Martha Wilson, artist and soon-to-be Founding Director of the Franklin Furnace moved into 112 Franklin Street in the Tribeca area of Manhattan. Wilson needed a place to live and envisioned opening up a bookstore for artists' books on the ground floor of the building where she like others at 112 Franklin would work and live. This was common for the times as real estate laws allowed for the Downtown art world to live in lofts and large commercial spaces in SoHo and Tribeca. On April 3, 1976, Wilson opened Franklin Furnace, the name coined by neighbor Willoughby Sharp. While one might wonder how a furnace relates to a bookstore, Wilson shares in an interview with scholar, Toni Sant that the name was meant to represent a "hothouse for artists' ideas, a place where ideas create light and heat."²

After just a couple months, it became clear that the Franklin Furnace could not just operate as a bookstore and the space became a nonprofit organization, evolving into a more museum or gallery-like space for archiving artists' books and also eventually a venue for exhibitions and performance. This was in part a result of ongoing discussions Wilson had with another artist space in New York City, Printed Matter. Both organizations were founded in 1976 and focused on artists' books so it was clear that making a distinction between the two would be most advantageous for each respective organization. Although Martha Wilson was and still is a

¹ Martha Wilson, interview with author, April 29, 2019.

² Toni Sant and Martha Wilson, "Franklin Furnace and Martha Wilson: On a Mission to Make the World Safe for Avantgarde Art (Art and Real Estate: Interview Part 1)," *The Drama Review* 49, no. 1 (2005): 29.

powerhouse, she knew that this venture couldn't be completed by herself. This is where Jacki Apple, artist and Franklin Furnace's first and last Curator of Exhibitions and Performances comes into the story.³ Ideologically, it didn't seem right for Wilson to also handle the curatorial program while running the Franklin Furnace. In an interview, Wilson explains that Apple was "the arbiter of taste."⁴ Martha Wilson "didn't want [her] personal taste to be what was being broadcast to the public."⁵

During the heyday of artist-run spaces and alternative art organizations in New York, artists and art workers utilized what they had and were quite creative with how they exhibited artworks. In *Artist Spaces* edited by Gabriele Detterer and Maurizio Nannucci, pioneering spaces besides Franklin Furnace in New York include (but are not limited to) Printed Matter, The Kitchen, A.I.R. and P.S1 Contemporary Art Center.⁶ This was a period of nonconformity, unconventionality and artistic freedom. The Franklin Furnace was no exception. In an interview with Martha Wilson, she shares some details about the neighborhood environment surrounding the Franklin Furnace during 1976:

Tribeca means triangle below Canal Street, which is a stupid name, but that's what the real estate people gave us. And pretty much everybody lived below 14th Street in Tribeca or SoHo or Chinatown or the East Village. Brooklyn was not a thing yet and Jersey City was not a thing yet. People lived in Lower Manhattan. Lower Manhattan had been not abandoned exactly but the businesses of Lower Manhattan had started to go under. On my street there was a spice business and fabric refolding, I didn't even know what that was till I got to the neighborhood. But for example, you get acres and acres of cloth and then they put it on bolts, measure it and put it on a bolt. And then it's a salable unit of fabric. So fabric refolding, produce, eggs. There were two diners where we could get food. There was no laundromat, we had to go to the West Village to do our laundry. The West Village being much more civilized than Tribeca, Tribeca was an industrial section

³ Jacki Apple was formally given this title by Martha Wilson in 1977.

⁴ Martha Wilson, interview with author, April 29, 2019.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Gabriele Detterer, "The Spirit and Culture of Artist- Run Spaces," in *Artist-Run Spaces: Nonprofit Collective Organizations in the 1960s and 1970s*, (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2012), 12-13.

of town.⁷

Inside the Franklin Furnace, the physical space included a constructed deck space for offices and living, the basement which was home to many historic performances, a decent sized space on the ground level for exhibitions, built in cabinets that would also become a space for exhibitions (known as Cabinet Shows) and finally, a large, 10-foot-tall storefront window. Jacki Apple, who wanted to use every inch of the space that she could, saw this window as a valuable broadcast medium and thus the Window Works series commenced, becoming a staple of the curatorial program at the Furnace from the inception of the series until the organization went virtual in the late 1990s.

Beginning around the early 1970s, alternative artist spaces, activist groups, and artist collectives such as Franklin Furnace, Printed Matter and Fashion Moda began utilizing the store window as a powerful screen for public art. The storefront window program at the Franklin Furnace is a noteworthy case study as the storefront window was utilized for live performance, video art, sound and light projections, uniquely activating the window space. So far in my own study of alternative art organizations and spaces who used the window for public art, the Franklin Furnace is an outlier considering the diverse mediums represented and the overall distinctive utilization of their storefront window. These store window installations function as public art and also fall into the category of streetworks, a medium popularized by activist artists during the late twentieth century.⁸

Over the course of my research, I have yet to come across any scholarship on the window program at the Franklin Furnace. Although well-known artists in today's art world such as Jenny

⁷ Martha Wilson, interview with author, April 29, 2019.

⁸ For a more detailed discussion of streetworks in New York City, see Alan W. Moore, "Political Postmodernism: Of Streets and Museums," in *Art Gangs: Protest and Counterculture in New York City*, (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 2011) 109-140.

Holzer were featured in the program, the public nature of these installations might have deemed these works less than worthy to art historians in comparison to artworks housed in traditional art spaces such as museums or galleries. The art historical canon has still failed to recognize the influence and impact of alternative art structures of the late twentieth century, which may also likely boil down to the ephemeral qualities of these organizations. Many of these organizations are no longer in operation, which can complicate finding primary source materials especially during tough times such as the global pandemic we are all currently living in. The proliferation of these alternative structures produced a rich art community and new outlets for art to be seen. Reflecting on the resiliency of artist run spaces in the 1970's and 1980's, Jacki Apple expertly captures the spirit of these spaces during the period:

It was a good time, the best of times in fact, the last time in 20th-century America when artists empowered themselves and created the contexts in which their work was seen, written about, and produced. As a generation of artists we utilized the counterculture values we came of age with to create an alternative to the establishment art world. We created a community of visual artists, dancers, musicians, and poets in which we made new kinds of spaces to meet the needs of a new aesthetic. We were both artists and curators and we shaped the discourse around our work by writing about each other. We had no money and it didn't matter.⁹

Approaching the Franklin Furnace and the Window Works Series

In this thesis, Franklin Furnace's Window Works series will be analyzed from its inception in 1976 to 1984. During this eight-year period, the curation of the storefront window program shifted from Jacki Apple, the sole curator, to a peer panel review system as a result of Apple moving to Los Angeles. This thesis will be the first attempt to begin to examine, analyze and historicize the window program at Franklin Furnace. By zooming in on the first eight years of

⁹ Jacki Apple, "A Different World: A Personal History of Franklin Furnace," *The Drama Review* 49, no. 1 (2005): 37.

the Window Works series and comparing and contrasting the curatorial approaches to the series, the author contends that looking at Franklin Furnace's window program from 1976 to 1984 provides a valuable insight into often political, *always* provocative, public artworks from the twentieth-century that have yet to be examined in scholarship. This thesis aims to be generative as opposed to conclusive.

I will chronologically approach the discussion of the artworks and artists featured in the Window Work Series. The artists include: Sharon Kulik, Dara Birnbaum, Ann Messner, Jenny Holzer, Earl Ripling, Fernando de Filippi, Lois B. Polanski, Beverly Naidus, Sydney Blum, Janet Henry, Marc Blane, Dominic Alleluia, Susan Mogul, Richard McGuire, Crash, Daze and Brad Melamed. The first chapter will analyze the installations and performances in the Window Works under the curatorial direction of Jacki Apple from 1976 to 1980. The second chapter will focus on the Window Works series from 1980 to 1984 curated by a peer panel review system. Finally, in the conclusion of the thesis, the author will consider the similarities and differences of the curatorial approaches to the WindowWorks program. Through writing about and analyzing histories that have challenged the traditional modes of viewing art, the author will argue that the Window Works program at Franklin Furnace should be recognized within the canons of art history and should thus appear in related scholarship about public art and activism during the period. Conversations and interviews with Martha Wilson, Jacki Apple and artists featured in the program along with digitally obtaining necessary materials on Artstor and the Franklin Furnace Event Archives have made studying the Window Works program possible.

It should also be noted that throughout this thesis I refer to the Franklin Furnace as an alternative space. As Julie Ault describes in her book, *Alternative Art New York, 1965-1985: A Cultural Politics Book for the Social Text Collective*, the "use of the terms *alternative*, *marginal*,

and *oppositional* have been historically regarded as problematic by participants in the arena because these terms inscribe and promote a hierarchical understanding of the art field as a system.”¹⁰ But on the same note, Ault writes “I find alternative to be useful as a general term because it declares historical and critical relations between the structures thus classified and the then-existing institutions and practices.”¹¹ For much of the twentieth century, the formal New York art world primarily privileged figural arts made by mostly cisgender heterosexual white men so alternative structures inevitably formed, allowing for greater inclusion and a diversity of mediums and identities. Organizations such as the Franklin Furnace, Printed Matter and Fashion Moda utilized the spaces they had (or that they could occupy for the time being) to center artworks from a period of rebellion and experimentation from a vibrant community of artists, activists and cultural workers who operated from beyond the restrained walls of traditional art museums and galleries.

Storefront Window Displays: An Abbreviated History

Storefront window displays can be traced back all the way to the nineteenth century. These displays created the concept of window-shopping, and ever since the early twentieth century department stores such as Macy’s have utilized alluring window displays to entice onlookers to come inside to buy. Window displays and other forms of visual merchandising flourished in this new era of conspicuous consumption in Western civilization. The holidays are perhaps the most important time of year for storefront window displays since the genesis of the window display. To this day, people from all

¹⁰ Julie Ault, “For the Record,” in *Alternative Art New York, 1965-1985: A Cultural Politics Book for the Social Text Collective*, (New York: Drawing Center, 2002), 4.

¹¹ Ault, “For the Record,” *Alternative Art New York, 1965-1985*, 4.

over the country flock to metropolitan cities like New York and Chicago to see window displays fashioned by prominent retailers like Saks Fifth Avenue, Barney's and Bergdorf Goodman.

The avant-garde nature of Franklin Furnace's window program places the windows within a category all their own. Unlike major department stores of the period that utilized their windows as capitalistic tools for materialistic consumption, Franklin Furnace utilized the storefront window as a screen for ephemeral forms of art, which were often provocative in their nature. Alternative art organizations such as Franklin Furnace and Printed Matter radicalized the practice and culture of window displays in New York during the late twentieth century.

In a 1986 *New York Times* article, Grace Glueck examines window displays in New York City crafted by artists. While there were numerous window displays by artists around the city, the majority of the installations were apolitical. At Tiffany's artists including Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg provided backdrops for their 57th Street and Fifth Avenue store window. The program was curated by Gene Moore and dedicated to emerging artists, "with no other showcase for their work."¹² There was also a window series by artists on White Street entitled "Windows on White," but "the owners of the business [were] wary of shows dealing with such themes as religion, politics and nudity."¹³ Franklin Furnace's windows were public artworks that incited public interaction and allowed onlookers the opportunity to often deliberate on important social and political issues of the period such as sexism, racism, unemployment and gentrification.

¹² Grace Glueck, "Through A Glass Brightly: Artists' Creations Abound in City's Windows," *New York Times*, April 25, 1986. <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/04/25/arts/through-a-glass-brightly-artists-creations-abound-in-city-s-windows.html>.

¹³ Glueck, "Through A Glass Brightly: Artists' Creations Abound in City's Windows," *New York Times*.

Chapter One

Jacki Apple: The First *and* Last Curator of Exhibitions and Performances, 1976-1980

I think the average passerby who is not particularly involved in, say, the neighborhood as an art zone, probably didn't pay much attention to the space if there was nothing to see, if they were just walking past until the Window Works. And so in that sense, I viewed the Window Works conceptually, especially in 1978, as a political act in a way, it's like, OK, we're here, we have all this esoteric material and these performances and but how do we make it interactive? What happens when you don't have to come inside to see art? – Jacki Apple¹⁴

Jacki Apple sought to bring artwork to the street via the Window Works series, an installation series that took place within the large storefront window at the Franklin Furnace. The window at the Franklin Furnace allowed for a democratic experience of viewing art from the sidewalk, car or from afar after stepping out of the local diner. The series curated and initiated by Jacki Apple allowed for art to be seen from the streets in the busy, industrial neighborhood of Tribeca in Lower Manhattan. In the excerpt from an interview above, Apple alludes to the political qualities of a curatorial program such as the Window Works series which will be considered throughout this chapter.

Before studying the installations curated by Jacki Apple, it will be useful to map out how the Window Works series originated. Apple's curatorial approach and own background will also be considered to provide more context for the series and for Apple as a figure. The Window Works series under the curatorial direction of Apple featured early career installations from various artists who have still have active and enduring legacies within the art world today. Artists presented in Apple's curation of the series include: Sharon Kulik, Dara Birnbaum, Ann Messner, Jenny Holzer, Earl Ripling, Fernando de Filippi, Lois B. Polanski, and Beverly Naidus.¹⁵ It

¹⁴ Jacki Apple, interview with author, December 9, 2020.

¹⁵ This list was compiled from my own research.

should also be noted that beyond the Window Works series, the Franklin Furnace was a space that graced many early career artists who are prominent within the larger art world today. Artists featured included: Barbara Kruger, Michael Smith, Kathy Acker, Constance De Jong, Mierle Ukeles, Barbara Bloom, Alice Aycock, Larry Miller, Dara Birnbaum, Lynne Tillman, John Malpede, Ana Mendieta, Ida Applebroog, Stuart Sherman, and Nigel Rolfe.¹⁶ As Jacki Apple usefully mentions, the Franklin Furnace also presented artists who were already well known due to their contributions in the 1960's. Well known figures within the art world who showed at the Franklin Furnace included: Simone Forti, Alison Knowles, Dick Higgins, Geoff Hendricks, Philip Corner, Jackson MacLow, Carolee Schneemann, John Cage, Lee Breuer, Joan Jonas.¹⁷

This will be the first time the Window Works at the Franklin Furnace have been considered in scholarship. Finding resources that discuss these works are few and far in between. As a result, I interviewed several artists from this iteration of the Window Works series to allow for a richer study. This is an attempt to begin the conversation on these works and bring visibility to public artworks that existed in an ecosystem of public art that has yet to be written about. These are valuable histories that need to be inscribed before their ephemeral qualities allow them to slip into the past and are only accessible through archival research.

Apple's Path to Curating

As Jacki Apple recounts in her article, "A Different World: A Personal History of Franklin Furnace," her involvement and contributions to the Franklin Furnace all began on a chilly December night in 1975. After viewing the space on Franklin Street, Martha Wilson took a walk

¹⁶ Jacki Apple, "A Different World: A Personal History of Franklin Furnace," *The Drama Review* 49, no. 1 (2005): 41.

¹⁷ Apple, "A Different World: A Personal History of Franklin Furnace," *The Drama Review*, 41.

with Apple and revealed her enthusiasm about the opportunities this space could offer. Wilson then asked Apple if she could help her take on the project and Apple was eager to step in. This was very much the spirit of artist spaces during the 1960s and 1970s; many artists had a can-do attitude and formed community with other like-minded peers within the alternative art spheres in New York and internationally.

The duo first met through Lucy Lippard's *c. 7500* exhibition which featured conceptual art by women artists such including Adrian Piper, Agnes Denes and Mierle Laderman Ukeles. Lippard's catalogue consisted of 30 index cards and each artist featured in the exhibition utilized the front and back of one card. It makes sense that this catalogue would eventually bring Apple and Wilson together as their works featured similar themes. Lucy Lippard explains in the *c. 7500* catalogue how the works surprisingly could be "divided into quite distinct parts" with Apple and Wilson being placed in the same category alongside other artists whose "work deal[t] with transformation, primarily of the self."¹⁸ Martha shares how the duo was first connected early on in their careers:

So I go through these note cards and there are all these women who are doing work like I'm doing that I never even heard of them before. So I wrote to Lucy, got Jacki's address, started corresponding with Jacki, went to New York to plan a performance. We did a performance in December of 1973 starting at the Plaza Hotel then we took a limo and went down to SoHo. It was called *Transformance* and it was Jacki and four or five of her friends and me inventing a person, inventing a woman whom we all aspired to be but didn't feel like we could be. So we were taking her out to lunch where we thought she would be comfortable, taking her to the gallery so that she could look at the art.¹⁹

At the start of her tenure at Franklin Furnace, Apple had not yet assumed the role of Curator of Exhibitions and Performances; instead she worked as the salesperson for the

¹⁸ "C. 7,500 : an exhibition organized by Lucy R. Lippard," Printed Matter, accessed April 2, 2021. <https://www.printedmatter.org/catalog/tables/17521/20284>.

