

Wally, Maxine. "All the Must-See Art Shows of 2023 (So Far)." *W Magazine* (January 12, 2023) [ill.] [online]

W



Images courtesy of the artists. GIF by Ashley Peña.

CULTURE

01.12.23

All the Must-See Art Shows of 2023 (So Far)

by **Maxine Wally**

Describing the early 2023 arts calendar as “stacked” feels like an understatement. The sheer number of exhibitions, group shows, retrospectives, and openings is overwhelming in both number and scale. But fear not: we’ve put together a list of the highlights from the first few months of this year in New York City, Los Angeles, and other select cities throughout the United States. Consider this your grab-bag guide to the can’t-miss exhibitions of the season, and check back often—we’ll be updating this list as more events roll in.

Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures at 52 Walker



Pope.L, *studio*, 2022.
Courtesy of 52 Walker

52 Walker is kicking off the new year with *Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures*, an exhibition pairing the work of the site-specific artist Gordon Matta-Clark and the visual artist Pope.L. The TriBeCa space helmed by Ebony L. Haynes will unveil on February 3 an examination of the two artists' careers—specifically, their shared fixations on the problematic nature of institutions, language, scale, and value. Running through April 1, *Impossible Failures* will also feature a new site-specific installation by Pope.L, presented in collaboration with Mitchell-Innes & Nash. Personally, we can't wait to see the Newark, New Jersey native's take on Matta-Clark's preferred medium.

“Worldwide Exhibition Hitlist: Art Openings February 2023.” *Berlin Art Link* (January 31, 2023) [ill.] [online]



Worldwide Exhibition Hitlist: Art Openings February 2023

Jan. 31, 2023

Berlin Art Link is widening its horizons and launching a whole new format, highlighting not only Berlin's most worthwhile art exhibitions, but presentations and events happening all over the world. Every month, a new Worldwide Hit List will be bringing to the limelight artists, galleries, museums and new projects touching on a variety of topics, employing multiple media and featuring diverse subjects. Below are some of the stand-outs that we've selected for the month of February.

52 Walker

Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: 'Impossible Failures'

Exhibition: Feb. 3–Apr. 1, 2023

52walker.com

52 Walker Street, New York NY 10013, [click here for map](#)

This February, 52 Walker gallery is hosting its sixth exhibition, 'Impossible Failures,' which brings together for the first time projects by American artists Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L. While Matta-Clark was known for his large-scale architectural interventions and site-specific artworks, as well as for pioneering socially engaged food art, Pope.L is a visual artist and educator. His multidisciplinary practice draws on contemporary culture and uses binaries, contraries and preconceived notions to create artworks in various formats, such as writing, painting, performance, installation, video and sculpture. Focusing on their shared interest in the problematics of architecture, language, institutions, scale and value, 'Impossible Failures' features a selection of drawings as well as films by both artists. Pope.L will also debut a new site-specific installation.



Pope.L: 'studio,' 2022 // Photo courtesy of the artist and 52 Walker, New York

“Impossible Failures.” *Artforum* (February 3, 2023) [ill.] [online]

ARTFORUM

David Zwirner | 52 Walker Street Impossible Failures

[explore map](#)



DAVID ZWIRNER | 52 WALKER STREET
[52 Walker](#), [52walker.com](#)
Tue - Wed 10am to 6pm, Thu 10am to 8pm

MUST SEE
Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L
Impossible Failures
February 3 - April 1, 2023

52 Walker is pleased to announce its sixth exhibition, Impossible Failures, pairing work by Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L, debuting a new site-specific installation, in collaboration with Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.
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Lempesis, Dimitris. "Art Cities: N.York -Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L." *Dream Idea Machine* (February 4, 2023) [ill.] [online]



ART CITIES: N.York -Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L

By Dimitris Lempesis

Photo: 52 Walker Archive



The exhibition "Impossible Failures" is pairing the work of the site-specific artist Gordon Matta-Clark and the visual artist Pope.L., the exhibition is an examination of the two artists' careers—specifically, their shared fixations on the problematic nature of institutions, language, scale, and value. The exhibition is a collaboration of two Galleries: David Zwirner and Mitchell-Innes & Nash.

Matta-Clark and Pope.L are known for their respective interdisciplinary practices that examine the value and paradoxes of urban life as well as the risk inherent in art making. Through performance, film, drawing, and various multimedia projects, the two artists often opened up interstitial spaces by realizing sweeping gestures that take into account shifting, decentralized zones. Embracing the wide-ranging opportunities afforded by concepts around failure—and in their expression a consideration for hope—the two artists employed existing languages and systems to envision wholly original ideas that seemed absurd or unfathomable in order to expose standards and structures, and more importantly how playing with and within those systems considers what is newly possible. **“Impossible Failures”** juxtaposes a group of Pope.L’s **“Failure Drawings”** (initiated in 2003), which the artist creates on found materials when he is in transit, with conceptual sketches by Matta-Clark that conceive of and illustrate seemingly impossible ideas. Projected across the expansive walls of the space, Matta-Clark’s iconic **“Conical Intersect”** (1975) is shown with **“Bingo X Ninths”** (1974) and **“The Wall”** (1976/2007), in addition to a never-before-seen film by Pope.L that similarly suggests the act of destruction while obliterating it. In the center of the gallery, Pope.L created a new site-specific installation, **“Vigilance a.k.a Dust Room”** (2023). Together, the works on view suggest affinities in the two artists’ deliberate choice to visualize failure and the ample possibilities that result from welcoming the unknown.

Since the 1970s, **Pope.L** has pursued a dynamic multidisciplinary practice that has since shifted the paradigm of performance and installation art. As an MFA student at Rutgers University, he became known for his work **Times Square Crawl** (1978), which involved the artist dragging his body while on his hands and knees on West 42nd Street in Manhattan. Pope.L’s performance and subsequent **“crawls”** brought attention to those who were often made invisible in public spaces. Throughout his career as an artist and educator, he has continued to evaluate the limits of the body, identity, language, and personhood by irreverently manipulating form and content as well as revealing how these constructs are established and reified. A central figure of the downtown New York art scene in the 1970s, **Gordon Matta-Clark** pioneered a radical approach to art making that directly engaged the urban environment and the communities within it. Through his many projects—including large-scale architectural interventions in which he physically cut through buildings slated for demolition—Matta-Clark developed a singular and prodigious oeuvre that critically examined the structures of the built environment. With actions and experimentations across a wide range of media, his work transcended the genres of performance, conceptual, process, and land art, making him one of the most innovative and influential artists of his generation.

Photo: Pope.L studio, 2022. © Pope.L. Courtesy the artist and 52 Walker, New York

Info: Curator: Ebony L. Haynes, David Zwirner Gallery, 52 Walker St., New York, NY, USA, Duration: 3/2-1/4/2023, Days & Hours: Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat 10: -18:00m Thu: 12:00-20:00, <https://www.52walker.com/>

Altchek, Ana. "This Week In Culture: February 6 - 12, 2023." *Cultured* (February 6, 2023) [ill.] [online]

CULTURED

ART THIS WEEK IN CULTURE

This Week In Culture: February 6 - 12, 2023

In this week's art openings, creatives—including Elham Fallahi, Jess Valice, and Kelli Akashi—use varying mediums to explore realist and surrealist interpretations of the modern era.

WORDS

Ana Altchek

February 6, 2023



Pope.L, *studio*, 2022. Image courtesy of the artist and 52 Walker.

“Impossible Failures” by Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L**52 Walker New York**

Pope.L is known for examining the value and paradoxes of urban life through performance, film, and drawing, among other multimedia formats, as was Gordon Matta-Clark during his lifetime. Here, the artists' work seeks to challenge existing norms in language, architecture, and societal institutions. By finding hope in failure, possible futures are imagined, built upon the dismantling of current structures. “Impossible Failures” will be on view through April 1, 2023 at 52 Walker in New York.

Hullander, Megan. “‘Impossible Failures’ uncovers the shared fixations of Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L.” *Document* (February 6, 2023) [ill.] [online]

DOCUMENT

Above The Fold

‘Impossible Failures’ uncovers the shared fixations of Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L

Read time 1 minute

Text by

Megan Hullander

Posted

February 6, 2023



Gordon Matta-Clark, *The Wall*, 1976/2007 (still) © The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York Courtesy The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark and David Zwirner.

At 52 Walker, the artists' practices are examined through parallel motifs—the problematics of architecture, language, institutions, scale, and value

The oeuvres of Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L are enormously dissimilar, the former's eliciting a sense of isolation, and the latter's generally dominated by collectivity. But their foundations are rooted in shared fixations: the problematics of architecture, language, institutions, scale, and value. The interdisciplinary nature of their subject matters is mirrored in the artists' practices, which span across and experiment within the structures of numerous mediums, including performance, film, and drawing.

Curated by Ebony L. Haynes, *Impossible Failures* pairs the artists' works, which when placed beside one another, are only further resonant in their thematic parallels—guided by an unwavering fascination with decentralization, with repositioning one's gaze toward the urban landscape whose complexities are easily erased by the monotony of everyday life. The works of Matta-Clark and Pope.L challenge their audiences to engage, to stimulate that which one easily becomes numb to in a saturated landscape—their poignance lingering well past the experience of them face-to-face.