¹⁹ Martha Wilson, interview with author, April 29, 2019.

bookshop. During the nascent stages of the Franklin Furnace, Apple notes that “no one was getting any salary, although Martha hoped that the Furnace would eventually become the means to sustain ourselves and our art, without having to suffer the indignities of working in the uptown.”²⁰ Prior to working at the Franklin Furnace, Apple had already been living and working in the art and fashion fields in New York. Apple held positions at fashion houses including the Arkin Foundation, Kelita, Aileen, Villager, Jones New York and Calvin Klein. In the fashion industry, Apple’s work duties ranged from fashion design, graphic design, art direction, copywriting, photo styling as well as producing and stage managing fashion shows. Within the spheres of art in New York, Apple served as Co-Director at Apple from 1969 to 1974, an alternative artist-run space founded by Billy Apple. In 1971, while Jacki Apple working at Apple, she began her feminist conceptual performance and installation art practice.²¹

Shortly after the Furnace assumed nonprofit status, Wilson and Apple had a conversation on how to divvy up responsibilities. Since the organization was going to function as a gallery space, someone needed to curate. This is when Jacki began managing the curatorial program at the Furnace. A couple months later in June 1976, a pivotal moment occurred when a young artist from Paris, Martine Aballea stepped into the space to show her books. This encounter would influence the curatorial program at the Franklin Furnace for years to come. Jacki Apple notes that this initial meeting with Aballea sparked the idea for a reading. In an interview, Jacki recalls that she had this “idea [that] we could have artist readings or like readings slash performances, and then we would add that into the mix with the exhibition.” Aballea seemed reserved about the idea but Apple’s can-do nature that aligns with the community spirit of alternative spaces proved to win over the Parisian artist. Apple explains that:

²⁰ Jacki Apple, “A Different World: A Personal History of Franklin Furnace,” 40.

²¹ Jacki Apple, email message to author, April 29, 2021.

She was kind of like, oh, I don't know, I'm too shy. I said, oh, I'll do it with you... and my friend Erin Martin, who's a dancer and she's a great performer. We'll kind of stage it and you'll have fun and we'll do it in the front room and we'll just open the doors and it was great. You know, we did it on an afternoon and people just came in from the street. Various people were invited and told about it. And that was the beginning of what would become the performance series. Artists who write, artists who make books, artists from a cross-section of aesthetics and disciplines.²²

That first reading led to many, many readings, performances and exhibitions. This was a historical moment as it marks the beginning of the performance program at Franklin Furnace. Aballea's performance along with pivotal conversations with Martha and the Furnace community set Apple on the path to curatorial work at the Franklin Furnace and beyond. The performance program grew rather quickly as the Furnace gained popularity with multiple performances a week.

Apple was concerned with showing diverse works in terms of materials and aesthetic. She explains her curatorial policy was open and she created space for anyone who walked through the door. Apple writes that, "even if an artist didn't get to show, it was important that she was treated with respect, and the experience of showing her work to someone was a dialog, a good exchange between artists, not a humiliating experience- which was so often the case with commercial galleries."²³ The curatorial ethos that Apple followed was very in touch with artist run spaces at the time which were far more inclusive than the traditional art world. This thinking followed all aspects of her curatorial work; for example, Apple's goal for exhibitions was to:

²² Jacki Apple, interview with author, December 9, 2020.

²³ Jacki Apple, "A Different World: A Personal History of Franklin Furnace," 41.

choose the most exciting work in each genre-sculptural books, conceptual books, handmade paper books, photo/text books, painters' books, fiber and textile books, object books-stretching the definition of "book" as far as possible. We dared to show "edgy" unpredictable, and sometimes difficult work, as well as elegant, beautifully crafted, and poetic work. Raw, brazen, political, satirical, sexy, or just hilarious art could all be part of the mix. Thus the Furnace became known for a willingness to experiment, rather than for representing any one group or style. There was always the possibility of being surprised by something totally outside of one's expectations. In that sense the Furnace as a "site in process" was very much an artwork in itself.²⁴

As Franklin Furnace grew and Apple's curatorial ethos developed, the space became a site for artists' books, performance, film and video, public art and other forms of artmaking.

The Birth of the Window Works series

The Window Works series at the Franklin Furnace grew out of necessity and curatorial creativity. Jacki Apple was determined to show a broad view of art from American and international artists who were working in different mediums and aesthetic styles. As a result, the large storefront window at the Franklin Furnace was activated as a screen for public art allowing anyone who was walking down the street the opportunity to view art. Apple shares her realization of the window as exhibition:

I realized that we had these front windows, these huge glass windows, and they weren't being used. So it seemed to me that we ought to have commissioned artists, or have them come up with an idea that would address the windows as an exhibition space, and then part of the concept also had to do with using inside and outside. So people would experience the Window Works who might never have entered the Furnace. Or had any concept of even what an artist book was.²⁵

²⁴ Apple, 43.

²⁵ Jacki Apple, interview with author, December 9, 2020.

Considering that the Franklin Furnace was a space for experimental and highly conceptual artworks, the audiences who entered the Furnace were working in similar fields. As a result, those passing by the space would likely not know what to think of it or possibly feel inhibited about venturing into the space to check it out. In this manner, Apple's use of the window brought art into the street. I understand this as an offering to passersby and the people working and living around Tribeca. And as Apple notes, these folks didn't even have to understand what an artists' book was to experience the Window Works.

By bringing art into to the streets, Apple allowed for an accessible way to view art that was free and could be viewed day or night. Instead of having to trek uptown to see artworks at an art museum, Apple brought provocative art from early career artists to the neighborhood allowing for a new way to interact with art. Instead of utilizing the storefront window as screen for commodity, she saw the window as an opportunity for artistic engagement.

Like Jacki Apple, I understand the Window Works series as a political act. Especially for those who didn't know what Franklin Furnace was or might have been intimidated by entering art spaces or museums, the window offered an opportunity to interact with art from the sidewalk. After feeling connected to or provoked by a window installation, a passerby might feel empowered to come into the Furnace and check out the space. Many of the window installations presented by Apple had qualities that called for viewing them from the outside and inside which also might have compelled viewers to come in so that they could fully take in the work. This could have been impactful for viewers notably audiences who weren't up to date on the current

trends in artistic publishing or art in generally. The Window Works series helped bring visibility to the Furnace while also promoting accessibility and art for all.

Apple's Window Works

As stated earlier on, the purpose of this thesis is to generate scholarly attention to a series of public artworks that engaged with audiences from the streets via the storefront window of the Franklin Furnace. Doing research on this topic during the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging considering the temporary (and in some cases, permanent) closures of many centers for research. It should also be mentioned that these window installations were infrequently written about when they were exhibited. As a result of these challenges, I knew that getting in touch with artists individually could provide primary resource materials that have proven to be invaluable during these uncertain times for research and the production of scholarship.

This examination of the works featured in Jacki Apple's curation of the window from 1978 to 1980 serves as the first attempt to study and document this curatorial series in scholarship. Chapter two will continue looking at how the peer review panel curated the Window Works series from 1980 to 1984. Some discussions of the individual installations are lengthier than others highlighting the impetus for continued research on this series. By breaking ground with these simultaneously old *and* new installations, I hope to foster interest from scholars working in similar fields as a means of continuing and building on this research. If these histories on the diverse artworks shown at these alternative art organizations aren't inscribed and written about, future communities will miss out on learning from those who came before us to rebel against the hegemonic nature of the traditional art world.

According to my research thus far, Sharon Kulik was the first artist to be featured in the Window Works series. In February of 1978, the storefront window was first activated as a powerful medium for broadcasting ideas out into the public, literally onto Franklin Street. Fitting for an artist-run space that encouraged artistic innovation and new media, Kulik's window installation was a film playing on a loop. Within the spheres of storefront windows as public art, the Franklin Furnace and Kulik broke barriers in terms of what could be shown from behind a window. Her film, *Breaking Through* (Figure 1) was shown in the window in conjunction with another film the artist was showing inside the space. Although watching *Breaking Through* is not a possibility presently, it's wonderful to think of the film playing in the storefront window. This was quite an exciting start to a unique curatorial program at the Franklin Furnace.

Two months later on April 11, 1978, Dara Birnbaum was featured in the Window Works series. Martha Wilson confirms that Birnbaum's work, *(Reading) Versus (Reading Into)* (Figure 2) was the only installation at the Franklin Furnace that utilized the neighbors' transom window above their door at 113 Franklin.²⁶ The rest of *(Reading) Versus (Reading Into)* utilizes the transom above the Furnace and only takes up about a quarter of the storefront window. By placing the images of "three men seated and reading" in an easy-to-follow line, a passerby would be able to take in the work more easily.²⁷ The installation has a cinematic quality and Birnbaum extended the narrative in a text-based fashion inside the Franklin Furnace. According to the Franklin Furnace Event Archives, "viewed from inside, the banner displays quoted text from Martha Wilson regarding the inner political and organizational workings of Franklin Furnace."²⁸

²⁶ Martha Wilson, interview with author, April 29, 2019.

²⁷ "*(Reading) Versus (Reading Into)* Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed March 15, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

²⁸ "*(Reading) Versus (Reading Into)* Record," Franklin Furnace, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

Birnbaum's installation lends to a reading of sorts from the left to right in a fashion similar to the Western tradition of reading text from left to right. Appropriately, many of the artists featured in the Window Works series were working within the tradition of artists' books in their art practices. The window at Franklin Furnace functioned similarly to a page of the book, the large glass "page" was open and visible for the public to witness who might have been walking to the courthouse or grabbing a coffee from the diner.

In October of '78, Ann Messner, who currently works as a Professor of Fine Arts at Pratt Institute, was included in the storefront window program at the Franklin Furnace. Messner, who previously was doing performance work in New York City subways and other public spaces, had her first ever exhibition at the Franklin Furnace. For her untitled Window Works installation referred to by the Franklin Furnace as [Performance with Amplified Typing], Messner used the opportunity to perform a durational performance. According to the artist, she sat in the Franklin Furnace (Figure 3) each day for a week, typing on a typewriter.²⁹ The sound of Messner's typing on the typewriter was amplified with a speaker and projected onto Franklin Street (Figure 4). This was not a faint sound that you had to closely put your ears near the windows of the Furnace to hear; it was so loud in fact that it caused the storefront window to shake.³⁰ Messner's installation is another prime example of the aesthetic diversity and originality of the Window Works program at the Franklin Furnace. Works such as Messner's emphasize Apple's investment in showing diverse works of art. [Performance with Amplified Typing] explores the nature of the outside/inside and public/ private qualities of the storefront window program at the

²⁹ Ann Messner, interview with author, December 22, 2020.

³⁰ Ann Messner, interview with author, December 22, 2020.

Franklin Furnace which was made available to artists as a means of artistic exploration and freedom.

While walking down Franklin Street one day, Jacki Apple spotted powerful posters that offered commanding aphorisms made by a young woman artist.³¹ These posters were made by none other than Jenny Holzer, who today is widely regarded today for her text-based artworks. After noticing these posters, Apple went directly to the source and asked Holzer if she wanted to be featured in the Window Works series at the Franklin Furnace. Holzer happily obliged as this happened to be her first ever exhibition.³² *Truisms (1977–79)* was exhibited as a part of the Window Works series in December 1978 and Holzer used every morsel of the space offered to her. Similar in fashion to the posters Jacki Apple found on the streets, *Truisms (1977–79)* was a text-based artwork that featured brief aphorisms written by the artist. In alphabetical order, Holzer’s *Truisms* ranged from “DON’T PLACE TOO MUCH TRUST IN EXPERTS” to “ABUSE OF POWER COMES AS NO SURPRISE.” Holzer’s *Truisms (1977–79)* took up the door transoms above the door of the Franklin Furnace in addition to the double doors (Figure 5). The installation also made use of the large storefront window which was vandalized only a few days after being installed (Figure 6).³³ As illustrated in the photograph of the incident, the window was not completely broken but it was a decent break in the glass which caused cracking throughout and the need for the window to be replaced (Figure 7).

Over the duration of the Franklin Furnace being open as a physical space, this was the only incident in the organization’s history when vandalism occurred. Jacki Apple’s framing of the incident is convincing as it does appear that the vandal was attempting to make a clear

³¹ Jacki Apple, interview with author, December 9, 2020.

³² Jenny Holzer, interview with author, February 8, 2021.

³³ Jacki Apple, interview with author, December 9, 2020.

message. This happenstance was not random; in fact, the viewer of the work obviously interacted with the work because they damaged the window through Holzer's line that read, "BOREDOM MAKES YOU DO CRAZY THINGS." This direct choice of destruction "became a kind of art action in which the viewer becomes a performer in the piece" and "it became an interactive work." While it's unclear who vandalized the window or why they did it, the story of Jenny Holzer's installation has become a story that sounds like it almost too unusual to be true. While Martha Wilson and Jacki Apple have differing opinions and slightly divergent stories, the *Truisms (1977–79)* installation will always remain as an extraordinary happening at the Franklin Furnace.

In a similar mode to Holzer, the Window Works series graced another artist who was working with text in their artistic practice. This time that artist was Earl Ripling who showed his installation, *By Comparison ... Another Installed Story* (Figure 9) in September of 1979. Ripling was the first artist in the series to have already shown at the Franklin Furnace previously to showing a Window Works installation. His first showing at the Furnace was an exhibition inside the space; Ripling exhibited *He Walked by a Neighborhood He Once Lived in to His Typewriter on the...* which was a "narrative, sequential photo poem of 14 conceptual expressions."³⁴ Once centers for research are open to public again, looking at archival materials on Ripling's engagement with the Franklin Furnace would allow for a richer study of Ripling's works.

Following in a similar format for his storefront window installation, Ripling's *By Comparison ... Another Installed Story* utilized photo and text to create a narrative for viewers to follow from outside and inside the walls (Figure 10) of the Franklin Furnace. Through narrative and portraiture, Ripley offered a story for those walking by the space. From the outside, Ripling

³⁴ "He Walked by a Neighborhood He Once Lived in to His Typewriter on the... Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed March 16, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

shared two photographs which only featured the feet of the subject, one of the figures wearing sneakers asks “IS BEING HERE STRANGE FOR YOU?” The corresponding image featuring a figure wearing flats responds with, “NOT STRANGE JUST DIFFERENT.” Ripling continues this narrative work on the inside of the window with two photographs of hands holding up a notecard. The photograph on the left reveals, “HIS TRICK DIDN’T WORK. I KNOW HE WANTED TO THROW ME OFF GUARD BUT IT DIDN’T WORK.” To the right, the accompanying photograph discloses, “SHE’D NEVER TELL ME ANYWAYS; SHE’S TOO SHREWD FOR THAT.”

As the Event Archives record description asserts “by displaying different images inside and outside, Ripling sets up a situation to play with differences between what ones says and what one thinks.”³⁵ Ripling’s photographs featured on the outside of the Furnace is also striking from a contemporary perspective in relation to smartphone photography and social media trends. As a contemporary viewer, Ripling’s work could possibly be understood as an early, pre-social media era precursor of the #fromwhereistand photo trend on Instagram. Currently on Instagram, the #fromwhereistand hashtag has been tagged in over 6 million posts on the platform. This connection to contemporary visual culture seemed too apt not to be discussed in relation to Ripling’s Window Works installation. This unique style of portraiture can be very telling and robust by itself without the need for other bodily expressions to aid in understanding an artists’ intended narrative.

Fernando de Filippi was the first international artist to be shown in the Window Works series, making his debut on October 30, 1979. De Filippi is an Italian artist who was working with language in artists’ books, posters and his installation at the Franklin Furnace, *Slogan*

³⁵ “By Comparison ... Another Installed Story Record,” Franklin Furnace, accessed March 16, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

(Figure 11) which can be understood as an extension of the book. The text-based installation follows a similar aesthetic such as Ripling and Holzer's installations for the series. In the press release for his Window Works installation, de Filippi explains the title and concept for his work: "I have used the slogan as a significant form of language because it is generally destined to provoke a precise reaction—"buy," "vote," etc... Even when these are not immediately translated into action, they provoke various actions and reactions that, on the whole, reflect the habits of society."³⁶ He also mentions that his installation aimed to "[analyze] two sides of perception: 1) the inner side of the art system 2) the outer or exterior aspect."³⁷ Playing off this idea about perception, de Filippi astutely utilizes the inside (Figure 12) and outside format of the storefront window, allowing viewers to view his slogans from two different vantage points.

The first Window Work installation in 1980 was Lois B. Polansky's *Bookware Series* (Figure 13) in January of that year. This installation is very much informed by the book, quite literally. The windows of the Franklin Furnace were covered with pages embedded with leaves and plant materials (Figure 14). A leaf represents the cyclical lifecycle of the natural world; it transforms from a sprout to full grown and eventually falls to the ground, changing from green to brown. In a press release for her joint exhibition with Saribenne Stone at the Franklin Furnace, Polansky works sought to "indicate a sustained interest in three themes: change and transformation in reality, personal experience and the creative process." Later on, the release also mentions how Polansky's "books serve as metaphors for the artist herself and in that context, archetypal associations to women/plant forms/weaving/barkcloth/decoration, etc., become meaningful. These works are superimpositions of art, life and dreams created to be shared with

³⁶ "Slogan Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed March 18, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

³⁷ "Slogan Record," Franklin Furnace, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

the viewer.”³⁸ When possible, it would be invaluable to study Lois B. Polansky’s artists’ books to further investigate this Window Works installation.

Beverly Naidus was the last artist selected by Jacki Apple for the Window Works series. Naidus was also the first person who worked at the Franklin Furnace to be featured in this distinct curatorial program. By the time *Apply Within* was up in March of 1980, Naidus was no longer working at the Franklin Furnace as the publicist. During this period of her life, Naidus was unemployed and going through the process of looking for jobs and applying for governmental assistance. Directly informed by these experiences, she created *Apply Within* to interact with others in the world who might also be looking for a new job. The installation that appeared behind the storefront window was rather simple but very effective. Similar in concept to the governmental agencies around the city who plastered messages on their facades to urge unemployed people to come in to apply for work, Beverly Naidus put similar messages that attracted unemployed hopefuls to come inside the Franklin Furnace.³⁹ Those looking for a job would surely be compelled by incentives such as paid vacation or an increased level of income.

Part window installation and part social practice performance, Naidus sat in the Franklin Furnace and waited for interested folks to enter. In an interview with the author, Naidus shares the experience of those who entered the gallery and the sole visitor who was upset by *Apply Within*:

³⁸ “*Bookware Series* Record,” Franklin Furnace, accessed March 25, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fini/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

³⁹ Beverly Naidus, interview with the author, December 18, 2020.

People came across the threshold with their resumes, they didn't know it was an art gallery. They would sit down in one of the chairs, experience the audiotape, on the little platform in the window. There was a pressure sensitive button under the chair and the tape would turn on when they sat. And they would hear an interview. A kind of satirical one, because they would start laughing after a few minutes or a minute because it was only like a six-minute audio loop. They would often say to me, I don't know what that was, but I feel so much better, or that was the best job interview I ever had. You really know what it's like to be out of work. And I said, yeah, that's why I'm standing here. The only time that someone got pissed off was when I left to get coffee and someone filled in for me. And when someone came through the door looking for work and they said, this isn't an employment agency, this is an art gallery, there aren't really any jobs here. They got really angry because it's a risk when you cross the threshold, it makes you very vulnerable. And I never intended to upset people, I invited them in because I intuited that it would be healing for them to feel less alone in their job hunting – it was healing for me..”⁴⁰

As someone who lost their job due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I personally relate deeply to *Apply Within*. This is a piece that can resonate with many people over the course of their lives and especially in these tough times, it would be exciting to see a contemporary artist recreate this piece. Similar to those who actually experienced this work, *Apply Within* offers a sense of community to those in need of it. Conceptually Beverly Naidus' Window Works installation is exceptional and a further example of how Jacki Apple crafted the storefront window at the Franklin Furnace as a remarkably unique screen for broadcasting artists' ideas through mediums such as film, photography, sound, and performance. In 1980, *Apply Within* was recognized by art critics including Lucy Lippard in *Artforum*⁴¹ and Gylbert Coker in *Art in America*.⁴² To this day, Naidus continues working with the storefront window as a medium for broadcasting ideas within her art practice.⁴³

⁴⁰ Beverly Naidus, interview with the author, December 18, 2020.

⁴¹ Lucy R. Lippard, "Beverly Naidus," *Artforum* 18, no.10 (1980): 81-82.

⁴² Gylbert Coker, "'Apply Within' and 'Vigilance' at Franklin Furnace," *Art in America* 68, no. 7 (September 1980): 123—126.

⁴³ Naidus, interview with the author, December 18, 2020.

For Beverly Naidus and other early career artists, the storefront window program curated by Jacki Apple elevated and ignited their artistic careers. The Window Works series at the Franklin Furnace made it possible to circumvent the traditional museum system and bring art into the public sphere, free and available to anyone who has the agency and capacity to view it. There was no commodity or capitalistic function behind this curatorial series; Apple merely sought to use all of the space at the Franklin Furnace and highlight the vibrant nature of the American and international artistic community in the storefront window. The works presented by Jacki Apple reveal a diverse array of artists, aesthetics and mediums. The series experiments with the utilization of the storefront window as a formidable tool for broadcasting artists' ideas. From this perspective, I understand these works to be radical especially in comparison to artworks found within the walls of museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Museum of Modern Art at the time. Under the direction of Jacki Apple, the Window Works series was a force to be reckoned with within the spheres of storefront window installations organized by artist-run spaces, alternative art organizations and beyond.

Chapter Two

After Jacki Apple: The Peer Review Panel, 1980-1984

Jacki Apple left the Franklin Furnace for Los Angeles in 1980 to pursue new curatorial and artistic ventures which meant that the Furnace needed to carve out new curatorial practices.⁴⁴ This was a space for artists and by artists so it comes as little surprise that the next iteration of the curatorial program continued to be led by artists. Now instead of just one artist curating the program, the Franklin Furnace fashioned a peer review panel that would decide what was to be shown. Despite this shift in curatorial leadership, the Franklin Furnace continued to stay true to its roots as an artist-run space that fostered aesthetic diversity and artistic innovation. In this chapter, the curatorial program for the Window Works series from 1980 to 1984 will be examined. After studying the curatorial approach of the peer review panel, the individual Window Works installations will be considered as a means to continue shedding light on valuable public artworks from a lively ecosystem of artist-run spaces and alternative art organizations in New York City from the 1980s.

Art Curated by Artists: Franklin Furnace's Peer Panel Review

Curation through panels which are peer reviewed began in the 1980's at the Franklin Furnace and continues to be a practice for the organization to this today. Franklin Furnace has always served as a space that championed the avant-garde, ephemeral art and creativity from diverse populations. As Martha Wilson notes, the peer review panel at the Franklin Furnace was

⁴⁴ In fact, in 1998, Apple showed *Hidden Desires* in a storefront space at an upscale shopping mall in Pasadena, California. Utilizing the window as a medium to broadcast ideas became a part of Apple's oeuvre as well. Apple also went on to curate exhibitions at venues such as the Virginia Commonwealth University Gallery, Powerhouse Gallery, and the Williamson Gallery at the Art Center College of Design,

generally comprised of artists who had presented in some fashion or another at the space.⁴⁵ Even as time went on at the Furnace, Martha never felt as if her own taste should dictate in the program. The curatorial program at the Furnace under the direction of artists reflects what artists embody in their own works. Wilson also aptly explains how this has allowed for the space to echo the trends of concerns from artists from the culture wars to the AIDS crisis and beyond. By following this philosophy, the Franklin Furnace will always continue to be a vibrant, genuine light in the art world; a space where art will always be curated by artists, not art historians or museum workers.

As a result of the logistical difficulties and pauses for many centers of research during the pandemic, I wasn't able to find out just who served on the peer review panel for the Window Works series from 1980 to 1984. This investigation when research allows will provide a fruitful offering for further study. Hearing from those who helped curate the storefront window program at the Furnace would allow for a more nuanced understanding of the panel's thematic approach. Despite these research road bumps, I had the opportunity to interview Iris Rose who has a history of performing at the Franklin Furnace and served on the panel for the performance program in 1985. What was perhaps most illuminating about the conversation with Rose is how she described the curatorial liberty given to the peer review panel.⁴⁶ The panel for curation at the Franklin Furnace was not dictated by art historians, museum curators or the organization's board but instead by artists who already had a history with the Franklin Furnace. This process allowed for an energetic artistic program dictated by working artists who had a real understanding of the pulse of the art world.

⁴⁵ Martha Wilson, interview with the author, March 19, 2021.

⁴⁶ Iris Rose, interview with author, April 9, 2021.

The Peer Review Panel's Window Works

The first work featured in the Window Works series after Apple's curatorial tenure was by Mr. Mental; it was aptly titled *April Fool* (Figure 16) as it was first displayed on April 1, 1980. The storefront window installation was coupled with an exhibition inside with the artist and John Turturro. The press release from Franklin Furnace for *April Fool* also reveals that Mr. Mental was an artist working under that pseudonym to maintain anonymity.⁴⁷ The material nature of the paper displayed on the windows is discussed in the press release: "being on light sensitive paper, they will fade away during the exhibit." Paired with the anonymous nature of Mr. Mental, *April Fool* leaves the viewer with more questions than answers.

There was then a lull in the exhibition program for the Window Works series until January 3, 1981 when Dominic Alleluia presented an untitled installation that featured sculpture, light and sound (Figure 17). It's unclear why but according to the press release, the work was displayed in the storefront window of 102 Franklin Street rather than at the Franklin Furnace.⁴⁸ The record for the sculptural installation states the "work is comprised of television parts, light bulbs, a ship lamp, a fuse box, wood, and plexiglass."⁴⁹ What is most enticing about this work is that like many of the Window Works that Apple curated, Alleluia's installation interrogated the notion of what could be displayed behind the storefront window. Through light, sound and sculpture, Alleluia presents Franklin Street with an alluring public artwork.

⁴⁷ "April Fool Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed March 27, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

⁴⁸ "[sculpture and sound - window installation] Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed March 27, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

⁴⁹ "[sculpture and sound - window installation]," Franklin Furnace, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

On May 2, 1981 Sydney Blum and Janet Henry presented an untitled work that the Franklin Furnace Event Archives record describes as [Window Installation] (Figure 18). According to the record, “the work is an allegory for [an] artist's development.”⁵⁰ The press release also references that this was the second instance of Blum and Henry making work about the art world.⁵¹ Further research on the connections between those works would be useful for this study. The limited photographic documentation for this work also makes analysis difficult as the installation shots available are photographed from the inside of Franklin Furnace. While [Window Installation] can be viewed from the inside, it’s unclear if the artistic duo intended for it to be viewed from that perspective. This becomes a common thread while discussing the artworks featured in the peer review’s curation of the Window Works series.

A month later in June, Carol Meine’s *Curtains* was exhibited for the storefront window program (Figure 19). While the work can also be viewed from inside, the front and back are identical (Figure 20). The press release for *Curtains* points to a larger series that Meine was working on that sought “to literally alter an interior environment.” *Curtains* is successful in that it did alter the environment of the Franklin Furnace; it provided shade from the sunlight that often projected into the space. Aside from the utility of the work, it’s hard to pinpoint other ways in which Meine was transforming the environment of the Furnace. From a viewer’s perspective on the street, it makes the Franklin Furnace less appealing in terms of visibility and during the period it likely meant that the space just blended into the industrial neighborhood.

The following Window Works series installation, *Rubble Reconstruction Company* (Figure 21) by Marc Blane went up on October 7, 1981. The window coincided with an

⁵⁰ “*Curtains* Record,” Franklin Furnace, accessed March 30, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

⁵¹ “*Curtains*,” Franklin Furnace, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

exhibition at the Franklin Furnace which solely focused on Blane's company that he founded, *Rubble Reconstruction Company*. Blane is a native New Yorker and remains a part of the community of the Lower East Side. For Blane, art is most importantly a tool that can be used to teach and his *Rubble Reconstruction Company* functioned early on to engage with populations in surrounding New York City areas.⁵² Blane's storefront installation was a very simple concept and utilized a text-based message to provoke those who might have passed by and studied the work.

As the press release explains, "Blane challenges both urban megaplanners and their victims: 'For those of you above who look down, the crumbs you throw disintegrate before they reach us. For those of you below who look up, the action you've taken has not convinced us we need to do more'"⁵³ Blane's messages in the main storefront window probe the viewer, by placing the first message on top and the second on the bottom of the window while leaving a space in the middle. Looking directly at the middle of the window of Franklin Street, a viewer would encounter their own reflection and possibly deliberate on where they fall within the spectrum proposed by Blane. Although Blane's window installation was minimal by nature, I understand it to be one of the more interactive works from the peer review's curation of the Window Works program.

It wouldn't be until January 6th of 1982 that another Window Works installation was exhibited at Franklin Furnace. This installation was by Richard McGuire, who shares a connection with Beverly Naidus; to my knowledge, they are the only former employees of the Franklin Furnace to be featured in the Window Works series. Previously to showing at the

⁵² Marc Blane, interview with author, March 15, 2021.

⁵³ "*Rubble Reconstruction Company* Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed March 14, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

Franklin Furnace, McGuire worked as an intern and assisted with installing for exhibitions and performances. In 1982, McGuire mounted his own work at the Franklin Furnace, which is perhaps one of the most eye-catching works to be featured in the program. *Big Man Out The Window* (Figure 22) was just that, a massive sculpture of a black and white striped human form that was coming out of the window into the Franklin Street. To construct the work, McGuire used chicken wire and paper.⁵⁴ This sculptural form also extended several feet inside the exhibition space; McGuire was one of the few artists in this curatorial iteration to take advantage of the inside and outside qualities available for Window Works artists to explore (Figure 23).

Another interesting fact that tethers McGuire and Naidus further is that after their installations at the Franklin Furnace, they both continued to utilize the window as a screen for public artwork. When talking to Richard McGuire about how the series might have influenced the rest of his artistic practice, he realized that years later he had returned back to the window as a medium for broadcasting his ideas.⁵⁵ In 2018, McGuire exhibited in the window of the Drawing Center and I understand the installation to as a contemporary version of his *Big Man* work. In the window installation, a comic-like figure in walking in motion with one foot placed outside the actual window space (Figure 24). It is exciting to see McGuire still experimenting with ways of using the window as a medium to literally bring art into the streets.

Susan Mogul presented *Venus di Balebosteh* on May 1, 1982 for the Window Works series (Figure 25). There is limited information about this work on the Franklin Furnace Event Archives but it's clear that the work related to a Mogul performance in February of that year titled *Doing the Dishes*.⁵⁶ While there may have been a minority of informed viewers who saw

⁵⁴ Marc McGuire, interview with author, March 23, 2021.

⁵⁵ McGuire, interview with author, March 23, 2021.

⁵⁶ "*Venus di Balebosteh* Recrd," Franklin Furnace, accessed April 3, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

Doing the Dishes and could draw connections with that performance and the window installation, the majority who witnessed *Venus di Balebosteh* could not make that connection. Some years later on April 28, 1989, Mogul performed again at the Franklin Furnace in a solo show called *The Sightseer*. All of Mogul's work shown at the Furnace reflected upon themes on identity and gender and she is still working with these themes today in her artistic practice.

Many months after Mogul's installation, two New York graffiti artists, CRASH and DAZE presented *Graffiti on the Window at Franklin Furnace* in November 1983. In terms of showing aesthetic diversity of work at the Furnace, CRASH and DAZE's installation represents the vast genres of artistic experimentation that could thrive behind the doors or windows in this case of the Franklin Furnace. In the press release for the Window Works installation, the subject of the work is expertly captured, "Working at night... always on the run... the plight of the graffiti artist is the subject of a window work by John Matos 'CRASH' and Chris 'DAZE' Ellis. Their collaborative installation incorporates a mannequin, a brick wall and phosphorescent paint."⁵⁷ CRASH and DAZE's installation allowed for a special opportunity for artists who typically presented work outside to bring their work inside with the opportunity for public interactivity, behind a storefront window at the Franklin Furnace.

The final Window Works installation in this study is by Brad Melamed who was featured in the series in February of 1984. Melamed's *Jeopardy!* would have likely been appealing to everyday viewers on the streets of Tribeca because the subject nature of the work was relatable and referenced a game show (Figure 27). This work is a combination of text and image, and utilizes the storefront window as a game board of sorts. By making this allusion to a game, Melamed is promoting an interactivity which when utilized allows for a dynamic form of

⁵⁷ "Graffiti on the Window at Franklin Furnace Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed April 5, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

communication to broadcast ideas to the public. In the case of Melamed's *Jeopardy!*, the work considered "the polemics of the everyday and the false choices that inhibit, control and limit consciousness."⁵⁸

Despite typical growing pains and organizational changes at the Franklin Furnace, the curatorial program at the organization continued to encourage artistic experimentation, crossing boundaries in new forms of media, and freedom of expression. Looking at the Window Works series from 1980 to 1984, allows for a glimpse into an artist-run space that fostered the avant-garde and ephemeral forms of artwork. The Franklin Furnace's tradition of art being presented by artists continued during this period in the organization's history and continues today as a valuable approach for showcasing the latest developments and interests from artists working across many mediums and artistic fields of production.

⁵⁸ "Jeopardy! Record," Franklin Furnace, accessed April 6, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.proof-cloud.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes.

Conclusion

From the inception of the Franklin Furnace, there were no strict guidelines in terms of what could or could not be shown at the space. Unlike art museums or galleries of the period, an artist could be very early on in their career or test out new forms of artmaking and gain recognition at an artist-run space. Franklin Furnace along with other alternative art organizations in New York allowed for artistic experimentation to flourish beyond traditional mediums or aesthetic modes. In addition to the innovative programming featured at the Furnace, Martha Wilson and the organization continues to steadily collect artists' books. The diverse and valuable collection amassed during the early years of the Franklin Furnace offers an unparalleled glimpse into the world of artistic publishing in the late twentieth century.⁵⁹ This immensely important collection is now housed in the Museum of Modern Art Library's special collections as MoMA acquired the artists' books collection in 1993. Studying the Franklin Furnace allows for the opportunity to delve into their robust curatorial program, the organization's fascinating legacy and their historical contributions to the world of artists' books and alternative forms of artistic publishing. Looking at the Window Works series from 1976 to 1984 reveals just how unique and important this space was for various artistic communities but only begins to skim the surface to that effect.

Store Windows as Public Art

Now after studying almost ten years of the Window Works series at the Franklin Furnace, I have a deeper appreciation for the organization and their dedication to fostering new forms of

⁵⁹ For a former MoMA library staff member's perspective, see David Senior's article published in March of 2017 titled "Back in Time with Time-Based Works: Artists' Books at Franklin Furnace, 1976-1980" which can be accessed online through VoCA Journal.

art as well as artistic communities. To truly compare and contrast these two curatorial iterations of the storefront window program, more research is required. Due to the constraints in research processes as a result of the global health crisis, essential visits to archives at the Franklin Furnace and other relevant research centers such as the NYU Fales Library Special Collections and the Museum of Modern Art Library were not possible. As a means of honoring the artistic and curatorial legacies of the Window Works series at the Franklin Furnace, the program should be studied closely with the support of more primary resource materials.

From 1977 to 1984 at the Franklin Furnace, the Window Works series serves as an excellent example of the power of the storefront window as a screen for public art. The artists featured in the program came from communities near and far, utilizing mediums such as film and live performance to interact with public viewers on Franklin Street. Both iterations of the series were successful in bringing art into the street and providing a space to encounter art for free, available to be viewed at any time of the day. Conceptually, Apple's program was more successful in terms of utilizing the window as a broadcast medium and using every inch of the space. Apple's featured artists considered the viewing experience of the Window Works series from the outside as well as inside the Franklin Furnace.