Pope.L studio, 2022. © Pope.L. Courtesy the artist and 52 Walker, New York.

Impossible Failures is on view at 52 Walker through April 1, 2023.

Type

Gordon Matta-Clark

Impossible Failures

Pope.L

Adams, Katherine C.M. "Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L's 'Impossible Failures'." *E-flux* (February 17, 2023) [ill.] [online]

e-flux

Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L's "Impossible Failures"

Katherine C. M. Adams



Pope.L, *Vigilance a.k.a. Dust Room*, 2023. Mirrors, wood, ducts, fan, extension cords, blue tarp, lights, utility cart, sound, electrical panels, particles, 353.1 x 598.8 x 598.8 cm. Image courtesy of 52 Walker, New York.

February 17, 2023

52 Walker, New York

February 3–April 1, 2023

Gordon Matta-Clark's film *Bingo X Ninths* (1974), which features a precise dismantling of all but the core of an abandoned house, has been projected at large scale along the first wall of 52 Walker. The door to the exhibition space intersects the projection, such that gallery visitors irrupt onto the image as they enter and exit. A perfectly circular hole, cut straight through the same gallery wall, also interferes with the clean transmission of the film. A layer of dust from this incision lines the gallery floor.

It's tempting to view such strategies as a literal self-reflexivity built into the gallery design: Matta-Clark's canonical building cuts overflowing onto the gallery's walls, making their mark on the present architectural space. Yet the pairing of Matta-Clark and Pope.L for "Impossible Failures" performs a different function, complicating Matta-Clark's practice on a more fundamental plane. Here, Matta-Clark appears to work vertically, in the air, through various forms of physical suspension, while Pope.L works laterally, low-to-the-ground, worm-like. Drawings by Matta-Clark with subjects such as *High Rise Excavation Diving Tower* (1974) show lofty engineering schemes that seem to resist the pull of gravity. The artist's three exhibited films all emphasize, to varying degrees, aerial vantage points or a strategic resistance to collapse—from *Conical Intersect* (1975)'s dramatic vistas over Paris; to *The Wall* (1976/2007), in which a ladder lifts West German viewers to see over the top of the Berlin wall; to *Bingo's* vertical cuts into a two-story structure. At choice moments, Pope.L's works have even been presented literally below Matta-Clark's (one of his "Failure Drawings" is hung directly below *The Wall*, nearly on the floor).

The pairing of these two artists—both obsessed by risky, raw encounters with the built environment, here along opposite axes—shifts the monumentality of Matta-Clark's urban cut-ups towards the crawlspaces Pope.L is wont to inhabit. Vice versa, Pope.L's pairing with Matta-Clark opens onto the machinic underbelly of his practice. Much of Pope.L's oeuvre—particularly his well-known, crawl-based performance works that take him on hands and knees across New York City—play with the visceral embodiment of lack and abjection to trace the deprivations of American life. Others focus on salvaged materials gathered from the street or amassed over time: a tendency echoed here in the "Failure Drawings" made between 2004 and '06 and sketched directly onto found ephemera, many centering worms and earthbound crevices. Voids are central to Pope.L's work—so much that the artist penned a "Hole Theory," an artist book from 2002, on their constitutive importance to his practice. Yet here, with body absent, "Impossible Failures" centers the machine as metabolizer of lack—chewing up the void and spitting it back out in a swarm of dust.

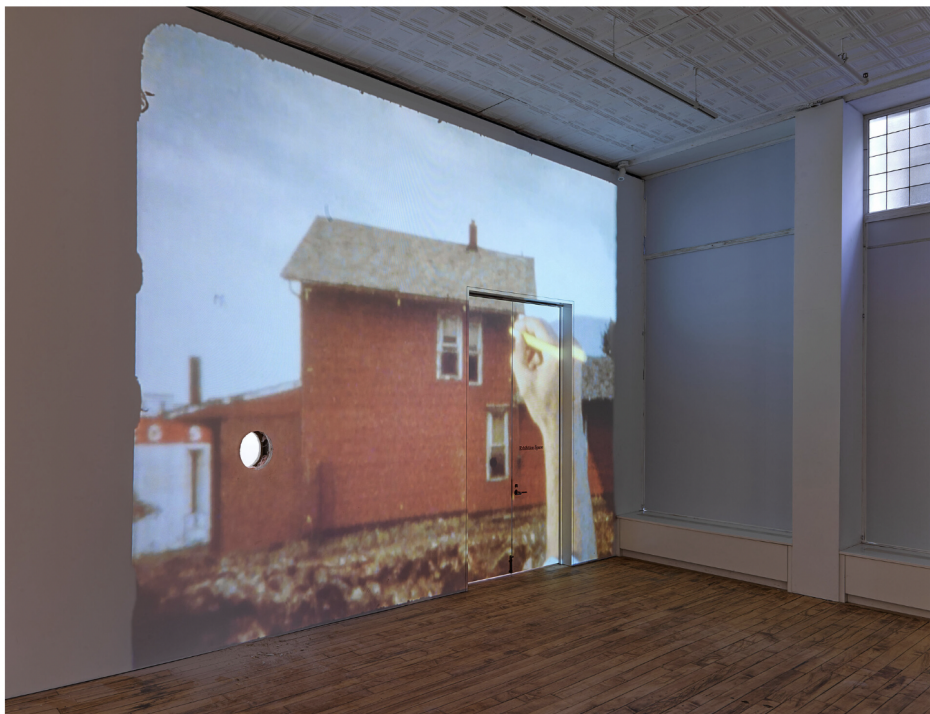
Pope.L's *Vigilance a.k.a. Dust Room* (2023)—an enclosed white cube with large air ducts coming out each side—dominates the core space of the exhibition. A sign laid atop a utility cart warns *Vigilance* should not be operated: “not ready for safety.” On either wall, two more Matta-Clark films are shown at large scale. Matta-Clark's landmark *Conical Intersect*—documenting the creation of one massive hole through Paris buildings that would later be demolished to build the Centre Pompidou—is projected between two walls, along a gallery corner. Drawings by both artists are featured throughout the space.

In its configuration here, projected along the right-angle of two adjacent walls in 52 Walker's space, *Conical Intersect* appears to slightly distort and elongate the growing architectural hole that is the focal point of Matta-Clark's video. Opening its maw around the viewer, this voided incision becomes elliptical—tunnel, portal. A video by Pope.L is installed directly left, set at the end of a narrow makeshift corridor. In the center of the gallery, *Vigilance*—whirring loudly and connected to bundles of wires, its ducts shaking from the pressure of rapid airflow—retains the appearance of a self-sustaining system, even if its warning sign seems to promise imminent implosion.

Contrasting the monumental, almost telescopic apparatus that *Conical Intersect* becomes throughout the course of Matta-Clark's video, Pope.L indulges our interest in viewing the belly of his device with only two small windows. No simple viewports into the otherwise closed work, they show an interior space lined with reflective material and saturated by a disorienting swirl of blue and white “particles.” *Vigilance*'s inside might be even more obscure (more absurd) than the exterior of the machine. The interior comes off as a game or trick, withholding whatever complex structural core seemed evident from *Vigilance*'s exterior architecture.

In a similar manipulation of visibility, Pope.L's video *Dust Eater a.k.a. White Woman Eating A Donut* (2007–2009/2022) renders its subject's mastication and persona almost unrecognizable—simultaneously exaggerating and blurring it, as though the consumption were turned inside out. The film appears less like a body in the process of consuming than a machine digesting the body. These works seem to highlight the everyday abrasions that common infrastructures continually expose us to. “Dust”—like the particles swirling in *Vigilance*, or the powdery residue filling the air of *Conical Intersect*—becomes a distraction from inevitable precarity, a spectacle of our own decomposition. Rather than compulsively “eating the dust”—consuming it as fascination, or creating “cuts” that fill the air with it—we might, Pope.L suggests, confront it more directly, attend to surfaces: crawl.

In “Impossible Failures,” Pope.L's grounding force runs the show—the gravitational pull against which Matta-Clark's stripped-down building cores seem to be suspended is constantly confronted by Pope.L's rooted sensibility. Matta-Clark's anarchitecture comes off as an “impossible failure” to the degree that these architectural destructions inevitably tend, albeit subversively, toward the monumental. Compared to Matta-Clark's dramatic cuts, Pope.L's granular “dusts” perhaps more closely approach the paradoxical materiality of the voids underlying infrastructure's failures and possibilities.



Gordon Matta-Clark, *Bingo X Ninths*, 1974. 16mm film, 9:40 minutes (color, silent). Installation view at 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Image courtesy of 52 Walker, New York.



View of Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L's "Impossible Failures," 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Image courtesy of 52 Walker.



Gordon Matta-Clark, *The Wall*, 1976/2007. Still from super 8, 15:00 minutes (color). © The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Image courtesy of The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark and David Zwirner, New York.



View of Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L's "Impossible Failures," 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Image courtesy of 52 Walker.



View of Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L's "Impossible Failures," 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Image courtesy of 52 Walker.