While some of the artists featured in the peer review also were successful in considering this viewing perspective, it seemed to be more important conceptually during the first iteration of the program. In terms of which program offered more interactivity through the window as a medium for broadcasting and communicating artists' ideas, I would also speculate that Apple's program confronted this artistic challenge more head-on. Generally, the most successful Window Works from 1977 to 1984 created an artistic dialogue between the viewer and the work on the streets of industrial Tribeca. Through showing work in a public setting for the everyday viewers,

the Franklin Furnace symbolically opened their doors for all who might be curious and from my understanding created a more democratic space for experiencing art in New York during the late twentieth century.

The Everlasting Spirit of the Franklin Furnace

After 1984, the Franklin Furnace continued to tread forward, navigating the turbulent waters of the New York art scene and the tumultuous political environment of the time. From the culture wars to changes in funding and other challenges, Martha Wilson unabashedly moved ahead, breaking down barriers in the arts. C. Carr, writer and supporter of the Franklin Furnace refers to the space at the “Fiery Furnace” stressing the courageous workings of the organization which sought to uphold avant-garde works of art. As Carr explains, “the Furnace helped fill in some very important cracks, by supporting artists who might have otherwise fallen through them.”⁶⁰ Martha Wilson and the organization continued to chip away at this mission in the 1980s and 1990s.

In April of 2016, the Franklin Furnace celebrated its 40th anniversary which is a remarkable feat for any organization, especially for an artist-run space first initiated in the ‘70s. Today, the Franklin Furnace still operates as an archive and virtual non-profit organization that remains dedicated to showing avant-garde art and time-based works of art. The Franklin Furnace Fund awards yearly grants to artists ranging from \$2,000 to \$10,000 to support temporal work and performance. Each year, a new season of artists appear curated by a peer panel review system which changes annually, so as the Furnace communicates to interested artists: “if at first

⁶⁰ C. Carr, "The Fiery Furnace: Performance in the '80s, War in the '90s," *The Drama Review* 49, no. 1 (2005): 19.

you don't succeed, please try again.”⁶¹ Almost 45 years later, the Franklin Furnace remains as a fresh, dynamic and accessible organization continuing to work towards Martha’s personal mission “to make the world safe for avant-garde art.”⁶²

⁶¹ “About the FF Fund,” Franklin Furnace, accessed April 12, 2021, http://franklinfurnace.org/artists/franklin_furnace_fund/index.php.

⁶² Martha Wilson, “The Personal Becomes Political in Time,” *n.paradoxa: international feminist art journal* 5, (2000): 90.


Figure List

Films of
Sharon Kulik

Presented by:
Franklin Furnace Archive
112 Franklin St.
New York, New York
10013

February 14, 1978
8:30 P.M.

\$1.00 Contribution



BREAKING THROUGH
Super 8 Film Loop

February 11, 12, 13
From 8-11 P.M.

In Franklin Furnace's Store Front Window
(in conjunction with film showing)

Figure 1, Sharon Kulik, *Breaking Through*, February 11, 1978. Super 8 film loop that played in the storefront window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313211867



Figure 2, Dara Birnbaum, *(Reading) Versus (Reading Into)*, April 11, 1978. Double sided banner spanning both the storefront of the Furnace as well as the window area of the 'residential building' 112 Franklin Street

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313209972



Figure 3, Ann Messner, [Performance with Amplified Typing], October 10, 1978. Performance and window installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Franklin Furnace Event Archives

http://franklinfurnace.pointinspace.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes



Figure 4, Ann Messner, [Performance with Amplified Typing], October 10, 1978. Performance and installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY
Image Source: Franklin Furnace Event Archives
http://franklinfurnace.pointinspace.com/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=ffa_Events&-loadframes



Figure 5, Jenny Holzer, *Truisms* (1977–79), December 12, 1978. Installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313211179



Figure 6, Jenny Holzer, *Truisms (1977–79)*, December 12, 1978. Installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

Photo credit: Jacki Apple

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313211185

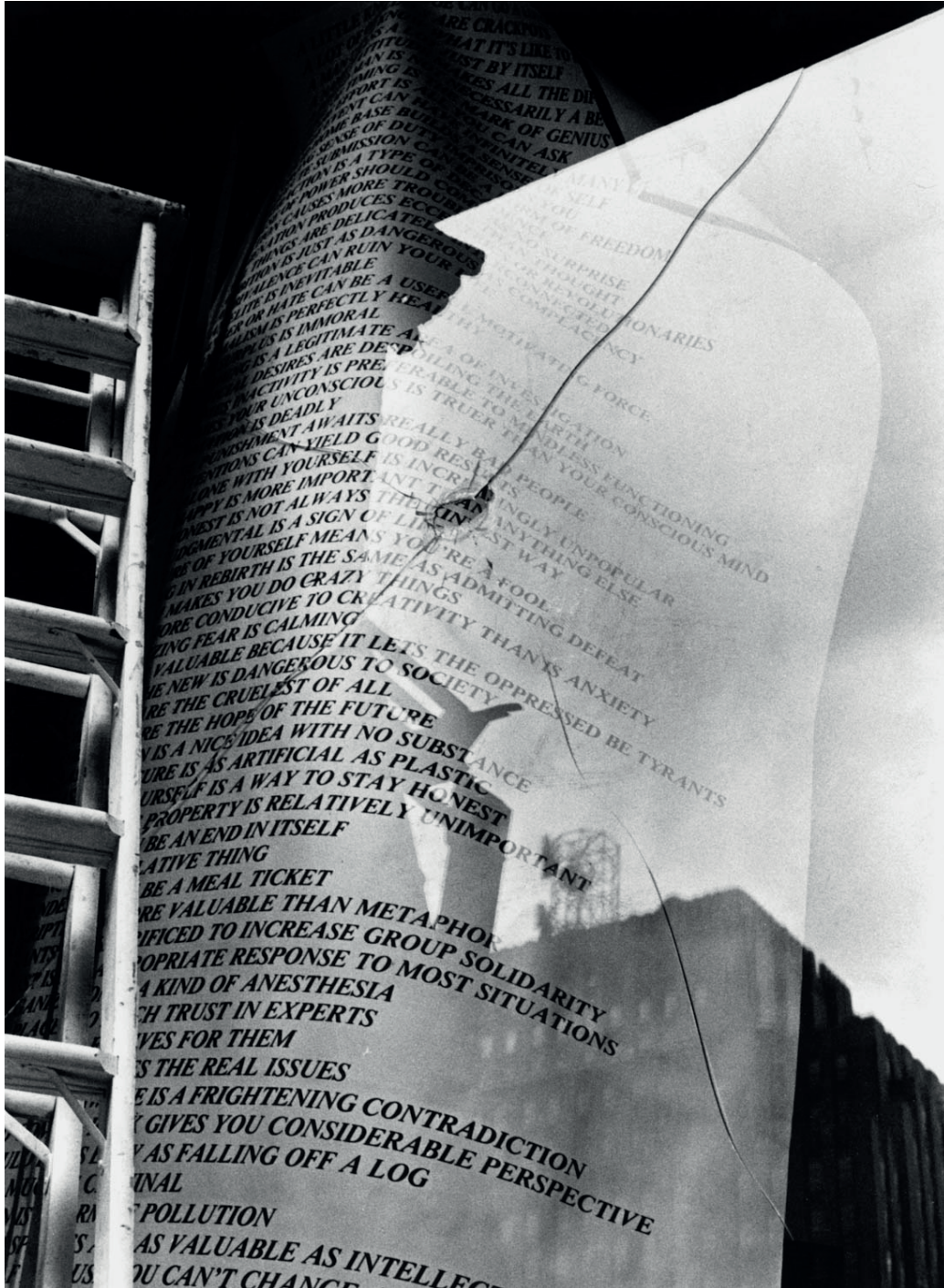
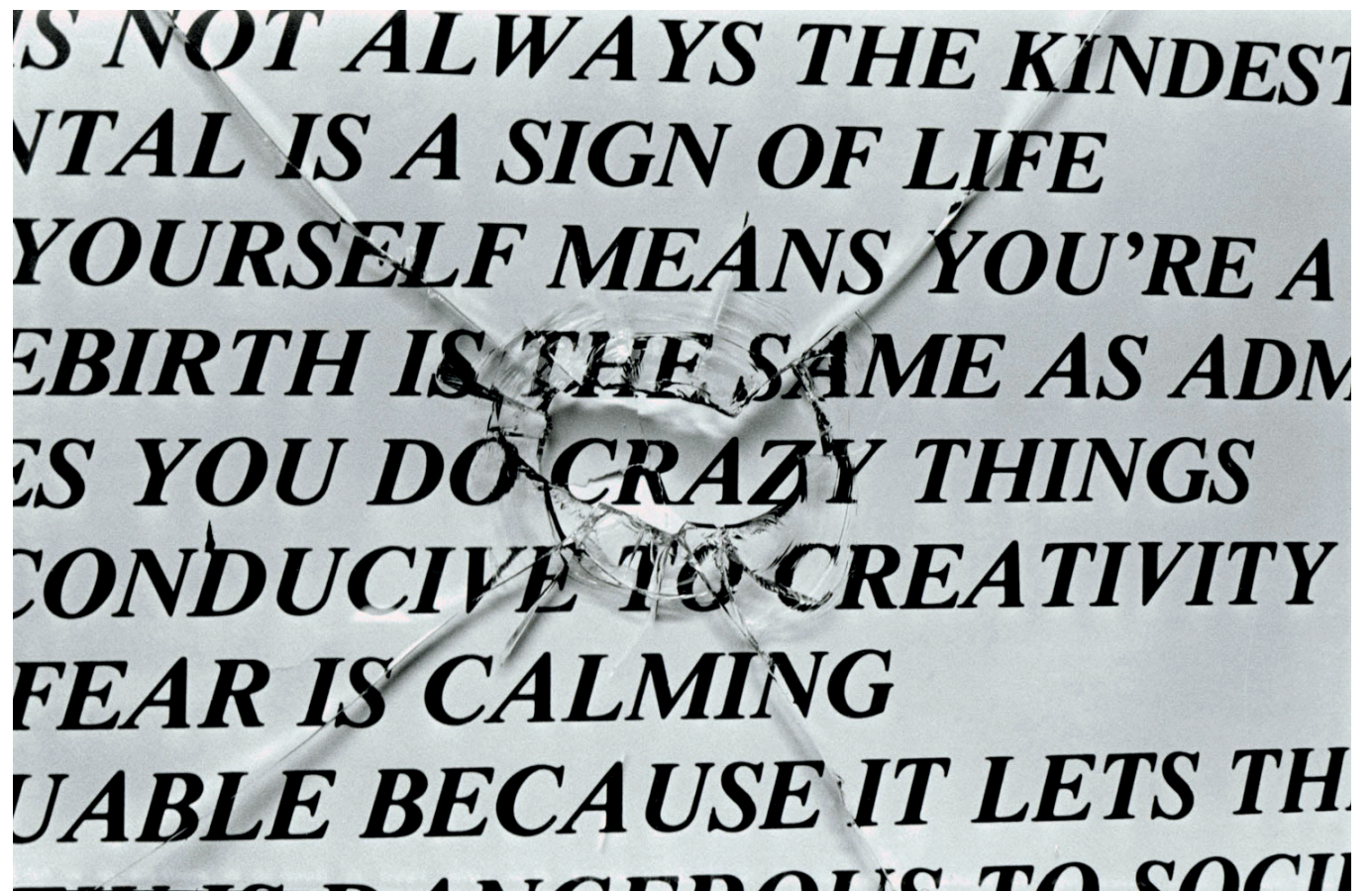


Figure 7, Jenny Holzer, *Truisms* (1977–79), December 12, 1978. Vandalized installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Photo credit: Mike Glier

Courtesy of Jenny Holzer, member Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



**IS NOT ALWAYS THE kinDEST
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CONDUCTIVE TO CREATIVITY
FEAR IS CALMING
UABLE BECAUSE IT LETS TH
DANGEROUS TO SOCI**

Figure 8, Jenny Holzer, *Truisms* (1977–79), December 12, 1978. Vandalized installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Photo credit: Mike Glier

Courtesy of Jenny Holzer, member Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Figure 9, Earl Ripling, *By Comparison ... Another Installed Story*, September 18, 1979. Window installation with photographs on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212976



Figure 10, Earl Ripling, *By Comparison ... Another Installed Story*, September 18, 1979.
Window installation with photographs on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin
Furnace, New York, NY
Image Source: Artstor
https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212973



Figure 11, Fernando de Filippi, *Slogan*, October 30, 1979. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313210779



Figure 12, Fernando de Filippi, *Slogan*, October 30, 1979. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313210780



Figure 13, Lois B. Polansky, *Bookware Series*, January 22, 1980. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212234

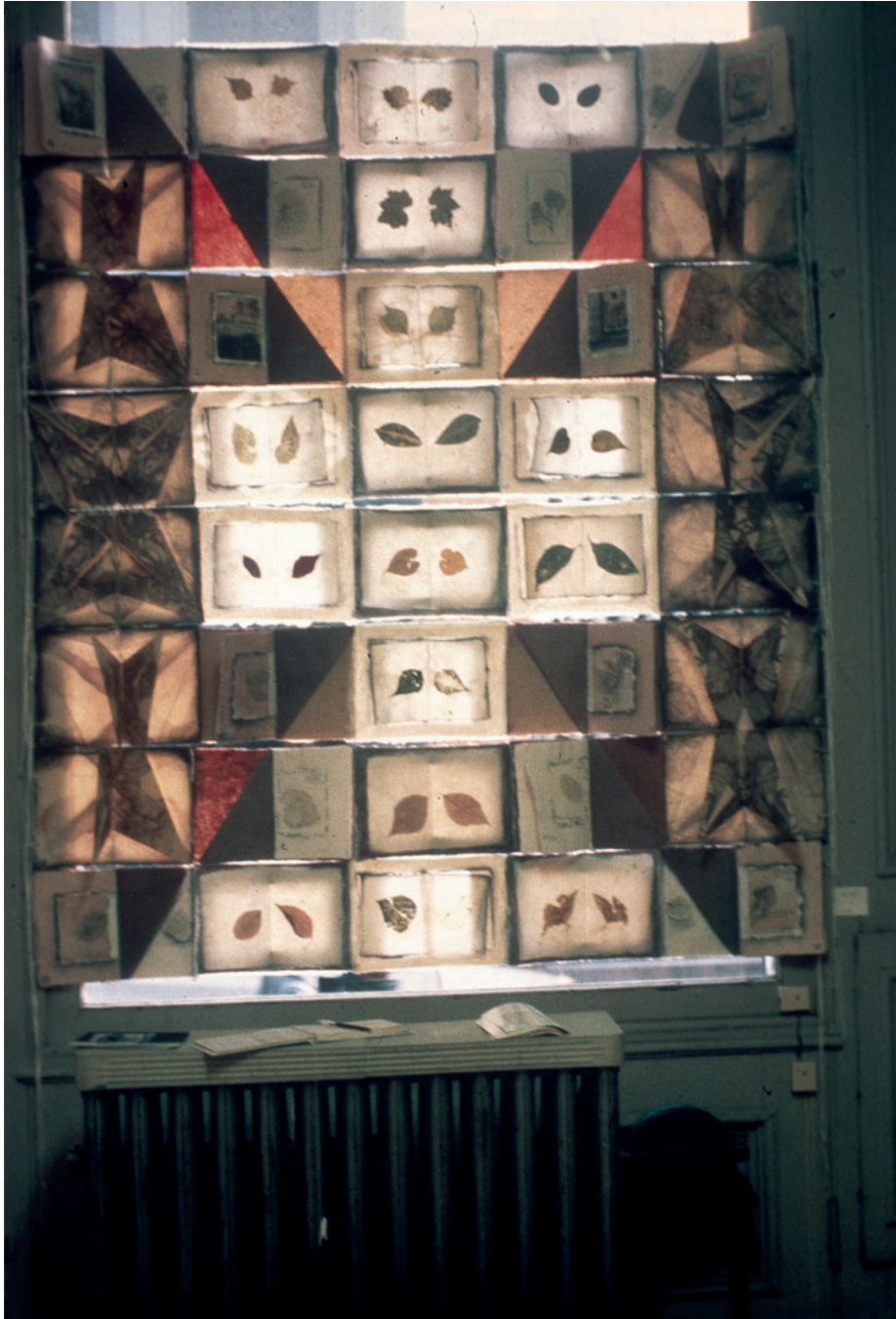


Figure 14, Lois B. Polansky, *Bookware Series*, January 22, 1980. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212257

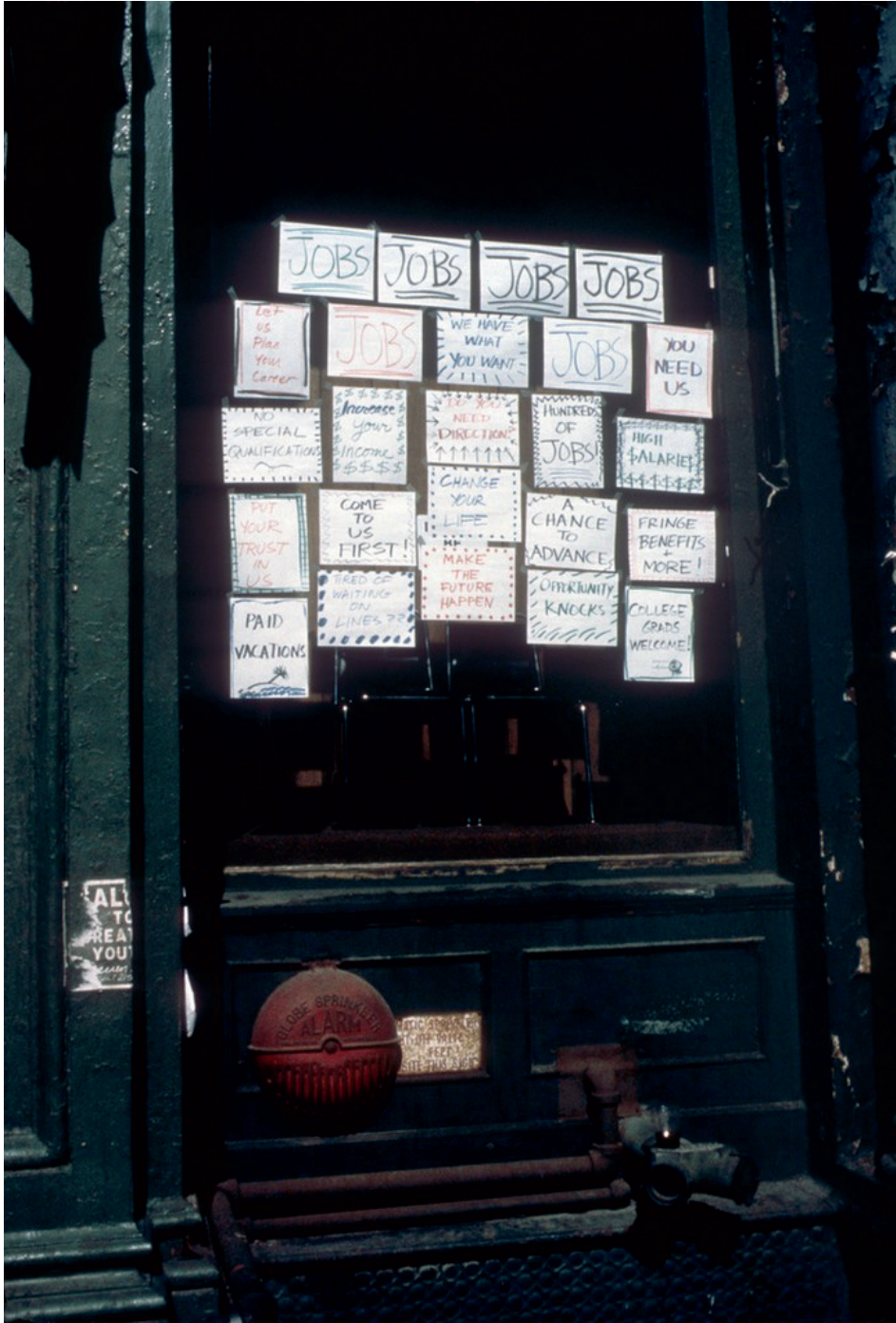


Figure 15, Beverly Naidus, *Apply Within*, March 11, 1980. Installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212104



Figure 16, Mr. Mental, *April Fool*, April 1, 1980. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212571



Figure 17, Dominic Alleluia, [sculpture and sound - window installation], January 3, 1981. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313209700



Figure 18, Sydney Blum and Janet Henry, [Window Installation], May 2, 1981. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_1031320992



Figure 19, Carol Meinel, *Curtains*, June 3, 1981. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212353



Figure 20, Carol Meinel, *Curtains*, June 3, 1981. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212351

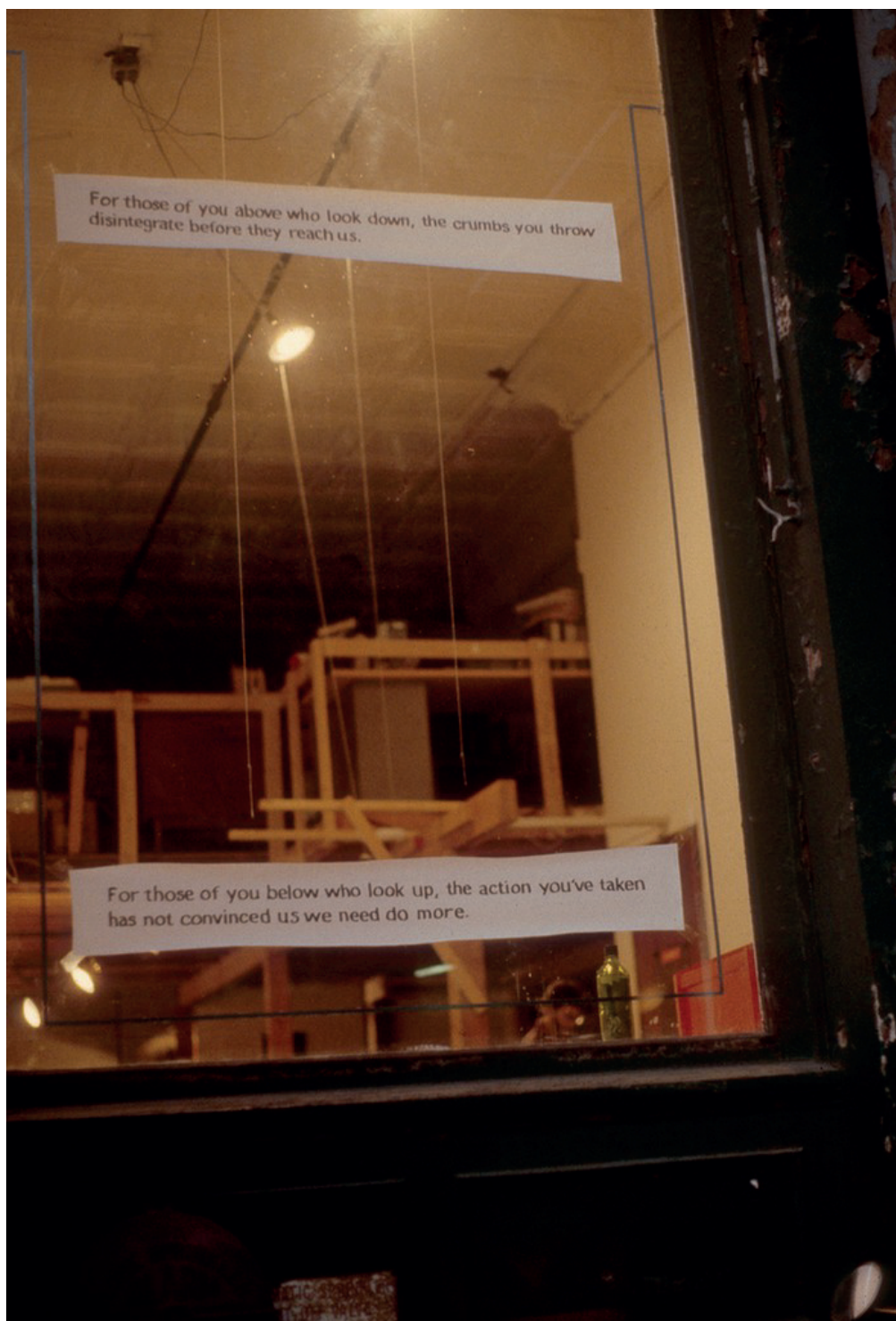


Figure 21, Marc Blane, *Rubble Reconstruction Company*, October 7, 1981. Installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313210015



Figure 22, Richard McGuire, *Big Man Out The Window*, January 6, 1982. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY. Image Source: Artstor https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212450



Figure 23, Richard McGuire, *Big Man Out The Window*, January 6, 1982. Window installation that could be seen on the inside and outside of the window at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212448

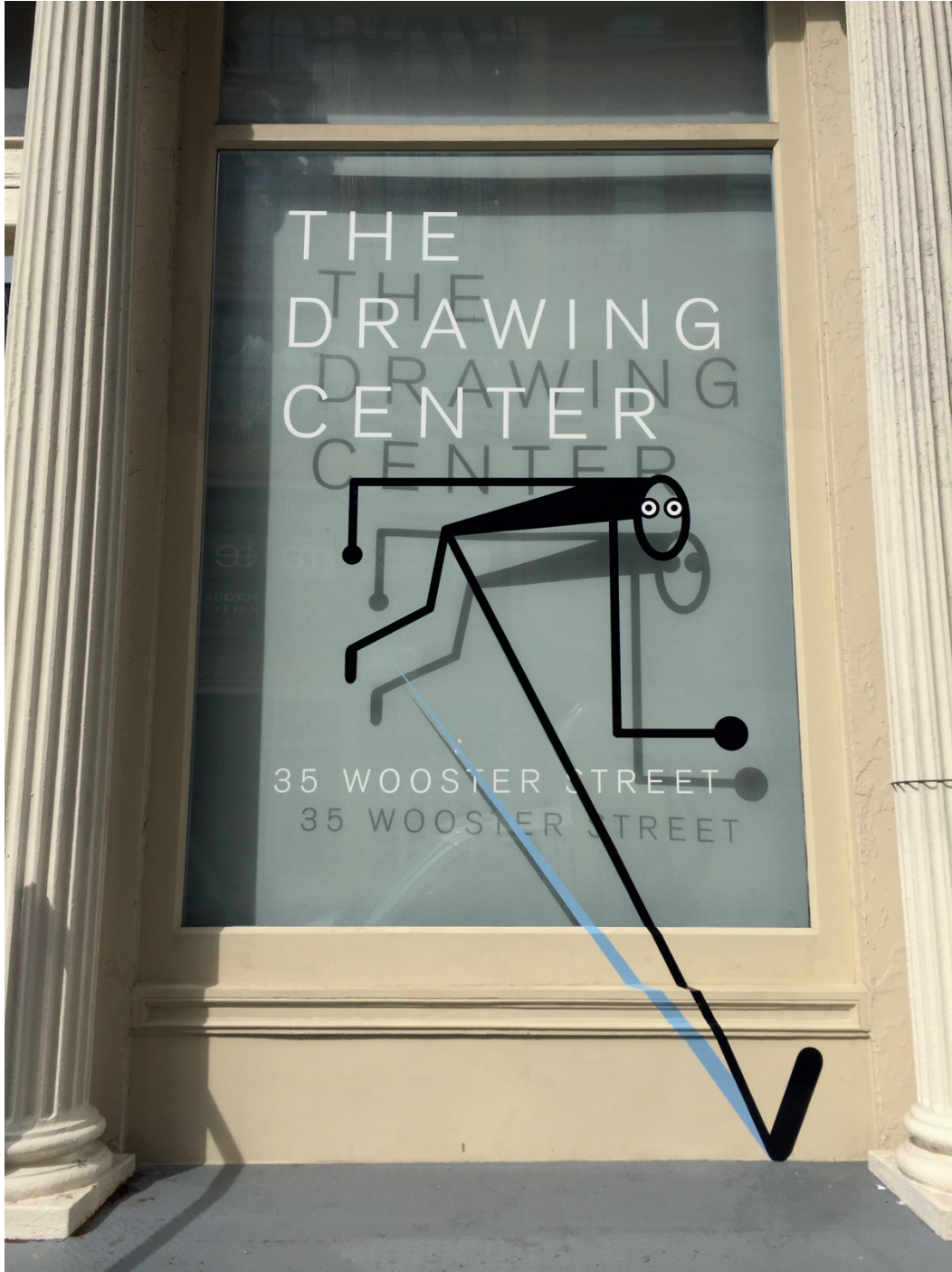


Figure 24, Richard McGuire, Window Installation, 2018. Window installation at the Drawing Center, 35 Wooster Street, New York, NY. Courtesy of Richard McGuire



Figure 25, Susan Mogul, *Venus di Balebosteh*, May 1, 1982. Installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212399



Figure 26, John Matos “CRASH” and Chris “DAZE” Ellis, Graffiti on the Window at Franklin Furnace, November 30, 1983. Installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.
Image Source: Artstor
https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313210120

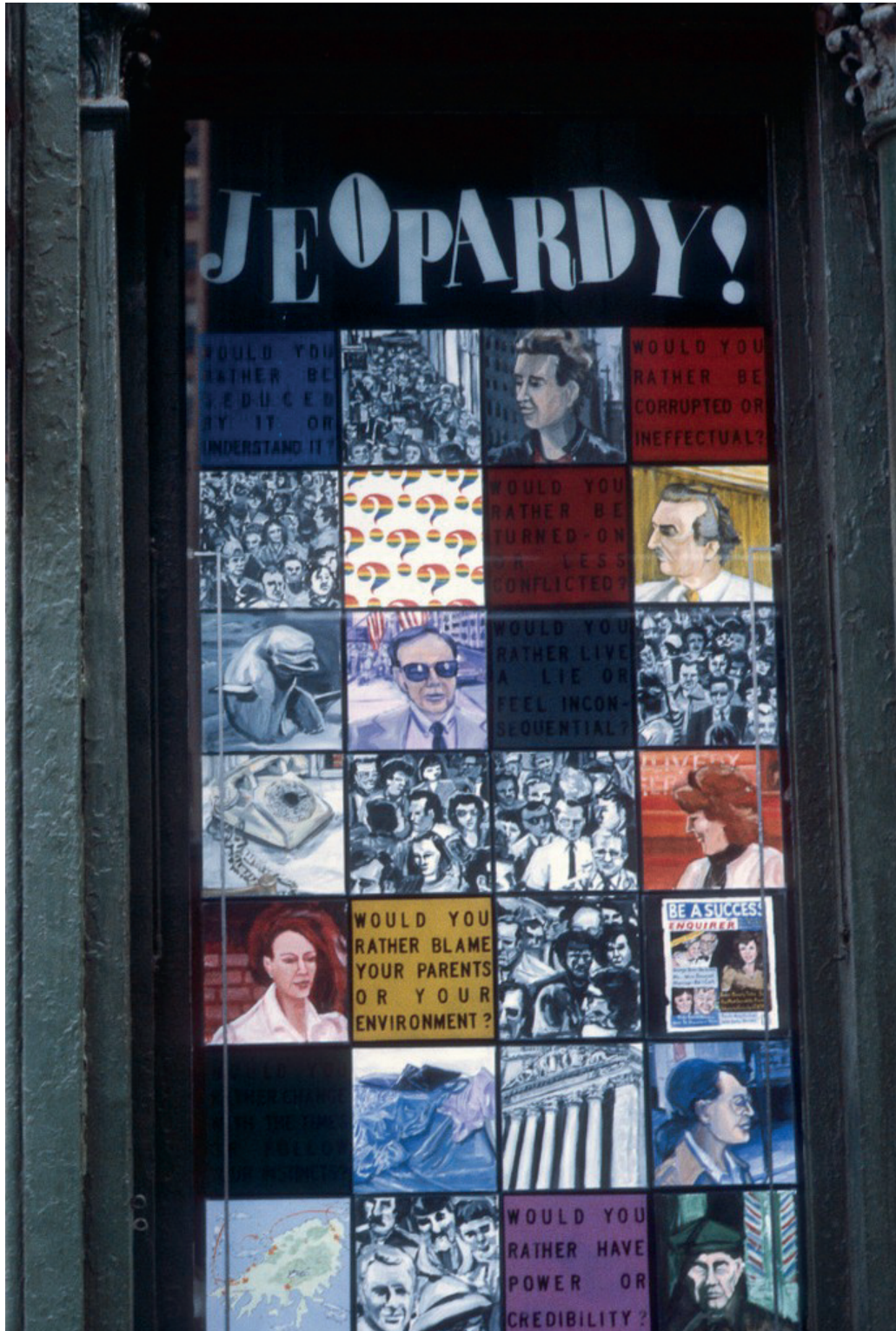


Figure 26, Brad Melamed, *Jeopardy!*, February 8, 1984. Installation at Franklin Furnace, New York, NY.

Image Source: Artstor

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AFURNACEIG_10313212355

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Appendix

Appendix A

Martha Wilson interview with Joseph “Joey” Vincennie, April 29, 2019

Joey Vincennie Alright, so how did the window installation series at Franklin Furnace begin?

Martha Wilson Well, I founded Franklin Furnace in 1976 to collect artist books. And I had a friend in New York with whom I had done a collaboration in 1973, I moved to New York in '74. Her name was Jacki Apple. She's an artist. I'm an artist. And she served as the curator of Franklin Furnace for the first four years from 1976 to 1980, when she moved to Los Angeles.

Martha Wilson She met with artists and they gave her proposals for what they wanted to do, and the window was 10 feet tall and broadcast images and ideas out on the street. So artists like Jenny Holzer and Dara Birnbaum were attracted to the idea that their concepts could be broadcast to the people walking on Franklin Street. The subway was right at the end of the block and the courthouses were two blocks east. So people would get out of the subway, walk down Franklin Street to go to circuit court or whatever.

Martha Wilson So artists used the front window. They also used audiotape, Ann Messner who is faculty here at Pratt was typing in the gallery, and the sound of her typing was broadcast outside. Willie Cole did an installation on the front window on the outside of the of the building using barbed wire and images of Nelson Mandela. This is in 1988 and then had an audiotape playing out on the street, “Mandela, Mandela, Mandela, Mandela.” This was at a time when there was no indication that he, Nelson Mandela, was going to be freed from prison in South Africa. So, I think universally artists saw the window as this as having the same potential as a broadcast medium as an artists' book, which could be mailed and bought cheaply by anybody who didn't have to be a rich person to buy this kind of art, the whole concept being that the purpose of art is to change ideas. And the way to get to regular people is through cheap publications or maybe posterings. There may be street actions or maybe broadcasting the idea through the window.