Pope.L, *Failure Drawing #1026 Rocket falling, Carrot and Mellon*, 2004. Ink and cut magazine paper collage on ruled paper, 12.1 x 14.3 cm. © Pope.L. Image courtesy of the artist and 52 Walker, New York.

“Hyperallergic’s Spring 2023 New York Art Guide.” *Hyperallergic* (February 21, 2023) [ill.] [online]

HYPERALLERGIC

Hyperallergic’s Spring 2023 New York Art Guide

A visual guide to the museum exhibitions and art events you should check out this season.



Hyperallergic 16 hours ago

It’s no secret that New York’s dynamic art scene is what brings our city to life. Dozens of museums, hundreds of art galleries, countless nonprofit spaces and temporary venues, and of course public art everywhere all add color and vitality to this sprawling metropolis. Spring may be the time for flowers, but we believe the real beauty of New York lies in its inclusiveness. There is something for everyone here, so go out and see it all!

Take a walk through one of our many public parks and soak in the marvelous architecture, landscaping, and art projects, or check out the commercial art galleries of Lower Manhattan to see some work by emerging and established artists alike. Or better yet, make a day of it and go museum-hopping to see some of the best art the city has to offer.

This guide is focused on the art institutions that help make this city great, highlighting the breadth of venues throughout the boroughs and a section on new art spaces we’re particularly excited about, as well as a few shows in the tri-state area for those who want to explore outside the city limits. Art in New York is unlike anything else in the world: Go make the most of it.

—Hrag Vartanian, *Editor-in-Chief, Co-founder*

Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures

Pope.L studio, 2022 (© Pope.L; courtesy the artist and 52 Walker, New York)

Artist Gordon Matta-Clark is best known for his “anarchitecture” works, made by sawing, carving, and drilling holes into buildings. Here, his drawings and films are exhibited alongside those of contemporary multimedia and performance artist Pope.L, whose practice also examines the complexities of architecture, institutions, and value. The show also includes a site-specific installation by Pope.L.

52 Walker (52walker.com)

52 Walker Street, Tribeca, Manhattan

Through April 1

"Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures at David Zwirner Gallery / 52 Walker Street, NYC (Video + Photo Story)." *Arte Fuse* (March 01, 2023) [ill.] [online]

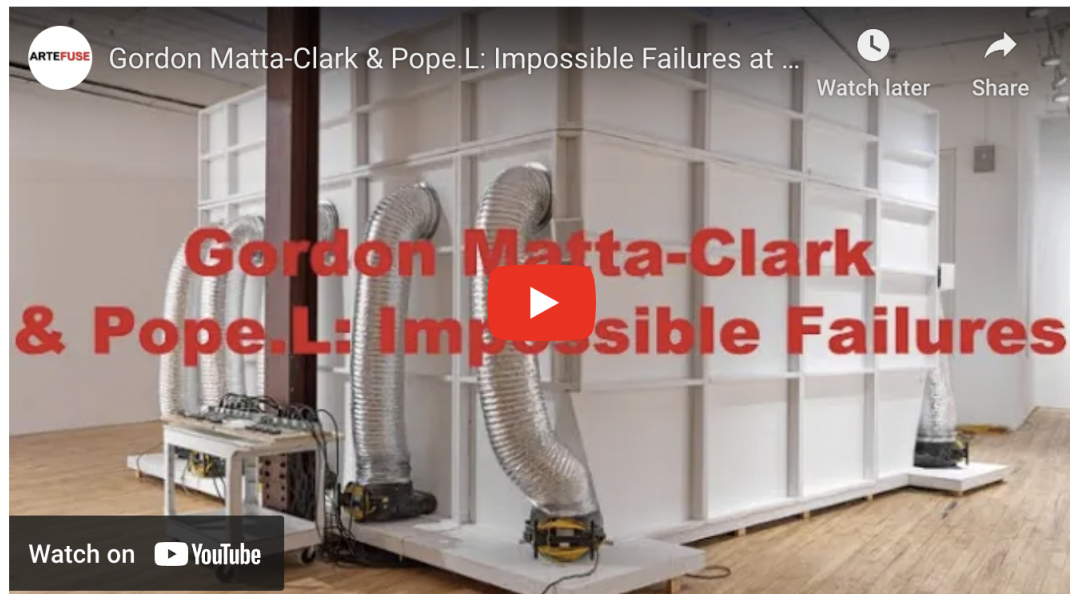
ARTEFUSE

CONCEPTUAL ART, FEATURED, PHOTO STORIES, REVIEWS AND PHOTO STORIES, SCULPTURE, TRIBECA, VIDEOS

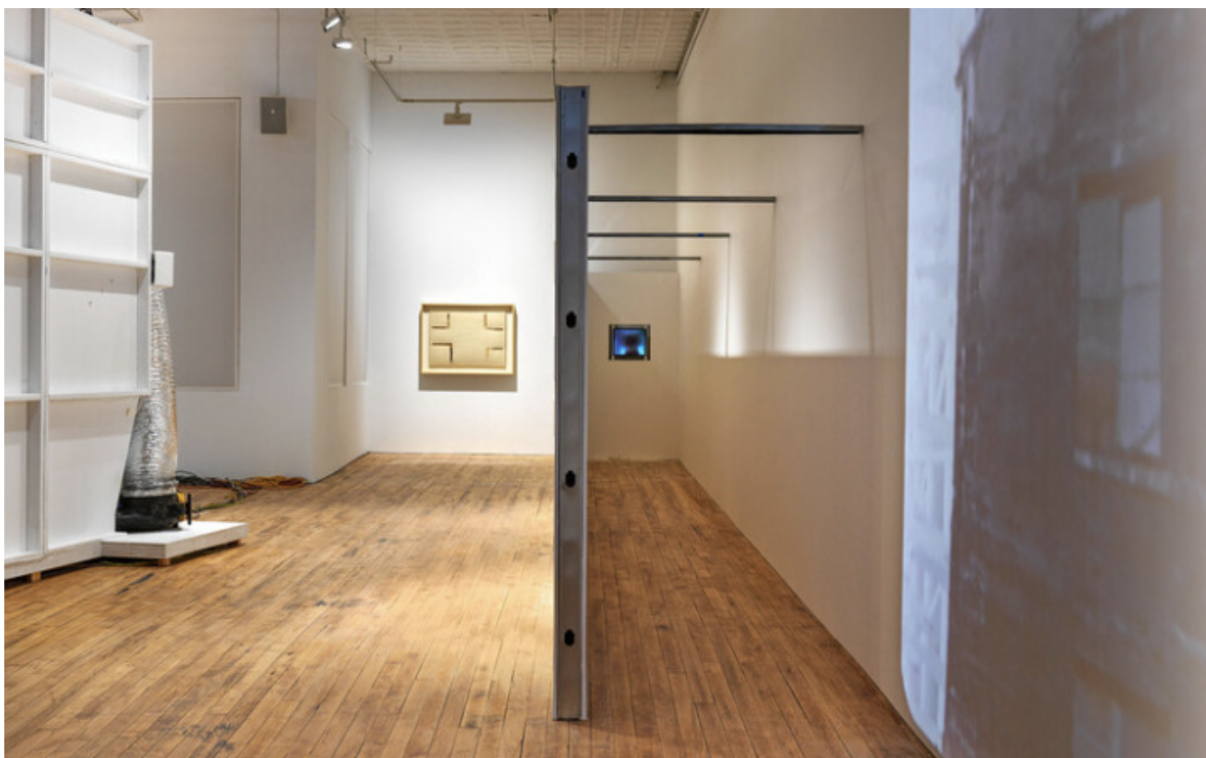
Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures at David Zwirner Gallery / 52 Walker Street, NYC (Video + Photo Story)



1 HOUR AGO by ADMIN



Installation view, Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L's "Impossible Failures" at David Zwirner Gallery, 52 Walker, NYC, 2023



Installation view, Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L's "Impossible Failures" at David Zwirner Gallery, 52 Walker, NYC, 2023



Installation view, Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L's "Impossible Failures" at David Zwirner Gallery, 52 Walker, NYC, 2023

Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures

52 Walker Street, New York, 10013, New York

February 3–April 1, 2023

All images courtesy of David Zwirner Gallery, 52 Walker, and the artists

PR- 52 Walker is pleased to announce its sixth exhibition, *Impossible Failures*, which will pair work by Gordon Matta-Clark (1943–1978) and Pope.L (b. 1955). The exhibition will focus on their shared fixation regarding the problematics of architecture, language, institutions, scale, and value.

Matta-Clark and Pope.L are known for their respective interdisciplinary practices that examine the value and paradoxes of urban life as well as the risk inherent in art making. Through performance, film, drawing, and various multimedia projects, the two artists often opened up interstitial spaces by realizing sweeping gestures that take into account shifting, decentralized zones. Embracing the wide-ranging opportunities afforded by concepts around failure—and in their expression, a consideration for hope—the two artists employed existing languages and systems to envision wholly original ideas that seemed absurd or unfathomable in order to expose standards and structures, and more importantly how playing with and within those systems considers what is newly possible.



Installation view, Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L's "Impossible Failures" at David Zwirner Gallery, 52 Walker, NYC, 2023

Since the 1970s, Pope.L has pursued a dynamic multidisciplinary practice that has since shifted the paradigm of performance and installation art. As an MFA student at Rutgers University, he became known for his work *Times Square Crawl* (1978), which involved the artist dragging his body while on his hands and knees on West 42nd Street in Manhattan. Pope.L's performance and subsequent "crawls" brought attention to those who were often made invisible in public spaces. Throughout his career as an artist and educator, he has continued to evaluate the limits of the body, identity, language, and personhood by irreverently manipulating form and content as well as revealing how these constructs are established and reified. The artist has been the subject of recent institutional solo presentations including *Pope.L: Between a Figure and a Letter* at Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin (2022); *Pope.L: Misconceptions* at Portikus, Frankfurt (2021); and *Instigation, Aspiration, Perspiration*, three complementary exhibitions of his work in New York organized by The Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and Public Art Fund (2019). He has also presented solo exhibitions at La Panacée, Montpellier, France (2018); The Geffen Contemporary, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2015); and the Renaissance Society, University of Chicago (2013). Pope.L is represented by Mitchell-Innes & Nash, and his work is held in numerous collections worldwide.

This dual presentation juxtaposes a group of Pope.L's *Failure Drawings* (initiated in 2003), which the artist creates on found materials when he is in transit, with conceptual sketches by Matta-Clark that conceive of and illustrate seemingly impossible ideas. Projected across the expansive walls of the space, Matta-Clark's iconic *Conical Intersect* (1975) will be shown with *Bingo X Ninths* (1974) and *The Wall* (1976/2007), in addition to a never-before-seen film by Pope.L that similarly suggests the act of destruction while obliterating it. In the center of the gallery, Pope.L will also mount a new site-specific installation, *Vigilance a.k.a Dust Room* (2023). Together, the works on view suggest affinities in the two artists' deliberate choice to visualize failure and the ample possibilities that result from welcoming the unknown.

A central figure of the downtown New York art scene in the 1970s, Gordon Matta-Clark pioneered a radical approach to art making that directly engaged the urban environment and the communities within it. Through his many projects—including large-scale architectural interventions in which he physically cut through buildings slated for demolition—Matta-Clark developed a singular and prodigious oeuvre that critically examined the structures of the built environment. With actions and experimentations across a wide range of media, his work transcended the genres of performance, conceptual, process, and land art, making him one of the most innovative and influential artists of his generation. The artist's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at prominent institutions worldwide, including *Gordon Matta-Clark: "You Are The Measure,"* a retrospective held at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, which traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2007–2008). In 2017–2020, Matta-Clark's work was the focus of a critically acclaimed traveling exhibition, *Gordon Matta-Clark: Anarchitect*, that was on view at The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York; Jeu de Paume, Paris; Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia; and the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. Recent institutional solo exhibitions were presented at the Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Austria (2021–2022), and MAMCO Genève, Switzerland (2022–2023). The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark has been represented by David Zwirner since 1998, and his work is held in numerous international collections.

Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures is curated by Ebony L. Haynes and presented by 52 Walker. The work of Pope.L is presented in cooperation with Mitchell-Innes & Nash.

Mdivani, Nina. "Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L "Impossible Failures" 52 Walker, New York." *Flash Art* (Spring 2023): 34-35 [ill.] [print]

Flash Art



**FUCK THE BAUHAUS
(NEW SCULPTURE)**



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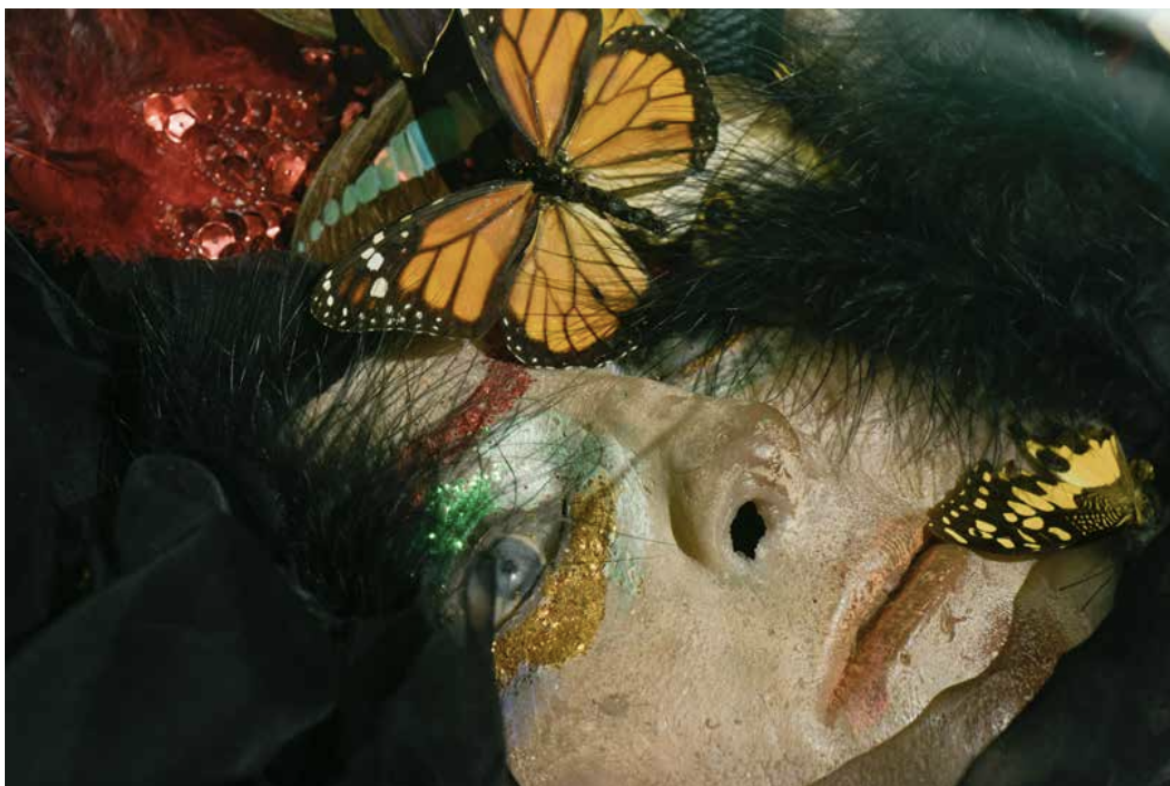
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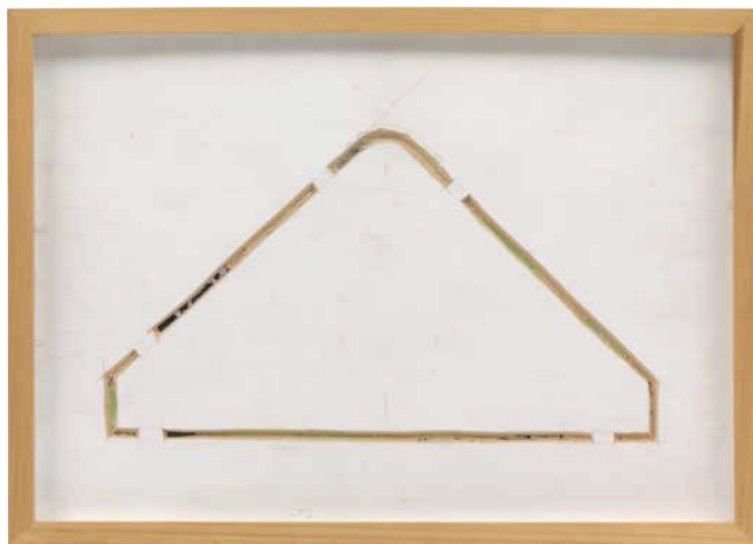
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52W

Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L “Impossible Failures” 52 Walker, New York by Nina Mdivani

The concept of impossibility changes over time, reflecting larger shifts in consciousness and zeitgeist. What is probable becomes common and therefore devalued; newness arises from breaking the old and working with the remaining shreds. In this thoughtful juxtaposition of two seminal artists, Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L, curated by Ebony L. Haynes at 52 Walker, deconstruction takes on poetic and metaphoric meaning rather than a theoretical version of postmodernism. Failure to bring an idea to fruition does not necessarily constitute a failure of effort; futility may become the end goal precisely for this reason. An ephemerality of material outcome — to which both artists subscribe in the works on view — is in opposition to the age-old commodification of art into objects. Relational aesthetics step in, and the totality of social history is examined through the lenses of anarchy, dismantling, and transformation. One would agree that the disillusioned American society of the 1970s and '80s needed these different lenses to take a closer look at the status quo; Matta-Clark and Pope.L were pioneers from two subsequent generations who undertook this reexamination. In today's age of total commodification, dislocation, and disquiet, revisiting their works is refreshing.

Matta-Clark's approach to deconstructing existing architecture using building fragments, bulldozers, facades, and partitions as source

material created a new poetry of dislocation. Looking at the three videos presented at 52 Walker, Matta-Clark's anarchitecture — his idiosyncratic synthesis of anarchy and architectural norms — is as fresh today as when it was conceived in the mid-1970s. Matta-Clark clearly saw architecture's embodiment of dominant systems of power as an adversary to be fought with vehemence and irony. His elegant sketches throughout the gallery imply different impossibilities, but they do so with precision and foresight; there is little humor here, just an astute questioning of structure and its limits.