Joey Vincennie And so when you moved and when you all moved into the space, was this a thing that started happening pretty rapidly with the windows?

Martha Wilson Let me think about when that happened. It was pretty soon; I know Jenny was in 1978. We were founded in 1976. And I can't remember if Dara Birnbaum was before or after. But there was a window installation by Margia Kramer that was taken from her artists' book. That was *The FBI file on Andy Warhol*, I think. And it shows the redacted file that's so redacted that is black, that not much light was coming through the windows. It was pretty funny. The front window was 10 feet tall and then there's a transom above the door. The door had glass panes and the transom was a big glass pane. The only artist who ever used all the glass panes was Dara Birnbaum. She got permission from the residents upstairs to put an image in the transom above their door, above our door. And then she kept the same visual line going and put images in the window, but only in the same line as the transom.

Joey Vincennie It's funny because there's a lot of artists who did installations for the Franklin Furnace also did installations at Printed Matter. Because I wrote about Margia Kramer for my undergraduate honors thesis.

Martha Wilson Oh, did you? Fantastic!

Joey Vincennie Yeah. And I guess it just makes sense, like a lot of those folks were in the same community so there was overlap.

Martha Wilson Yes, well Printed Matter had a window and we had a window, and so everybody was trying to broadcast their ideas in any matter.

Joey Vincennie Yeah so Jacki was like the...

Martha Wilson She was the arbiter of taste. I was not. I didn't want to be the director and the arbiter of taste. I didn't want my personal taste to be what was being broadcast to the public. Jacki was a couple of years older than I am and an artist who lived in New York. So she had a more grounded sense of community of who is in the art world and and how, you know, how they've been working in the past years. And so it was a blessing for her to be the person who was meeting with the artist, looking at their work and selecting them.

Joey Vincennie So there was no sort of like call for proposals or like anything of that nature?

Martha Wilson Not yet. Then Jackie moved when she moved to Los Angeles. Then we started open calls.

Joey Vincennie How did you and Jacki meet and start working together?

Martha Wilson That's a great story. Thank you. So I was living in Halifax, Nova Scotia. And I wasn't at the art college except as a member of the faculty teaching English grammar to art students. But I was on the faculty, so I was able to audit all the classes and go to projects out on the Citadel. And so I educated myself. I was, you know, a low-residence art student and I was doing pieces like for example, covering my face with lipstick and appearing red faced in public, at which point people were embarrassed for me. Or I was dressing up as a man, tried to look like a woman, or I was trying to make it into men's rooms, wearing a crewcut. So Lucy Lippard, she was a visiting critic who came to the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. And she said, "first of all, you are an artist. What you're doing is art. And second of all, you're a feminist artist. And there are other women feminist performance artists and artists all over North America and Europe. And I'm going to put you in my show "Circa 7,500." So "Circa 7500" started in Valencia, California. The population of the town is circa 7,500. That's where that number came from. It was part of her numbers shows. She did shows of women for about ten years. She decided men had had their shot. And, you know, the pop artists were famous now and the abstract expressionists were hanging out in bars and doing very well, thank you and didn't really need help. But she was going to help the women. So, Jacki Apple was in the "Circa 7,500" card catalog, which consisted of cards, four by six note cards. We got two sides of the note card. We could do anything we wanted. So I put my *Breast Forms Permutated* piece on one side and then

on the other side I mentioned a piece called *Alchemy*, which is three patterns of color created by taking photographs of my hair after I dyed it.

Martha Wilson Well, one is blonde. I'm a blonde. I was a blonde. One is white. So, you know, silver and one is red. I was referring to in the medieval times, gold was referred to as red gold for some reason, red gold. So red gold is the third panel. So it's a cut, you know. It refers to Jules Olitski and other artists of the time who are doing these blocks of color, but it's my hair, but it's also about value and how blond hair blondes are more fun and redheads are tumultuous in their personalities.

Martha Wilson OK, so I put breast forms on one side and I discussed alchemy on the other side. And then I got the catalog, which consisted of quarter inch high set of note cards. So I go through these note cards and there are all these women who are doing work like I'm doing that I never even heard of them before. So I wrote to Lucy, got Jacki's address, started corresponding with Jackie, went to New York to plan a performance. We did a performance in December of 1973 starting at the Plaza Hotel then we took a limo and went down to SoHo.

Martha Wilson It was called *Transformance* and it was Jackie and four or five of her friends and me inventing a person, inventing a woman whom we all aspired to be but didn't feel like we could be. So we were taking her out to lunch where we thought she would be comfortable, taking her to the gallery so that she could look at the art.

Martha Wilson What I recall about this performance was that she, Jacki, was very relaxed and happy because she's a New Yorker and she knew what she was doing and these are all her friends. And I was the bumpkin from Halifax and I was so anxious, I thought if I turned my head, my neck would break. So also we had photographers. That's one way you get people to look at you. If you're having lunch at the Plaza Hotel, one way to get the rest of the room to look at you is to have photographers circling your table, taking your picture. And we let the people in the room just project whatever they wanted on us. So if somebody said, "oh, is that *Vogue* magazine?", the photographer would say yes. It was about public performance or public appearance as performance, creating performance out of every day, public action. So we had lunch uptown where we don't know what the people in the room thought, but they thought something was going on. Then we get in a limo, we go downtown, we go to Sonnabend and Castelli: 420 West Broadway was the belly button of the art world at the time. And they immediately were suspicious of these people who were taking pictures, not of the art. You're not allowed to take pictures of the art; but we were taking pictures of each other in the gallery. All these, you know, like 12 people suddenly show up and we got thrown out of Sonnabend gallery, but not before we got some pictures out of it.

Martha Wilson So this all starts with the "Circa 7500" catalogue through which I met Jacki Apple. So I met her through the catalogue and then when I moved to New York in '74, Jackie established an appointment for us to show our work to Ivan Karp at OK Harris Gallery. This is a little sidebar to the whole story, but it's I think it's relevant anyway.

Martha Wilson So he looks at our work and looks at Jacki's work and he looks at my work. And then he says, "Why are you showing me this work? This work is terrible! I would never show

this work!" Which was so traumatic to me as a baby artist that I didn't show my work to anybody else. I put it under the bed and forgot about it. Instead I started Franklin Furnace, asked Jackie to be the curator, started raising grant money. Franklin Furnace was just a clearing in the front of the loft. The loft was 2,500 square feet and Franklin Furnace was like the 500 foot clearing near the front door. And then Franklin Furnace got bigger and stronger. And I had two roommates and one of the roommates left, the other roommate left. And then finally I left. And Franklin Furnace was the whole ground floor. And then we got the lease to the basement in 1980, I think? So we were showing, we used to have to deinstall the show to do the performance program, which was really not good because the artists were installing their shows and then you're taking it down and putting it back up again. There's room for error there.

Martha Wilson So we got the ground floor, we used the ground floor for installation and collection, and then I had a kitchen in the back and the mezzanine was bedrooms, we were sleeping upstairs. Later, the mezzanine became the office. The basement was the performance space. And we would routinely give the artists the keys. We'd go home and let them stay all night if necessary, if they wanted to paint the ceiling white or build a chain link fence or whatever they needed to do. It was a bunch of artists with other artists who we trusted to not burn the place down. And it never did burn down.

Joey Vincennie So it seems like it was very natural, this sort of relationship that you had with Jackie, like in terms of beginning to work together?

Martha Wilson I think what's important is that we were all peers. Everybody was doing work. We were all the same age and we were all doing work for each other. The audience that we wanted to impress was other artists in the artist community. We didn't really give a crap about an uptown audience or really a general audience or wider audience, except in so far as the window works broadcast on the street, that that would be true. That was different than the exhibition program we did.

Joey Vincennie So we've kind of touched on how the window installation program worked with Jacki Apple and how she dealt with the program. But were there any sort of general guidelines for the series?

Martha Wilson We showed one guy who put hamburgers in the front window and let them decay. Pope.L himself put rat poison down, but I could smell it and I bought all new corn flakes and picked up all the rat poison and then put down new corn flakes. I admitted to him that I had changed his installation.

Joey Vincennie Typically, how long was each window installation up for?

Martha Wilson One month

Joey Vincennie Okay.

Martha Wilson I guess, fire, live open fire. I don't think we had a rule about it because Eleanor Antin was doing a performance in the basement for which she had a candle and it ignited her

hair. Her hair caught on fire and one of my members, one of the people in the audience whom I will love forever, Doug Bube walked up to the fire extinguisher and walked up to the artist, put out her hair, put the fire extinguisher back and sat down in the front row again. And I just thought, you know, but for the grace of God, we're not running out of here screaming.

Joey Vincennie Can you talk a little bit about just the neighborhood that the Franklin Furniture was in.

Martha Wilson Tribeca means triangle below Canal Street, which is a stupid name, but that's what the real estate people gave us. And pretty much everybody lived below 14th Street in Tribeca or SoHo or Chinatown or the East Village. Brooklyn was not a thing yet and Jersey City was not a thing yet. People lived in Lower Manhattan. Lower Manhattan had been not abandoned exactly but the businesses of Lower Manhattan had started to go under. On my street there was a spice business and fabric refolding, I didn't even know what that was till I got to the neighborhood. But for example, you get acres and acres of cloth and then they put it on bolts, measure it and put it on a bolt. And then it's a salable unit of fabric. So fabric refolding, produce, eggs. There were two diners where we could get food. There was no laundromat, we had to go to the West Village to do our laundry. The West Village being much more civilized than Tribeca, Tribeca was an industrial section of town. Now, also, you should know, the city of New York was busy going bankrupt in the 70s. I had had a job working for Brooklyn College. I think it was one year. It was '74 to '75 or '75 to '76, I can't remember what year it was, but when the city of New York was busy going bankrupt, a guy who was in the administration decided to fire all the art teachers and a lot of English teachers. Just fire them.

Joey Vincennie Was this just at Brooklyn College?

Martha Wilson No, this is through the city of New York, the entire city of New York. All the art teachers were fired and I got fired. So then I thought, oh, fine, I'm going to use my unemployment insurance not to look for a job, but start my own organization. And the not-for-profit sector figured out, oh, all these students are not going to have any art classes or music classes or anything cultural. So we, the not-for-profit sector, have to step in and create art programs. And then all the museums started their arts and education programs.

Martha Wilson So the 70s, people were leaving New York, moving to New Jersey or, you know, somewhere else. And there were abandoned buildings, empty buildings all over lower Manhattan. Artists started moving there in the late 60s, early 70s. I forget when Holly Solomon moved her gallery to SoHo. Laurie Anderson, Gordon Matta-Clark, it was a whole group of artists who started a restaurant called Food because there was no place to eat food. It was an entrepreneurial feeling. And the other thing that Lucy Lippard pointed out, she wrote an article about living in lower Manhattan. In those days, it was cheap enough that you only had to work maybe three days a week. You didn't have to work full time to afford a loft that was going to cost you two hundred seventy-five dollars a month.

Martha Wilson My loft, 2,500 feet was 500 dollars a month, which to me was such a huge amount of money that I had to have two roommates to pay it. But it was 2,500 square feet. Plus,

we built a mezzanine so it was actually three thousand square feet of space for us to live in and for Franklin Furnace to occupy as well.

Joey Vincennie So because the Franklin Furnace was located in such an area near the court and the train station, would you say it was like a pretty diverse group of people who were walking past the Franklin Furnace?

Martha Wilson I would say so, yeah. People who were judges, secretaries, stenographers and people who were the accused people going to court. So all kinds of people were walking past.

Joey Vincennie As far as who was living around there, would you say it was mostly artists?

Martha Wilson Well, a lot of artists were living around there. Now, today, I know two. Back in the day, there were, you know, a hundred, like a lot of artists. Some of them, like Jacki, did not live below 14th Street. She lived on West 76 street? A New Yorker, you know, been living here for a long time. She and her husband had an apartment there. So, OK, not everybody was living below 14th Street, but the art world was living below 14th Street.

Joey Vincennie On another note, I read that Jenny Holzer's *Truisms* installation was vandalized.

Martha Wilson Yes.

Joey Vincennie Was the window damaged by onlookers' multiple times, or was that just the only singular incident?

Martha Wilson It was the only time. Somebody threw a nut, really big, ding right through the plate glass window. And it was happening all over town. Lower Manhattan was not residential, so it didn't have very many cops. And so if you wanted to go out and have fun, you could drive down the street and throw a nut through somebody's window.

Joey Vincennie So you don't think it was someone who was actually worked up about the piece?

Martha Wilson I do not. It's a better story, but I don't actually think so.

Joey Vincennie So there were artists in the WindowWorks series that uniquely activated the storefront window in terms in relation to performance such as William Pope.L, Julie Laffin, and Dominic Alleluia. Some of these works featured live performance, video, or sound. Do you remember any interactions where you saw people interacting with these more performative works? Maybe thinking specifically about sound, acutally? Because from my research on window installations as public art, there haven't really been any instances in which sound is used in the windows like in the case of the Franklin Furnace. Personally, I think this puts the Franklin Furnace in a special place within this sort of sphere of windows and public art.

Martha Wilson Yeah. I think it was unusual even then back in the day. But it's a wonderful tool because if you have a manifesto, you can broadcast it.

Joey Vincennie Yeah, definitely.

Martha Wilson Now, Dominic Alleluia, it sounds like his thing is music, not a manifesto. Or sound anyway. Clinking, clanking sound

Joey Vincennie Did people ever come in to the Franklin Furnace merely because of what they saw outside?

Martha Wilson I can't remember a single instance when people a regular person showed up and asked us what the heck was going on here. The audience was artists and artists who wanted to know what other artists were up to.

Martha Wilson In 1983, we got an Advancement grant. Advancement was a program of the National Endowment for the Arts, like a mini challenge grant. And as we got into the 80s, more and more, the administration of Ronald Reagan, the National Endowment for the Arts, wanted art to appeal to a broad public and wanted professionals to be making those selections, not artists. They wanted to “professionalize” our field. So we took that as censorship, as a way to shut the artists up. And we were not happy about it. And by that point, we were doing peer review panels. But I think what changed is we used to apply for our coming year of activity so we would apply in March for September through June of the following year. And then NEA didn't want artists making these choices and they wanted to know what we were doing for the next two years. So they wanted a stronger conceptual and curatorial direction. They didn't want this wild and crazy, a hodgepodge of stuff that was individually motivated by individual artists. They wanted a thematic program. So we did have success in the early years applying for thematic shows and historical shows. After 1980, I started to apply for “Cubist prints, Cubist Books”, or “Artists’ Books: Japan” or “Multiples by Latin American Artists.” And we would get NEA support for those sorts of shows because again, they had a thematic consistency about them. We hired guest curators to do them, we'd borrow the material like a museum would borrow material. The funding for the individual artist program got less and less as we went through the 80s.

Joey Vincennie So does that mean there was less of the window installations?

Martha Wilson Yes. I mean, if we were having a three-month exhibition of Cubist prints and Cubist books, then that took up the space. Ironically, that show had commissioned a couple of graffiti artists (Crash and Daze) to do canvas bus posters that we put on the side of the bus because we had uptown institutions participating in the show and downtown institutions so we wanted to have an iconic visual way for people to understand that this was the Cubist bus.

Martha Wilson So the answer is yes. There were fewer individual artists, WindowWorks installations, for example, but we tried to get around it.

Joey Vincennie Were they paid for the windows?

Martha Wilson Yes, artists got fees.

Joey Vincennie How much were they paid?

Martha Wilson I forget; we were raising the fees every year. They started out very small in the beginning. We would have to go back to the check books, check stubs, which we still have out in the archives

Joey Vincennie For my last question, I was wondering if anyone ever specifically written on the windows at Franklin Furnace because I haven't found anything

Martha Wilson I have not anyone been aware of anybody specifically writing about the windows.

Joey Vincennie OK, great! Thank you so much, Martha.

Appendix B

Jacki Apple interview with Joseph “Joey” Vincennie, December 9, 2020

Joey Vincennie All right, well, I guess maybe we should just begin talking about the inception of the Franklin Furnace. I know that you and Martha worked together before the Franklin Furnace was established, and I would just love to hear about the inception of the Franklin Furnace. And, you know, I know you talk about that cold night in December of 1975 when the Franklin furnace was established.

Jacki Apple In 1975, Martha and I were walking down West Broadway and it was cold and windy. And Martha was trying to deal with where she was going to live and whether or not she should take the space at on Franklin Street in this building that Willoughby Sharp was putting together. And, you know, it was very, very raw. And so we're walking, we're talking about these things. And then Martha says, well, you know, if I move in there, what about... what do you think about this idea? You know, there's no place for artists who are making books, original books and perhaps limited printed books to really show them or are being collected or seen or and what if we made a space, you know, on the ground floor? I could live in the back or upstairs and we could have like a space for showing books or like a bookstore. The first, her first idea was that it should be a bookstore, we should be selling things. And then I said, oh, yeah, that's a great idea. And she was like, I don't know, should I do it? What do you think? You know? And it's very challenging to start something like that, because basically none of us had any resources. And so I said I think it's a great idea. It's really something, we really need to have this. And then she said, well, will you help me? You know, would you do this with me and I went sure, yeah, OK, let's do it. You know, go ahead, take this space and yeah, I'll come and work and help you develop it. Sure. Let's just go for it. And so she did. She rented this space and then the deck got built and Martha started collecting books. Then we opened in the spring of 1976, I think it was April.