Pope.L's continuous stance has been that of an activist fighting underlying systems of subjection built into urban life. He continues to do so here with a fresh spin, in this case a spinning movement produced within a gigantic site-specific installation called *Vigilance a.k.a. Dust Room* (2023.) Thousands of plastic particles mingle inside this room without purpose or hindsight. In a way it is a reminder of our own spinning orbits that we would like to see as centered and grounded, yet are at the mercy of a bigger dynamic. Likewise, Pope.L's previously unseen video *Dust Eater a.k.a. White Woman Eating a Donut* (2007–09/2022) presents a provocative take on a seemingly mundane fact of existence. The conceptual unravelling of social architectonics is visually presented throughout via circular holes in gallery walls with sawdust still

on the floor. Curator and artist are strong collaborators in this space, building on their longstanding professional relationship. Pope.L's drawings, sketched out on napkins, hotel stationery, and newspapers, evoke phantasmagoric structures. Their eventual completed state is not relevant; a dismantling of the expectations of language is more to the point. As in Louis Althusser's materialism of encounter, dislocation is an end in itself.

There is a communal element that brings these two artists together, as they would not exist outside of their communities of support and common adversaries. Using different epistemologies and methods, both artists worked against the same normative elements within the dominant system, making equally strong statements relevant to 2023. In this exhibition, failure, or rather the perception of it, becomes a virtue. It is a message we do not often receive within today's art system.



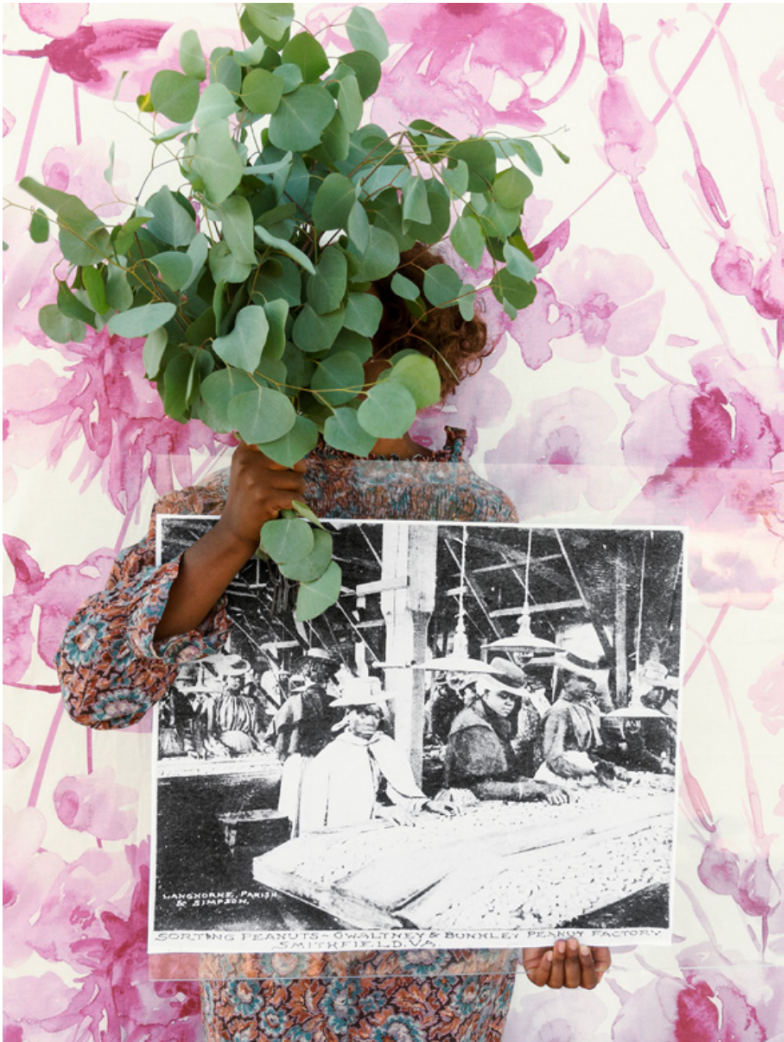
“There is a communal element that brings these two artists together, as they would not exist outside of their communities of support and common adversaries.”

Vartanian, Hrag. “Spring 2023 New York Art Guide.” *Hyperallergic* (March 2023): 5, 18 [ill.] [print]

Spring 2023 New York Art Guide

Your list of must-see, insightful, and very New York art events and exhibitions

HYPERALLERGIC



Xaviera Simmons, “Sundown (Number Five)” (2019), chromogenic color print (courtesy the artist and David Castillo Gallery)

Inside: A visual guide to the museum exhibitions and art events you should check out, including this season’s art fairs. Plus a special section featuring new art spaces and venues in New York City.

Hyperallergic is a forum for playful, serious, and radical perspectives on art and culture in the world today. Founded in 2009, *Hyperallergic* is headquartered in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

hyperallergic.com

Letter from the editor:

It's no secret that New York's dynamic art scene is what brings our city to life. Dozens of museums, hundreds of art galleries, countless nonprofit spaces and temporary venues, and of course public art everywhere all add color and vitality to this sprawling metropolis.

Spring may be the time for flowers, but we believe the real beauty of New York lies in its inclusiveness. There is something for everyone here, so go out and see it all!

Take a walk through one of our many public parks and soak in the marvelous architecture, landscaping, and art projects, or check out the commercial art galleries of Lower Manhattan to see some work by emerging and established artists alike. Or better yet, make a day of it and go museum-hopping to see some of the best art the city has to offer.

This guide is focused on the art institutions that help make this city great, highlighting the breadth of venues throughout the boroughs and a section on new art spaces we're particularly excited about, as well as a few shows in the tri-state area for those who want to explore outside the city limits. Art in New York is unlike anything else in the world: Go make the most of it.



—Hrag Vartanian
Editor-in-Chief, Co-founder

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Design: Peter Rentz
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Music as Image and Metaphor
Kentier International
Drawing Space
Through March 26

353 Van Brunt Street
Red Hook, Brooklyn

This multidisciplinary exhibition features 41 artworks by 28 artists, each accompanied by short musical scores created by composer and pianist Michael Kowalski and percussionist and composer Allen Otte. The etchings, drawings, paintings, and more also reflect on music — they were all inspired by sound or seek to directly depict it in visual form.

(Right to left) Artworks by Keiko Hara, Molly Snyder-Fink, and Hannah Israel in *Music as Image and Metaphor* (2021) at the Bo Bartlett Center in Columbus, Georgia (courtesy Kentier International Drawing Space)



Craft & Conceptual Art: Reshaping the Legacy of Artists' Books
Center for Book Arts
Through March 25

A thought-provoking selection of artists' books developed from the mid-1960s onward questions viewers' preconceived notions about the bifurcation of craftwork and conceptual art. Using the process of bookbinding as a thread to tie the two back together, curator Megan N. Liberty revitalizes the appreciation of materiality and intentional audience interaction inherent in book arts by highlighting the power of DIY zines, handmade single editions, and mass-printed photobooks.

Installation view of *Craft & Conceptual Art: Reshaping The Legacy of Artists' Books*, left to right: John Eric Broadbush, *Spin 1/2*; Books, Paintings and Memorabilia (1990) (Broadside and book); Yoko Ono, *Pennyviews* (1996); Cecilia Vicuña, *Palabra e hilo / Word & thread* (1996); and Liliana Porter, *New York 1972* (1972) (photo by Oswaldo Garcia)

28 West 27th Street, 3rd Floor
Flatiron, Manhattan



Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures
52 Walker
Through April 1

52 Walker Street
Tribeca, Manhattan

Artist Gordon Matta-Clark is best known for his "anarchitecture" works, made by sawing, carving, and drilling holes into buildings. Here, his drawings and films are exhibited alongside those of contemporary multimedia and performance artist Pope.L, whose practice also examines the complexities of architecture, institutions, and value. The show also includes a site-specific installation by Pope.L.

Pope.L studio, 2022
(© Pope.L; courtesy the artist and 52 Walker, New York)



Juan Francisco Elso: Por América
El Museo del Barrio
Through March 26

Born in post-revolution Havana, Juan Francisco Elso was a pivotal figure in the city's 1970s and '80s art scene, when artists ushered in a new, experimental era of Cuban art. This show surveys Elso's poignant practice, which was cut short by his untimely death at the age of 32. His sculptural works, constructed mostly with organic and found materials such as twigs, soil, and even his own blood, are set in poetic conversation with pieces by more than 30 artists, including Belkis Ayón, Ana Mendieta, and Lorraine O'Grady.

Detail from Juan Francisco Elso, "El Viajero [The Traveler]" (1986), carved wood, branches, ashes, and wax (courtesy Colección y Archivo de Fundación Televis (Collection and Archive of Fundación Televisa))

1230 Fifth Avenue
East Harlem, Manhattan



Jaune Quick-to-See Smith:
Memory Map
Whitney Museum of American Art
April 19–Aug.

99 Gansevoort Street
Meatpacking District, Manhattan

Long overdue, this is the first New York retrospective of the celebrated 83-year-old Native American artist, spanning almost five decades of her career. Always rooted in ancestral knowledge and heritage, her work uses methods of appropriation to address issues of land, white supremacy, and cultural preservation and erasure in contemporary American society and history.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, "War Horse in Babylon" (2005), oil and acrylic on canvas, two panels, 60 inches x 100 inches overall (photo courtesy the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York; Forge Project Collection, traditional lands of the Muh-he-con-ne-ok)



Tracey Rose:
Shooting Down Babylon
Queens Museum
April 23–Sept. 10

Grand Central Parkway and Van Wyck Expressway
Flushing Meadows–Corona Park, Queens

Understanding her own body as a site of resistance, Tracey Rose challenges the interlinked forces of racism, gender, and class through provocative works that echo the performance art of the 1960s and '70s, yet are entirely her own. A selection of her pieces reflects her commitment to this experimental approach, in which she confronts systems of power, along with a newer exploration of ritual restoration and healing.

Tracey Rose, "San Pedro V" (2005), giclée print, 33.43 inches x 24.98 inches (courtesy the artist)



Daniel Lind-Ramos:
El Viejo Griot: Una historia de todos nosotros
MoMA PS1
April 20–Sept. 4

Artist Daniel Lind-Ramos meditates on Afro-Puerto Rican and Caribbean histories, practices, and traditions through innovative use of found objects, harnessing the power of the everyday. This exhibition, the most comprehensive museum show in his career, brings together large-scale works whose presence and detail address the impact in Puerto Rico of Hurricane María, COVID-19, and more.

22-25 Jackson Avenue
Long Island City, Queens

Daniel Lind-Ramos, "Armario de la Memoria" (2012), assemblage, 108 inches x 65 inches x 36 inches (photo by Pierre Le Hors, courtesy MoMA PS1)



The People's Ball
Brooklyn Public Library
April 30

Held the night before the Met Gala in the lobby of Brooklyn's Central Library, this fashion-forward ball is a refreshingly inclusive alternative to Anna Wintour's celebrity-focused event. It's free, and New Yorkers from all walks of life show up in their kookiest and most creative outfits. Past years have included a red carpet, a runway, and an impressive lineup of performances.

10 Grand Army Plaza
Prospect Heights, Brooklyn

The People's Ball at the Brooklyn Public Library in 2022 (photo by Gregg Richards)

Bob Thompson
52 Walker
April–July

Lost too early, at age 28 in 1966, Bob Thompson stood out as one of the most daring artists of his time. While most of his New York peers were stranded deep in the cult of abstraction, he developed his own figurative style where humans, animals, and phantoms mingle about in intensely vivid colors. His career lasted less than a decade but left an indelible mark on American art history. This show will provide a chance to celebrate his peerless legacy and mourn the void created by his absence.

52 Walker Street
Tribeca, Manhattan

Diehl, Travis. “What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in March.” *The New York Times* (March 2, 2023) [ill.] [online]

The New York Times

What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in March

Want to see new art in the city? Check out Karen Kilimnik whimsical paintings or Ray Materson’s astonishing embroideries.

 Give this article





By Max Lakin, Jillian Steinhauer, Travis Diehl and John Vincler

March 2, 2023, 2:34 p.m. ET4 MIN READ

TRIBECA

Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L

Through April 1. 52 Walker, 52 Walker Street, Manhattan; 212-727-1961, 52walker.com.



Gordon Matta-Clark’s “Conical Intersect,” (1975), left, and “Bingo X Ninths” (1974), right, depicting poetic building demolitions, are projected onto the gallery walls, as if the walls themselves are being cut through. Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; via 52 Walker, New York

A cartoonish cacophony governs the inspired pairing of Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L in the show “Impossible Failures” at Zwirner’s revamped downtown space. Matta-Clark, of course — who died in 1978 at just 35 — famously, elegantly sliced and severed condemned buildings, including in the South Bronx. He was also among the artists who homesteaded SoHo in the 1970s, and his work’s presence in 52 Walker feels pointed. Three videos (transferred from films) depicting cuts in progress are projected onto three walls; where Matta-Clark and crew bore through Parisian flats in documentation of “Conical Intersect,” it’s almost like they’re sawing into the gallery.



Pope.L's “Vigilance a.k.a. Dust Room,” from 2023, at 52 Walker. via 52 Walker, New York and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

Pope.L actually has: The first work visitors see is a one-foot-diameter circle hacked through the wall of the building's foyer, comically puncturing one of the Matta-Clark projections on the other side and deflating the solemn white cube. Known for abject performances, especially a series of epic "crawls" around New York dressed as a businessman (or Superman), Pope.L brings a sardonic sense of urbanism to Matta-Clark's poetic one. A new installation by Pope.L, "Vigilance a.k.a. Dust Room," sits at the gallery's center: A white box of two-by-fours and plywood, rigged with shop fans on timers, sounds like a choir of leaf blowers. Two small windows on one side reveal its dim interior thick with whirling foam pellets, light and dark. It's powerful and unhinged and overbuilt — a monument to the entropy of the postindustrial city, and the tenuous dance of its inhabitants. *TRAVIS DIEHL*

Di Riccardo, Conti. "*Impossible Failures* , the exhibition that makes Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L." *Harper's Bazaar* (March 14, 2023) [ill.] [online]

BAZAAR

Lifestyle > Art

Impossible Failures , the exhibition that makes Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L

Anarchist of sculpture and revolutionary architectural concepts the first, poetic performer and activist the second. The exhibition that the space 52 Walker proposes is a dialogue between the two true monotype artists of the contemporary.



BY RICCARDO CONTI / 03/14/2023



Opened in 2021 in New York, 52 Walker is the outpost conceived by gallerist David Zwirner with the intention of offering a different space in which to experience and enjoy art. Directed by gallery owner and curator Ebony L. Haynes, from the outset it has proposed exhibitions which seek, as stated by Haynes, to "get away from the frenetic pace of commercial galleries". This attempt to practice a sort of desynchronization from that standard 'white cube' format, of the so-called *blue chip galleries* - like Zwirner itself - would like to bring the public closer to a different 'listening' time, and try to present with new keys reading the work of great artists perhaps not yet fully perceived as such by the general public.

Located in the former building where the M1-5 Lounge club was located, within the highly gentrified Tribeca district, the space is vast and sumptuous, and invites the public to long stays in the premises as the exhibitions conceived up to now enjoy more dilated exhibitions than those of a commercial gallery - they last about three months, compared to the more typical four-week format -.



KERRY MCFATE

After a series of interesting exhibitions, which began precisely in 2021 with the dense solo exhibition of the young African-American artist Kandis Williams, the exhibition/dialogue opened last February which sees two equally atypical and fundamental artists: Gordon Matta-Clark (1943-1978) and Pope.L (b. 1955) titled *Impossible Failures* .

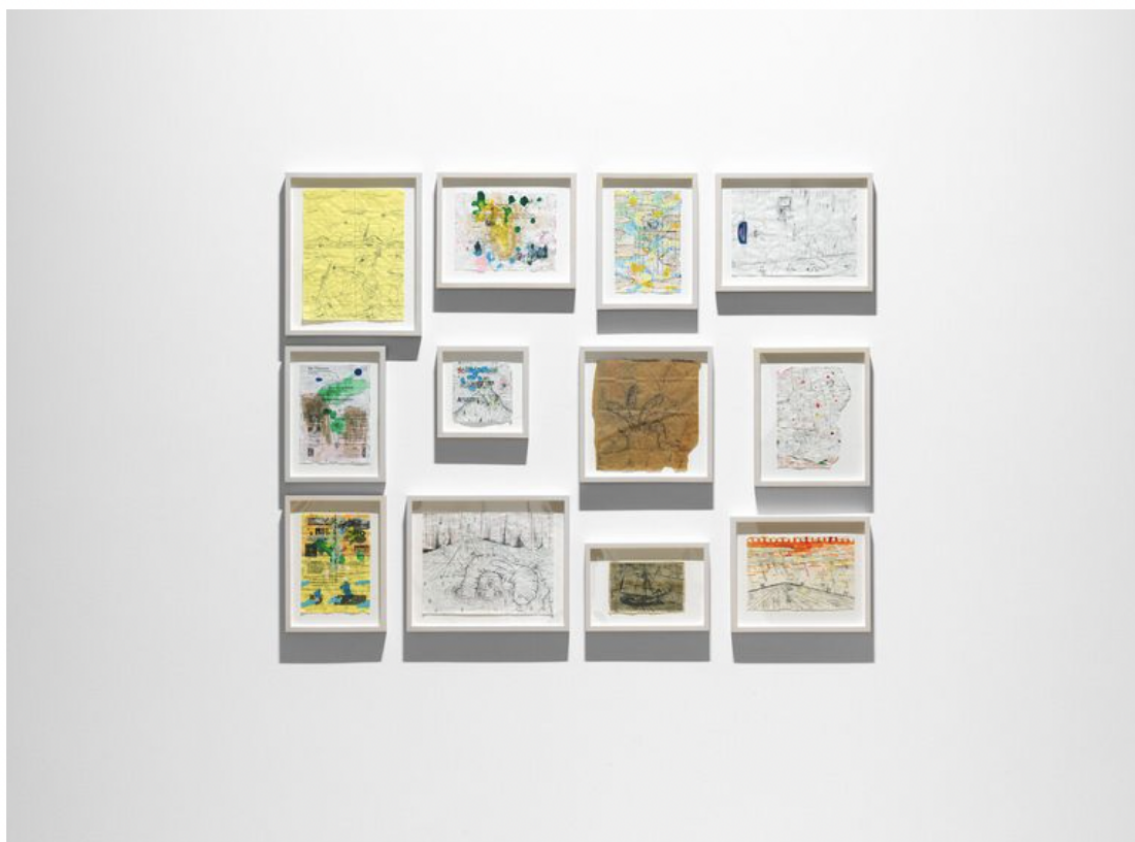
Not so distant generationally, yet divided by very heterogeneous biographies, the work of both has found a meeting point in the shared radicalism of the approach to art, and the visitation of themes concerning the most problematic aspects of urban, social, of architecture and the value of art inside and outside institutions. Throughout their careers, both artists have employed unconventional languages and approaches, which could even appear as absurd and without any artistic value but, in doing so, they anticipated forms and ideas today taken seriously even outside the perimeters of the art. 'art-world'. Gordon Matta-Clark, son of the Chilean surrealist painter Roberto Matta, is today considered an absolute point of reference by theorists of the experimental architecture. While still studying architecture at the prestigious Cornell University, he began to push the sense of that discipline to the limit, raising crucial questions, for example on the sanitization of spaces; Matta-Clark supported the importance of the encounter between organic and inorganic materials, of the encounter with everything that we still fear today could jeopardize cleanliness and our domestic health.