Jacki Apple We had a big opening and we had, you know, a little collection of books that we'd started with and we had them really nicely displayed for the opening and they were for sale. But it became apparent, you know, within the first few months that we weren't going to be able to financially maintain this situation from the sale of books. For one thing, the audience was not going to be buying books for hundreds of dollars. And they were all, you know, limited editions. And then the artists would get their cut. Somebody had to be there selling them all the time. So we discussed what the options might be. And I remember saying, well, you know.... and Martha's going, maybe we should make a non- profit out of it. And I thought that was a really good idea. And I suggested that perhaps we should not think of it as a book store, but more as a gallery.

Jacki Apple And that as a gallery, we could show artists individual works that were one-of-a-kind books and that there was a whole range of different aesthetic approaches to the book and how we define what a book was. And if somebody happened to come in and want to buy the artist's work, that was great. But we wouldn't be dependent on the sales of, you know, little printed editions that might be sold for four dollars or five dollars or whatever. And so Martha thought this was a good approach and she would as the director of the Franklin Furnace, go out

and pursue the whole business of getting a nonprofit status and raising money and so on. So we opened it. So then the question was like, well, if we're going to show all these books, if she's working on that, who's going to deal with, well, the art? And I said, OK, I'll be the curator. So we've kind of divided it up. She was a director and I would curate. I would see people's work and select them and set up shows and the deck was finished and she was able to move in by the time we opened. Then in June, there was a young woman who was visiting from Paris and she made these beautiful books, but she was basically a writer as well. And so I thought, why don't we do this--- why don't we have a reading? Because artists who are making books, they could perform them. And so I had this idea we could have artist readings or like readings slash performances, and then we would add that into the mix with the exhibition.

Jacki Apple So we'd have exhibitions and performances. We might have the performances on two nights a week or whatever we could manage. And the book shows, I decided, would change every three weeks and then there'd be like time for the artists to install and all of that. And that would be like a good amount of time for people to come and look at them. So the young woman from Paris, her name was Martine Aballea. And I said, why don't we have an event while you're here? And no, we didn't have an exhibition yet because we were selling books So I said, well, let's do a reading in the front room where the store was. And she was kind of like, oh, I don't know, I'm too shy. I said, oh, I'll do it with you.... and my friend Erin Martin, who's a dancer and she's a great performer. We'll kind of stage it and you'll have fun and we'll do it in the front room and we'll just open the doors and it was great. You know, we did it on an afternoon and people just came in from the street. Various people were invited and told about it. And that was the beginning of what would become the performance series. Artists who write, artists who make books, artists from a cross-section of aesthetics and disciplines. And I don't remember what the very first exhibition was, whose work it was.

Jacki Apple I had to decide what I was going to show and how long and all of the things around that, and doing a press release and you know, all this is 1976. We had no email, no social media. A lot of it was word of mouth, sending out little announcements and so on. So that's how we started. We started by some kind of spontaneous response, Martha had this idea that was cooking in her head, but could she pull it off? And as I said, she was fairly new in New York and she had to live and figure out how to earn a living. And so, like, could we pull this whole thing off? And then once I said, you know, OK, you don't have to do it by yourself, you know, we'll just do it. And we didn't really have a long-range plan. It was more like, OK, we'll just jump in and we'll see what happens. And then let's start collecting all these books. Martha was going out and looking and getting books from people and calling artists who were doing books. They were all printed books. And then I got into the business of one-of-a-kind books and defining what constitutes a book as opposed to, you know, a limited edition printed thing that was bound. How wide is the definition of what a book could be? And then continue to stretch it.

Joey Vincennie And then I guess after that, you had the books, the readings, the performances, how did the Window Works series sort of fall into place?

Jacki Apple Well, the Window Works didn't come until 1978. So in the time between 1977 and 1978, I developed a curatorial approach or a position about how to expand this idea. And one of the things that I wanted to do was, as I said, not lock in what a book was. And so rather than

having a narrow definition or a particular aesthetic, I was open to seeing people's work who could just come by and make an appointment or just walk in and show me works from all different aesthetics and positions. So there were conceptual books. There were image books, photographic books, sculptural books. Books that were all about materiality, fiber books and fabric books, and so the range was, you know, all the way from very conceptual text to narrative text, uses of paper, to books that were objects. Actually, I have one of them downstairs, so I should get it at some point and show you how far we stretched it.

Jacki Apple So the range of work was always a surprise. There were always people who were pushing the boundaries a little bit. If I can remember his name, his first name was Frank, an artist who had like stacks of newspapers or just paper. And they were, they were like sculptural objects, like minimalism, you know, but all print, printed matter and paper. And so you have this huge stack that would fill up the whole floor or you would have early work of Barbara Kruger's, that was photo/ text. Very conceptual photo/text and then some really beautiful books that were materials.

Jacki Apple There were books that were, you know, paintings and writing... and I mean, it was such a wide variety of approaches and ways of defining a book that it just created a whole new discourse around it. And then, of course, the readings began to evolve from just readings -- either a one-of-a-kind or printed book -- into whole performative events, all of which involved some aspect of a book. And that was either performed physically, or read, or had sound expanding into it. So the other thing is --- which leads to the Window Works --- is that the space at the front part of the Furnace was quite small-- the gallery space, because the larger room in the back part was the performance space. So part of how ~~that~~ Window Works came into being was I had so many people coming in wanting to show different things and what I tried to do was to show a range of different aesthetics and approaches and try to pick what I thought was the strongest work in these categories to represent these different approaches to a book. Given the limits of the space, the physical limits, the walls and the floor space, I thought, OK, we need to use every inch of space that we have. And the front space was separated from the performance place space, not by a wall, but Martha had these cabinets that formed a wall. So the back side of them was wooden cabinets. But the front side had shelves and glass doors. And that's when I conceived the idea of ...we would have cabinet shows that were different from the artists who had their one person exhibitions. The cabinet shows might be a group of things around a concept and the first one was about notebook's, artists' notebooks and scores, scripts and scores, and notebooks, which we showed in the cabinets. And then I had some guest curators for that. I realized that we had these front windows, these huge glass windows, and they weren't being used.

Jacki Apple So it seemed to me that we ought to have commissioned artists, or have them come up with an idea that would address the windows as an exhibition space, and then part of the concept also had to do with using inside and outside. So people would experience the WindowWorks who might never have entered the Furnace. Or had any concept of even what an artist book was. They might just be walking down Franklin Street and come upon something that was puzzling or provocative or made them stop. Then sometimes people came inside like -- what is this place? what is the thing in the window? you know, or what kind of store is this?

Jacki Apple A whole lot of different reactions. And then, of course, there were the audiences that came to the Furnace anyway. And it provided a space for artists that was a different kind of space, that didn't involve making a book per se in the same way, and it was sort of a cross between the performative aspects and the material aspects. And it was kind of exciting because different artists proposed different things in the same way as the one-of-a-kind books, there was a whole range of approaches. It attracted particular people who approached it conceptually because it was a great way to exhibit a text, photographs, a concept... a space to use only for the audience to be able to see it from outside. And for other people who had something going on inside that went with it. So if you were drawn to come in because you were curious by what was in the window then it became a kind of performative interaction.

Joey Vincennie Now, in my research, I found that the first window, and this isn't definitive because I'm still in my research process, but I found that the first window was Sharon Kulik's *Breaking Through*.

Jacki Apple Yes, Sharon Kulik, who had a film projection in the window. I can't tell you. I don't remember that piece very clearly in terms of its content. But what a perfect idea to project a film into the window from the back side. It was a little bit different because you don't really see this kind of thing in a window in an industrial district. The only case, people were used to looking at TV's in a store that sold televisions. And so there was this film and it was quite raw as I remember it. But I don't remember the actual content of the images other than it wasn't some fancy 35 millimeter. I think it was a Super 8 film.

Joey Vincennie I believe it was a Super 8 as well.

Jacki Apple Yeah and I think it was quite grainy because of the way it was projected. Almost looked like an old film rather than something very polished. I can't, maybe you remember the content better than I do.

Joey Vincennie That's actually something that I'm hoping that I can find within the archives. I haven't actually been able to, like, go in person just because of the world we're living in right now. But I'm hoping that I can find a little bit more about that. But would you say that so around that time when you realize that, you know, that this window was another space that you could continue doing your curatorial work? Was Sharon's work maybe just one of the first proposals that you received or did she come to you and did that sort of ignite this idea of, oh, maybe we should use it in the window?

Jacki Apple I don't remember, to be honest. I suspect that she had come to show me work that she wanted to show at the Furnace. I mean, she didn't just like, you know, walk off the street. And I had never met her before. If I remember this, we're talking about something that's more than 40 years ago and a lot of people who came and went every day in the Furnace, what I vaguely remember is that she was somebody who had come to the Furnace, that she had probably shown other work or was interested in doing either an evening or whatever. And then she had these films that she had probably wanted to show. And I probably went, why don't we show one in the window?

Jacki Apple You know, kind of a spontaneous like, OK, you want to show here, but you know well where is the space? Do you want to show in the performance space, but it's not quite a performance or reading, but it's an interesting idea. So why don't we just project it in the window and see what happens?

Joey Vincennie I'm really interested in the neighborhood's reaction to the WindowWorks series and you mentioned that people would walk by and engage with the window and some people would also come inside. Could you talk a little bit just about the neighborhood and maybe any of the interactions you might have had with those who walked by or anything like that?

Jacki Apple Yeah, sure. Well, first place then, it was a mixed neighborhood. I mean, it was Tribeca and there were art spaces, art going on in Tribeca, artists living in Tribeca but it was also the edge of an industrial area that was changing rapidly through the gentrification. But you had trucks going down the street. The space, the building was not fancy, to say the least. It was pretty raw. The outside probably could have used a good paint job. If you look in the photo of Dara Birnbaum's installation, the paint is all peeling on the columns.

Jacki Apple I think the average passerby who is not particularly involved in, say, the neighborhood as an art zone, probably didn't pay much attention to the space if there was nothing to, if they were just walking past until the Window Works. And so in that sense, I viewed the Window Works conceptually, especially in 1978, as a political act in a way, it's like, OK, we're here, we have all this esoteric material and these performances and but how do we make it interactive? What happens when you don't have to come inside to see art. You're not used to walking down the street and seeing art in windows at that time in this kind of neighborhood, in this industrial area. Now trucks went down the street, there were things being unloaded. It was a business area of some sort or another. I think it became provocative. And the best example of that was one of my what I thought was one of the most successful works.

Jacki Apple I was walking around town on Franklin Street downtown in Tribeca, and I saw these... you know, that's like the size of a piece of paper or a little bigger with this printed text on it being stuck up on these paint peeling walls and other places. And they were just a text. And I found out that the person who was putting up these sheets of kind of lists was a young artist named Jenny Holzer. And so I thought, oh, wouldn't that be cool in our window, not just these posters stuck up, but it could fill the whole window. And they were all these aphorisms and as you know Jenny's work, right? So I approached her about it and said, hey these are pretty cool but we have this great window and would you like to do the whole window? And she, of course, was thrilled, I mean, she was young. She was at the beginning of her career and she just started doing all this stuff. So she was like, Oh, my God, yes. She put up the whole window ~~and~~ with these aphorisms and she used all the windows and the door. So there was a lot of it and we were all thrilled. You know, we thought this is really great, this is really functioning, as the doors and windows, they're like frames, frames for an image. And the image was a text. And then I came in the next morning, I think it had been up a couple of days--- came in one morning and somebody had shot a bullet through the window. Maybe it was a B.B. gun, I don't know, but it shattered the glass. And it went very specifically through the line that said "Boredom makes you do crazy things."

Joey Vincennie Wow, that was no accident.

Jacki Apple It was very specifically right through that line. Then in the plaster wall there was a chipped out place. And I considered this piece to be a huge success. And in many ways, it sort of launched Jenny's career. I mean, it took her off little posters, stuck on walls or poles into something of a whole different scale that provoked people into thinking about it because you could pass the piece of paper and not read it, but you couldn't pass this and not read it. So it became a kind of art action in which the viewer becomes a performer in the piece which was very interesting. It became an interactive work, and I think that some of the other things were also interactive works. I mean, later --- Beverly Naidus, another artist who said it launched her career and her work and that was a good bit later. I mean, I think people took pictures of Jenny's works. And in a way; it also, suddenly the whole story of it, it made the WindowWorks something to come and see.

Jacki Apple Then Earl Rippling did these photo works. These conceptual photo works were provocative and questioned, well, you know, what are you looking at? What is this? It sort of crossed this line. Were these posters? Were they ads for something? "What is this?" could become a question. What is this about? And it was at the same time that Joseph Kosuth was putting up his billboards with just words on them. And so I think those pieces that Earl did in the windows kind of.... And then there was this other artist, an Italian artist, Fernando De Filippi.

Jacki Apple I knew Earl because he'd done books for the Furnace. Dara Birnbaum was a friend. A lot of the people who participated were artists that I already knew and was familiar with their work, except this guy, Fernando de Filippi. And I think he was probably.... artists would come in from Europe and they would just happen to come by without appointments. And so, you know, he did this slogan in the window which functioned in a way like Jenny's work. You know, Art is ideology. And it posed these questions, these aphorisms, these statements, philosophical, ideological, political. It was provocative. And so a lot of those works --- you know, that was part of my goal --- was to create this interactive space so that people on the outside who didn't even know what kind of space this was would be drawn to it, question it, come inside. I think the piece -- Beverly Naidus's piece -- actually had people coming inside because it was about jobs. Her piece said, you know jobs, right? She used the inside and outside. So it's got this whole thing about jobs. You need us, a chance to advance, all these promises about work. And she sat inside at a desk. You know, with papers to fill out and to, like, interview people.

Joey Vincennie Oh, wow.

Jacki Apple People who saw this in the window would go, Oh, wow, what's that? And then they come in and then she'd have conversations with them. So, you know, it again becomes an interactive piece that is performative in which the audience is a performer which is true of the Jenny Holzer one for the person who decided to shoot through it. You know, who is bored, right?

Joey Vincennie Did you ever find a bullet like or whatever the shard was like in wall?

Jacki Apple We just found the plaster and the, you know, the hole in the glass. We had to have a new window put in.

Joey Vincennie That was probably costly, money that the Franklin Furnace probably didn't have.

Jacki Apple It was a little worrying because you don't know whether the person was like somebody doing a responding art performance thing, or whether it was some crazy person who might come back and, you know, was angry about the sign. So not knowing who did it, you know, for all we know, it could have been Willoughby Sharp himself who was prone to do those kinds of things.

Jacki Apple So, yeah, so I think it was it was about two years' worth of works I think, with mostly 1978, 1979 up until 1980, the early part of 1980. And then I left the Furnace in the middle of 1980, and that's kind of when it came to an end. It was also a period with in addition to the Window Works, I curated some traveling shows, so we had interactions and that started with the cabinet shows where we'd have an exchange with somebody and they'd send --- like books from New Zealand or Australia --- and there'd be a guest curator. And then we'd send a bunch of books to them and they'd send a bunch of books to us. And then it expanded into some museums who had gotten into artists' books, interested in showing artists' books, the Albright-Knox Museum, a space in Kansas City. And then I did one for Japan which has a funny story of an artist named Judith Simonian.

Jacki Apple. She made these beautiful books, sculptural books, and all the books that went to Japan were sculptural books. And so what she would do is she would take a book, a printed book, bound, nice hardcover book, and she would crinkle all the paper. Each page was crinkled. So when you opened the book, it was like a fan. And they were quite beautiful and you couldn't really read them, but they became these visual sculptural objects with this fan-like shape like this, right? So they went to Japan and the Japanese being so careful and so meticulous about the artwork, thought that her book had been damaged in shipping and were quite distressed about this. But they didn't write to me and say, we think this book has been damaged, we are very sorry, et cetera. Instead, they took it upon themselves to do what they thought was necessary to repair the book, and they ironed all the pages flat. So the book came back and the pages had all been ironed out and there were apologies and Judith was beside herself. She had gone to a lot of work to do all this, you know, the pages had been crinkled like a fan. So when you opened it up, it opened like a fan. And it was just one of those interesting things, you know, of a cross-cultural misunderstanding, and they felt responsible for what they thought was damaged in shipping. So, yeah. And then, of course, Jenny's work was damaged, right?

Joey Vincennie How did she (Jenny) respond to that?

Jacki Apple Oh, she loved it. Of course, it was just what she wanted, boredom makes you do crazy things. Here's proof: bam! Yeah, you know, I mean, it was, it was kind of exciting. It sort of proved the point in many ways. And so that's what I mean when I say I thought of the WindowWorks as being not only using space that we had, but crossing the threshold between public and private space, because everything that was seen that way was in public space. But the other side was in private space, in this gallery. And so sort of, pushing that boundary of inside/outside and what you might potentially do to create an interaction between the inside and the

outside, the public in the private. And kind of in a performative way, but also in a provocative way.

Joey Vincennie This is so exciting to hear about this because I definitely agree with you. Coming from my perspective, the way that I see this window as a very provocative private/public screen for art -- that in other cases, people weren't able to see this on the street, like you said, what they would see on the street would maybe look like walking past the TV store with a bunch of televisions, or a laundromat or something like that. This was really bringing art to the public in such a different way at the time. And also just the redeeming qualities of what this program did for a lot of these artists who were in their early career.