KERRY MCFATE

In one of his first experiments later considered real works of art, *Agar* (1969), the artist caused mold and bacterial colonies to proliferate on a sheet of metal. For Matta-Clark, garbage itself was 'architecture', already reflecting at the dawn of the 1970s on concepts such as recycling, which has now become a fundamental and extended theme well beyond pure artistic experimentation. The artist also theorized the possibility of housing modules made with the scraps and refuse of the community to which he belonged, in a biodynamic vision of architecture that we have begun to glimpse as real solutions only in very recent times and still in very circumscribed contexts.

Subsequently, the artistic mark of Matta-Clark was crystallized not so much in works and objects, but more in the documentation of his architectural feats, or rather of *Anarchitecture* a term specially coined to restore the anarchic and liberating dimension of his deeds: if his architectural education was still based on the dogmas of modernism, of that almost virtual, purist and de-humanised idea of spaces, Clark frequented uninhabited lots and structures or in demolition road, making cuts with the carpenter's tools, he sculpted openings, geometric and out-of-scale openings, reorganizing not so much the function of the building, but its spatial perception and the idea of an architecture in constant evolution with structural modifications that went as far as the self-destruction of the building itself. Matta-Clark did much more: he meditated on the concept of community, setting up bars, places of conviviality and imagining his exhibitions of him as living organisms.



KERRY MCFATE

In the same seventies that also marked the early end of Matta-Clark's research, the African-American artist William Pope.L Pope - better known simply as Pope.L - had already started a personal multidisciplinary research which has since marked the paradigms themselves of performance and activism. As a student at Rutgers University he made his name in 1978 with his famous *Times Square Crawl* performance which saw the artist dragging himself on his knees along West 42nd Street in Manhattan. This and other actions by Pope.L have shifted attention to those citizens who lived on the margins of public spaces, as unwelcome presences, outside any health system and therefore made invisible by the system that expelled them as waste from buildings.

Looking back on his career, his actions and his interventions in the streets, one can see how much such projects have really made a difference; using various media, Pope.L, far from the coolness of figures like Jean Michel Basquiat, has given the marginalized a voice and a representation and has critically highlighted the oppressive and racist mechanisms of America in its daily life, as well as the very concept of art understood as a means of emancipation.



IMAGE COURTESY THE ESTATE OF GORDON MATTA-CLARK AND DAVID ZWIRNER, NEW YORK

The precious exhibition hosted at 52 Walker manifests the values and paradoxes of urban life through their respective interdisciplinary practices, but also the need of that generation to express themselves artistically in radical terms and without a real parachute. Through performances, films, drawings and various multimedia projects, Matta Clark and Pope.L have illuminated interstitial physical and social spaces, creating gestures whose resonance can be found in the practice of dozens of contemporary artists and authors. The title of the exhibition, conceived by the curator Ebony L.Haynes, focuses on the opportunity to review the concept of failure: not as a nefarious prospect to be avoided, but as an attitude full of hope in conceiving completely original solutions with maximum freedom they seemed absurd or preposterous and which instead have become "structural" in the languages of art and beyond.

Norman, Lee Ann. "Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures." *The Brooklyn Rail* (March 15, 2023) [ill.] [online]



Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: *Impossible Failures*

By **Lee Ann Norman**



Installation view: *Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures*, 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Courtesy 52 Walker, New York and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.

ON VIEW
52 Walker
Impossible Failures
February 3–April 1, 2023
New York

The writer and playwright Samuel Beckett believed that failure was essential to an artist's work, ultimately helping them to succeed. A well-known line from his 1983 novella *Worstward Ho* admonishes one to "fail again" and to "fail better," two sentiments the sixth exhibition at 52 Walker explores with great subtlety. In *Impossible Failures*, director Ebony L. Haynes focuses on works by Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L that explore the social conditions of space and how creative experimentation might help us to dream of a world that can hold the tension inherent in such social relationships. Through more than forty works spanning drawing, installation, and video, *Impossible Failures* proposes many gentle pushes that encourage engagement over confrontation.

Many of Matta-Clark and Pope.L's performative interventions could be considered overt—noisy incisions into abandoned buildings, a restaurant that serves as an art project, the stench of spoiling food, a man crawling along an urban thoroughfare wearing a suit—but they are really more like unsettled ideas. Pope.L's *Failure Drawings* (2003–ongoing) are made exclusively while the artist is traveling, often using scraps of paper like receipts or hotel stationery as their canvas. Worms, nature and landscapes, references to outer space, and glasses are rendered repeatedly, often bringing to mind particular preoccupations including transience, life and death, and the passage of time. Although the drawings are not meant to be read or understood as one cohesive narrative, their feeling of unresolve—as if testing out a pen—is more akin to iterative brainstorming sessions. In *Failure Drawing #997 Four Scenes* (2004), Pope.L's marks give viewers a different perspective on the idea of space travel and the discovery of new lands. In one quadrant, a rocket appears to blast off while in another, it lands; a worm inhabitant of this world notices the event, poking its head up through the ground, and puts on its glasses to see what's going on, all acts that seem to occur without the rocket ship occupants noticing. In other drawings such as *Failure Drawing #127 I Have This Fear...* (2004) and *Failure Drawing #33 Red Cloud* (2004–06), Pope.L has added multiple dates and sentences with different ideas, indicating that he revisits some of the preoccupations within these works by physically altering them over time.



Installation view: Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: *Impossible Failures*, 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Courtesy 52 Walker, New York and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.

Matta-Clark's drawings embody similar kinds of contemplation, ideation, and brainstorming. The two-sided works of the "Dragon Building" series (1978) are rendered on white, lined paper, making the competing ideas on each side visible, and simultaneously forcing the viewer to make sense, make connections, or suspend belief about the (im)possibility of various hot-air-powered contraptions and how much weight they might lift. Similar reverie occurs in *Flag Pole Housing* (1974), where the artist sketches a shelter on a flagpole and in *A Marbled Mirrored Ball Room in the Way of the 2nd Ave Subway* (1974), a nod to the controversy surrounding the proposed subway stops that privileged wealthier east side neighborhoods.

The show's focus on juxtaposing the drawings of these two artists opens up a conversation about how Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L each have tried various approaches to the ongoing social conundrum of how to move what and who is marginal toward the center, drawing attention to the invisible and the overlooked. References to Matta-Clark's *Conical Intersect* (1975), which now only exists as video documentation, abound throughout the exhibition. Circular gouges into 52 Walker's walls and the accompanying drywall dust left on the floor echo his contribution to the Paris Biennale of the same year, when he bored a large, tornado-shaped hole through two neighboring seventeenth-century Parisian buildings that would be demolished to make way for the construction of the new and controversial Centre Pompidou. Matta-Clark's gesture, a comment on the transformation and gentrification of the neighborhood, invited passersby to consider the fleeting nature of history as they experienced another vantage point of the construction site, this time through the lens of spaces two centuries old.



Pope.L, *Failure Drawing #184*, 2004-2007 © Pope.L Courtesy the artist, 52 Walker, New York, and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.