Jacki Apple It definitely allowed their work to be seen in ways that it might not have been perceived because the work itself didn't deal with commodity. It didn't deal with commodity or even visual images in the same way. A lot of these works dealt with text and with language which extends to the role of the book. As something that you, quote, "read" and so the text became an image in a window that could be read in multiple ways. You know, both in terms of content, i.e. the actual words, or in terms of how language functions in a public space. So the privacy of the book, the one-on-one relationship that you have with the book is a one-of-a-kind experience. But then like Beverly's piece, these were signs --- but they could have been pages out of a book -- but they were signs that invited the reader into a situation, into an event space, essentially They functioned on multiple levels as concepts about how you see an artwork and at the same time how you read a text and how you read an image. When those two things come together, when the text is the image it also has to make you rethink about definitions of art at that time. I mean, we were rethinking what the boundaries of art could be. And in this, you know, changing moment where there's this what would I say--- the 70s was very much about resistance to, for a lot of artists, consumerism, capitalism, commodity, collectability and was directed much more towards experience. And so in many ways, in curating, I was experimenting with the boundaries of experience in terms of the viewer and the artwork and the artist, and at what points do those boundaries blur and become another kind of space. So, you know the Furnace is an art space and therefore if you go into it from a sort of Duchampian definition, the function of that space is to show art. Therefore, anything you put into that space is art, regardless of whether it's good or bad art. If you play with that edge, which the window works did between what kind of space is this, what are these things? If this is an art space, is that art? Or is this some kind of office that's like some political group, you know?

Joey Vincennie Totally.

Jacki Apple So it varies I mean, in this case, it was like, well, is this a social services space? Each of the different approaches raised different questions like that of what kind of space it is, and what is the nature of what they're looking at. And I don't think that the people who shot a bullet hole through Jenny's thought of it as art. I think they probably --- unless they were an artist playing a game and I think saying, Oh, this is my performance. But if it wasn't, then what did they think? Is it propaganda, some group, some political group? What are they being told here? You know, is it some Orwellian list -- you're being told all these things. Then, yeah, so I think, you know, it was a very --- for the moment, for that period for 1978 and 1979 --- it was a very innovative, provocative way of approaching these blurred boundaries.

Joey Vincennie Did you have any hand in carving out how you envisioned the next curatorial iteration of the Window Works series to go?

Jacki Apple No, it was kind of my project. When I left, everything changed in the 1980's. I mean, there were some tensions about that. There were other people besides Martha who were working there who had, we might say, different philosophical agendas, especially when it came to what you do to raise money. And how you fit into other people's agendas and I was kind of a purist about that. I mean, I had this idea that it needed to be a kind of free speech space, in a sense, and, you know, and Martha was also very much into that... it fit into the whole idea of this as a kind of radical, experimental laboratory in which you could challenge systems. You could challenge the status quo. You could be provocative and get support for that. And when I left, there was a shift going on and there was never another curator. I was the first and last curator.

Joey Vincennie So only one...

Jacki Apple And so I brought to this, a kind of curatorial approach --- as an artist, and before I had started writing critical essays. But it was part of that moment of artists spaces where artists were in control of the curatorial mission, so to speak, and allowing for things that didn't fit. You know, much of the post minimalist and process based work of the 70s in spaces like 112 Greene Street were in total defiance of commodification of art and the commercialism of the 60s and the whole Warholian approach of everything could be sold. And so this was pushing it into another, into another direction. As a curator, I also was kind of committed to not having a brand like --- Oh, this space represents that approach to art or that aesthetic. And so I welcomed a whole range of different aesthetic approaches. The criteria was excellence. And experimentation. So you could push the boundaries and if it was exciting and interesting, and it was a little raw, or some of it didn't work--- I had this philosophy which carried into all my teaching in the 80s and 90s here and beyond in LA when I taught performance classes. It was like a brilliant failure is much more exciting than a mediocre success. So you could push an idea and if it didn't entirely work, but it was interesting enough to make someone think differently, you know, it was better to do that than to try to polish off all the edges and make it perfect. It had a lot to do with, you know, the people who did the WindowWorks -- What is your intention? Are you approaching this idea of the inside/ outside, public/ private space and as an interactive space, as a place to raise questions. It could be a little raw. It could approach it aesthetically in a variety of ways, so content was important.

Joey Vincennie I think that's especially thrilling because looking at the works that you curated, some of them, of course, have more like a political or radical aspect to them, but I think you talk about in your "Different World" article how your curatorial philosophy was more about displaying diverse works rather than radical work.

Jacki Apple Yes, right. Diversity was very important in that sense. I was talking about aesthetic diversity. Different ways of seeing the world, different perspectives, different ways of using materials. Different forms of presentation, and which isn't to say that I didn't have a very high criteria about how well the artist transformed a concept or an idea into an actual work, being able to make that leap, to make it work in its physical presentation. But I was not restricted in terms

of somebody's aesthetic sensibility. In other words, I didn't want it to be like, oh well, it has to be politically correct. Conceptual work and material work was viewed as craft. You know, it could be work that worked solely on its materiality. Especially if it was beautifully done and the materials were, you know... And then there were the sculptural works that pushed these boundaries, like Kay Hines's work where we presented as a book. It was a Coke machine. An old antique Coke machine, which she filled with green Perrier bottles that had messages in them, rolled up text. So you put a coin into the machine and you've got an artwork which was a Perrier bottle with a text in it. And that's what I have downstairs.

Joey Vincennie That's amazing. I love that idea.

Jacki Apple Yeah, and she had made these. It was like a machine, it was a book that was like a machine, a giant thing. And it turned and had the mechanisms in it. And so I encouraged books that looked like books that couldn't be read --- like Judy's book with the fan books. And then you had books by California artists. So it's also.... the other thing is I wasn't exclusive, like its just downtown New York artists. So that's why there were books from people who were in Italy or Germany or the Netherlands or New Zealand, California. And there was a California artist who was basically known as a performance artist from Los Angeles named Richard Newton, who'd done these performances in a motel in Barstow. And he took all these.... and so he made these books that were just color Xeroxes. And they were really about... they were sexually confrontational, let's say, and involved genitals and actions and other things. And the performance involved people coming to this motel, and I think one of them was, they could touch his penis. I think that was, if I remember right, that. It was definitely a little edgy there. But I thought, OK, he's really kind of pushing the performance thing, not in terms of the material, the book, but making an action in which the viewer becomes a participant or performer and then making these books using this technology that was new and cheap and didn't worry about whether it was going to be archival or anything. And then the books, you know, have a sort of shock effect, but they were documentation, essentially, but they were also the artwork in itself. We did not put them in the window.

Joey Vincennie They didn't make it to the window.

Jacki Apple Well, there were... there were issues about certain things that had come up with work at that time in the late 70s, which was called pornographic and stuff like that. You know, Martha was very happy to show what people call pornographic. I mean, there were interesting situations like that in some of the exhibitions. A photographer named Jackie (Jacqueline) Livingston, who showed photographic works, black and white photographs of naked images of her own children naked. And she had a grant and the work was declared pornographic. You know, child porn -- of her husband and her children and when it involved images of naked men as opposed to naked women, that was considered definitely not acceptable, which is interesting because, you know, nude women have been the backbone of Western art throughout history. Right? But you couldn't have men.

Joey Vincennie No, definitely not.

Jacki Apple It's like the Robert Mapplethorpe issue. And so, yeah, you know, my curatorial philosophy was, OK, I'm showing these beautiful fiber books in one show that are made out of natural materials and woven stuff. And then I'm showing this conceptual photo/text work in another show. And then I'm showing these colored Xerox performance things that happened in a motel in the desert in Southern California. And that's the kind of the wide range of things that were possible. And then, Kay Hines's work, which was one of these sculptural books. A stack, several feet high of paper that was big pieces of paper that you couldn't read the book, but it certainly represented what a book was. It was about diversity of how we define what constitutes a book which stretched the same kind of boundaries as how you define a window, how that functions in relation to public/ private, inside/ outside.

Joey Vincennie I have a question that might be kind of a big question but just reflecting back on that period and your curatorial process, your strategies, your philosophy... what were some of maybe your big curatorial takeaways or maybe the influence that this project had on the trajectory of your curatorial work? Or maybe your work as an artist or just generally any major takeaways?

Jacki Apple I think it definitely had an influence on the work that I did when I came to California later. When I came to LA, it was a very open situation, there was almost no--- there were commercial galleries, your usual little gallery scene. It didn't have the same structure of artists spaces that New York had. By the time I came to LA, which was 1981, I mean, there were, I don't know, maybe a dozen artist spaces in New York functioning all the time. Here there was just, there were two. Well, there was LACE. LACE was the primary one which showed video and performance and painting and books and whatever and I was on the Board after I moved here. And so what you had is --- artists were self-producing and performing, particularly in performance or making installations. And I think that it guided a certain aspect of my work in my commitment to experiential works as opposed to commodities. Big performances that happened--- site-specific performances --- that were never going to actually happen again the same way, because they were in the site. They were commissioned works, installation works in the 90s, which involved a certain interactive aspect on the part of the viewer, were in *The Culture of Disappearance* series. The third big work, the *Aviary of the Lost* was totally interactive with the audience because only two people could go down this 20-foot tunnel that dealt with extinction, and they had to take their shoes off. And the different kinds of responses. Students --- some of them would go into it and lie down for half an hour, which then nobody else might be able to come in -- you know, just listening to it and experiencing it.

Jacki Apple They were also multisensory, so much of my work became very much about different sense levels. In the case of *The Culture of Disappearance*, even smell, because there were feathers, knee deep in feathers, and they gave off a certain scent. And so I did work in a stairwell that was site-specific. A lot of site-specific installations in nature. In that sense, the works permeated different kinds of spaces in the way that you would experience them as site specific. I think the WindowWorks, the idea of the WindowWorks, came out again. I did a piece called *Hidden Desires* and the sponsoring curatorial person had gotten permission from this fancy shopping center in Pasadena. All the empty stores were given over to artists to make work for a month or whatever. And I took a storefront right on Fair Oaks Avenue, which is a very nice street with nice stores and cute little boutiques and a Metropolitan museum store, you know, and

the whole thing had to be seen through the window. And the piece was about information transmission, i.e. through organic material, via technology.

Jacki Apple And so the whole inside--- you look through the window --- it looked like there'd been an earthquake with fallen concrete blocks and earth, piles of earth and the colors of it, and everything and broken branches. Then it was filled with extinct technology --- five inch computer disks or cassettes, reel to reels, videos that where-- in other words the hardware five hundred years from now --- the hardware wouldn't be in existence. All the information would be trapped inside these plastic things that didn't deteriorate. Whereas huge amounts of information could be gathered from all the organic material. And the disparity between that. As a work, it was a storefront in an upscale, shopping center with fancy stores in it. It was complete. You couldn't go into it. You can only look at it through the window. It wasn't that big and was like a different way of thinking about how you use a window space, and kind of provocative because you couldn't. And it had a big photograph --- it was a person's shadow in nature, so just ghostlike. It was on the back wall.

Jacki Apple I think a lot of my installation work in the ~~in the~~ 90s involved audiences having to interact with it in some manner. In 2005, I did a site-specific piece in nature where it had been a year of drought, and was all about water --- a meditation on the absence of water. And it involved text and photographs embedded in these landforms. And so people walked up and down like you would on a hike, and I had little signs that told you about the different kinds of landforms, that looked like they were official. They had a logo from land management and water maintenance. I would say that all of the things that I had done, the question you're asking, did feed into my own work as an artist. Even the site-specific installations, even when the installation was in a museum like the one with the feathers, there was no permanence to any of it. It dealt with impermanence and with the immediacy of experience in which the viewer is both participant and viewer and interacting in one way either with the material, the site, the sound, the text.

Jacki Apple Yeah, I think that my curatorial philosophy when I was no longer in New York but in Los Angeles, where everything was so wide open, there weren't any kind of rules. Everybody self-produced and there was a very active and enthusiastic audience. So I think it really.... you know, before the Internet when people stopped going out... I think it's kind of, more important now than ever, that need for experience in real time and space.

Joey Vincennie We're all craving that now.

Jacki Apple Yeah, craving, craving face-to-face humanity, and also interactions with nature and with, you know, how that really functions in our lives. And why and how much we've lost. That was --- that was definitely part of my curatorial approach and how I approached my art after leaving the Furnace --- was about this level of interactivity or experiential situations. And the ephemerality of it, the impermanence. So it lives in memory because the documentation isn't the same.

Joey Vincennie Actually, now you bring up documentation, I do have a question for you because as I said, I'm still in some of the research phases of this work and am very interested in

how others reacted to this work. I'm hoping to find more reviews and things out there in the world about the Window Works. Do you remember if the series was written up a lot?

Jacki Apple Nobody wrote about them. I don't know. I cannot remember one piece that anybody ever wrote about. Maybe there was something written later about Barbara Kruger's piece because she got to be famous. And the story of Jenny Holzer's piece is almost like a kind of apocryphal, story to tell. Did that really happen? But aside from that, you know, it was a time when nobody was writing about most of the artists books. Nobody was writing about any of this stuff that was happening except years later when it related to a particular artist who received prominence or recognition or whatever. I would say that the best thing that you can do is to talk to as many of the artists who will talk to you and have that primary source of how they experienced the work, or what their intentions were, or if it turned out to be a surprising experience in terms of responses. And that's why I'm so glad you're talking to Beverly Naidus, because she has a very definite perspective on that. And I don't know who's still around, who's still alive and accessible, but maybe Jenny Holzer would give you an interview.

Joey Vincennie I should definitely reach out to her, since she does have one of the more, like you said, almost unbelievable stories.

Jacki Apple Because when the work was done, you know, who was she? She was just this young woman walking around, sticking up posters. I mean, that would hardly fit into any kind of commercial art world. You know, people rip them off poles, whatever it fell in the street and got dirty, walked on. She was just a young artist with some interesting ideas who was experimenting with public space. And so it seemed very fitting. Some of the people, I don't know what happened to Earl Ripling. Dara is still around and still alive. I think you should talk to Dara because she clearly had a very distinct idea about it as well, that was, photo/ text conceptual. Those works did work very well, but I don't remember. There were other kinds of works that I just don't remember what some of the others were. There is this one here of the typing piece, Ann Messner. And I think if I remember correctly, there were speakers outside so that people could hear outside what was going on inside, which was the sound of the typewriter and then all the pages that she was generating and typing. I don't remember whether she put the pages up in the window. I remember there were speakers outside so people could hear and that she just kept typing away. Ask her what she did with all the pages that came off of it. I don't know whether she ever read any of them aloud. I just don't remember. But it was an interesting use of the space, the inside/ outside situation.

Joey Vincennie Do you know Mr. Mental? I'm guessing you were still at Franklin Furnace because you said you left in the middle of 1980 or so.

Jacki Apple No. I've never heard of that person.

Joey Vincennie Okay.

Jacki Apple It doesn't strike any kind of chord with me. Everybody else does. I remember Ann and she made these books. And I remember Lois Polansky. But Mr. Mental does not strike a

chord. It just it must have been later, I mean, it was after Beverly. I think Beverly was one of the last things that I did. Mr. Mental must have been somebody else's friend.

Joey Vincennie I'll double check the press releases and see if I can find anything.

Jacki Apple It was a very specific category. Because it was this window and it had this idea that it was work that was conceptual and social like Beverly's work. Any more questions? I mean, I hope this is illuminating.

Joey Vincennie This is incredibly illuminating

Jacki Apple If you want to stay on screen and talk for a moment yourself, I'll bring up the bottle.

Joey Vincennie Great.

Jacki Apple OK, so, you know, in terms of those sculptural works, this is the Kay Hines piece. These are the Perrier bottles with the red cap, the little green bottle and inside the bottle is this text on a piece of paper that's handwritten and it's on lined notebook paper. And I'll read to you what's in this this page from the book. So think of the bottles, how she conceived of the bottles. Each one of them is like a page from a book, not necessarily the same book or in any particular order. And you got to have one page. And it says, "Wisdom is said to originate as an explosive headache, which then splits open the cranium like a cantaloupe in the next stage, flat mucus covered seeds dangle from sticky pulp clotted hairs down over the brow, causing a frown to appear, then pretty soon you should expect a good idea." Pretty neat!

Joey Vincennie I wish I could have been there to see it. I love this concept of a book as machine also.

Jacki Apple Yeah and so I still have this bottle all these years later and it's you know, Kay Hines artwork.

Joey Vincennie Did you ever open it up or has it been sealed?

Jacki Apple No, it's sealed. I've never attempted to open up, but it's completely stuck, you know, because it's very old and I suspect I mean, you can see look at the cap. So, no, it's never been opened. It's a pretty heavy glass, too, but, you know, she's available. She's in New York and she's still a good friend. She was married to Dieter Froese, the video artist. And so she's still in her loft downtown. And she was a person who came to the Furnace quite a lot. And I had to arm twist her to show her work.

Jacki Apple There were other people who showed there that might still be around. I can't remember all the different people. There were so many, you know, exhibitions in 1976, '77, '78, and '79. If you can think about there were at least 12 shows a year over four years, right? So that's 48 different shows and in some cases there were two artists that showed at the same time that wasn't necessary. There might be two artists with complementary work. And then there were

all the different cabinet shows and then the Window Works shows. There must have been at least somewhere between 16 and 20 shows in the window.

Joey Vincennie OK, well, then I definitely have some more digging to do, but this has definitely been fabulous and I feel like I've learned so much from talking with you over the past hour and a half. I really appreciate that.

Jacki Apple Well, it's been a great pleasure for me. It's delightful to go back and dig into my brain and go, OK. And thank you so much for the visuals, they sparked my memory, because then I went, oh, yeah, that person I remember. Yes, that was happening. So if you come up with more names or images and I can be of any further help, feel free to contact me.

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