Pope.L's massive installation *Vigilance a.k.a. Dust Room* (2023) faces a projection of the video documentation for *The Wall* (1976/2007), a performance Matta-Clark enacted after reconsidering his initial aim of going to Berlin and blowing up a section of the Berlin Wall. The dust room whirrs and chugs with industrial starts and stops, much like the construction equipment Matta-Clark would have used to bore that tornado-shaped hole in the Parisian buildings, a sound now only imagined in the silence of the existing documentation. In a similarly poetic gesture, Pope.L's *Failure Drawing #184* (2004-07) is installed on its side, leaning against *The Wall*'s wall, its own impossible failure being that it, too, is ultimately incomplete, its revision uncertain. *Impossible Failures* shows that for both artists, a gesture can be a question, a comment—a request to disrupt the status quo through imagining and conjuring, all in hopes of seeing something differently, or perhaps even for the first time.

Haimes, Helena. "Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L: Impossible Failures." *The Brooklyn Rail* (March 16, 2023) [ill.] [online]



ArtSeen

Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L: *Impossible Failures*

By **Helena Haimes**



Installation view: *Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures*, 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Courtesy 52 Walker, New York and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.

ON VIEW

52 Walker

Impossible Failures

February 3–April 1, 2023

New York

When I first arrived in New York City seven years ago, what first hit me was the noise. It's a relentless soundtrack that forces the metropolis' renowned energy straight through you: cars honking, sirens blaring, jackhammers juddering, construction sites clanking, and throngs of people shouting and screaming to be heard over it all. Usually, stepping into a gallery provides temporary respite. Unless, that is, you've decided to check out *Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L: Impossible Failures* at 52 Walker. Pairing iconic films and drawings by Matta-Clark with video, drawings, and an installation by contemporary multidisciplinary artist Pope.L, this exhibition is proudly, penetratingly loud—visually, aurally, and conceptually.

The raucous, machinic whirring that accompanies you throughout your visit emanates from a freshly commissioned installation by Pope.L—*Vigilance a.k.a Dust Room* (2023)—situated bang in the middle of the gallery space and composed of a self-contained room, fed by lengths of industrial ducting, whose interior is only visible through a few holes punched into its walls. Peer inside and you discover the source of the noise: a series of huge fans blowing heaps of tiny styrofoam balls around a blue-tinted, mirrored space like some kind of post-industrial snowstorm, both bombastic and boldly dystopic. And it's thoughtfully installed as well, with the surfaces of its windows reflecting Matta Clark's *The Wall* (1976/2007), which is projected on one of the walls behind it, opening up a visual dialogue between two works made almost fifty years apart.



Installation view: Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: *Impossible Failures*, 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Courtesy 52 Walker, New York and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.

Fortunately, the other works in the show are more than able to hold their own alongside a bedfellow as domineering as *Vigilance*. Matta-Clark's films, as well as the numerous drawings and conceptual sketches by both artists, seem to riff on the constant noise rather than allowing themselves to be overwhelmed by it. The physicality, sense of danger and artistic brazenness of Matta-Clark's *Conical Intersect* (1975)—a film recording the artist and workers cutting a conical hole through two seventeenth-century buildings on Paris's Rue Beaubourg—and *Bingo X Ninths* (1974)—where we watch Matta-Clark dividing a drawing of a soon-to-be-demolished building into nine sections before physically partitioning the structure itself—feel as subversive and relevant now as they must have in the 1970s. There are other plucky curatorial decisions here that also ensure Matta-Clark's films are shown to their full, vital potential. For example, *Conical Intersect* and *Bingo X Ninths* are each projected onto awkward corners rather than flat walls, working with the architecture of the space at 52 Walker rather than superseding it. Two holes, a foot or so in diameter, have been drilled directly through two of the space's partition walls, allowing us to glimpse behind the front desk and through to the crisp white lobby beyond them—small but important “anarchitectural” gestures that echo the viewing holes in Pope.L's cacophonous installation. Extending the conversation between the artists beyond the *Dust Room*'s reflective windows, Pope.L's *Failure Drawing #184* (2004–07) is displayed on the floor and leaning against the wall so as to playfully butt right up against the projection of *The Wall*.



Installation view: Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: *Impossible Failures*, 52 Walker, New York, 2023. Courtesy 52 Walker, New York and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.

The show's evocative title, *Impossible Failures*, provides much of the conceptual glue that binds Pope.L and Matta-Clark's practices, despite the chronological gap between the bodies of work shown here. It opens up some timeless questions about creative work more broadly: What is an artistic "failure"? What constitutes a "successful" artwork? In Matta-Clark's case, what could be described as his supposed failures are really intentional infeasibilities: to blow up a section of the Berlin Wall in the 1976 film *The Wall* (he ended up stenciling "Made in America" on it instead, leading to a run-in with the police), to construct a home at the top of a flagpole in his sketch *Flag Pole Housing* (1974) or suspended from hot air balloons in his *Dragon Building* drawing from 1978. Such a quixotic attitude is precisely what gives these works their power. The lasting wonder and fascination in Matta-Clark's sketched ideas lies in the very impossibility of their full realization. The "failures" (or at least hiccups) inherent in exhibiting documentation of seminal performances half a century later are also embraced by curator Ebony L. Haynes; *The Wall* is shown here without sound.

The exhibition's title is paralleled most obviously, though, by Pope.L's "Failure Drawings," a selection from an ongoing series of well over a thousand drawings that goes back as far as 2003. By turns funny, surreal, and sensuous, they were all made while the artist was traveling, with whatever materials he could bring to hand: napkins, flyers, hotel stationery, ruled and printed paper provide his surfaces, while his marks and washes are made with inks, ballpoint, markers, or spilt coffee. Some resemble extraterrestrial landscapes, and penises, rockets, worms, and buildings are among his recurring motifs. Titling these drawings as "failures" feels like a cryptic decision, until you learn more about their backstory. The "failure" in question apparently refers more to the artist's ongoing anxieties while making them, rather than anything literally depicted in the drawings themselves—he began the series during an especially tumultuous period in his personal life, which included both a hospitalization and a traveling retrospective that brought his work unforeseen levels of international attention. For those more familiar with Pope.L's "crawl" performances—*Times Square Crawl* (1978), in which he dragged his body down West 42nd Street in Manhattan while dressed in a stereotypically bourgeois suit and tie, is probably the most widely known—these drawings present a vastly different example of his predilection for blurring the boundaries between art and life.

In its rowdy volume, its sense of utopic possibility amid urban decay, and its joyful exploration of risk and anxiety, this is an exhibition that's about as inimitably New York as it is possible to imagine.

Dorris, Jesse. "Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures at 52 Walker finds consonances between two very different artists." *The Architect's Newspaper* (April 6, 2023) [ill.] [online]

The Architect's Newspaper

Dust Room Disco

***Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures* at 52 Walker finds consonances between two very different artists**

By Jesse Dorris • April 6, 2023 • Design, East, Review



Installation view, *Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures*, 52 Walker, New York, February 3–April 1, 2023. Courtesy 52 Walker, New York and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

You hear it before you see it: material wrestling, things falling apart, the determined groan of industry. And then, before you open 52 Walker's massive interior door, you might catch a glimpse through the wall, where a hole has been emptied-out, of the kinds of things people get up to inside.

Gordon Matta-Clark & Pope.L: Impossible Failures, 52 Walker's blockbuster late-winter show, which closed earlier this month, built a bridge between two interdisciplinary artists, and then knocked it down. Curator Ebony L. Haynes cleverly overlaid a few of Matta-Clark's signature punctures—iterations of those massive openings he blew into West Side warehouses, here scaled down to small circles somewhere between portal and peephole—with projections of the films he made to document their making. For 1975's *Conical Intersect*, he broke through condemned 17th-century Parisian buildings to show, at levels both anatomical and poetic, what would be lost with their demolition. The previous year's *Bingo x Ninths* took a similarly destructive approach to domesticity: first, he carefully, ruthlessly divorced an intact house in honeymoon fantasyland Niagara Falls into nine separate parts; then, the house was demolished by a previous engagement. What makes a house a home, anyway?



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It's hard to turn from these films, with their money shots of plaster dust pluming among packs of erect wood planks and rebar, the great crashes of walls giving up their ghosts. But Pope.L's *Failure Drawings*, which hung interspersed with Matta-Clark's own illustrations of wildly, intentionally preposterous architectural schemes, offer good reasons to wrest your gaze from the uproar. Best known for durational performance work that requires his body to crawl across busy city streets, Pope.L's drawings explore different kinds of traveling. Made on the move, the drawings transform hotel stationary and bits of newspaper into maps of distant or imaginary lands. Worms appear in many of them, sometimes acting like a sort of Greek chorus in commentary of the landscape and sometimes signaling where all this commotion inevitably ends up, expired and underground.



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The undeniable anchor of the show, though, was Pope.L's *Vigilance a.k.a Dust Room* (2023), a big box in the back. On a table before it, tens of power cords plugged into chunky outlets. A sign was duct-taped between them, written in red blocky letters: DANGER! DO NOT OPERATE THIS DUST ROOM! NOT READY FOR SAFETY. And yet, if not safely, the room stood ready. Thick air ducts penetrated its white walls; a terrifying din pierced the ears. Likely, this, and not Matta-Clark's efforts, was what you heard on the street. There was a small window set into one wall as if this was any old building. Peer in, though, a world of spectacular horror showed itself. Drifts of dirt blizzarded the air, like an infernal snowglobe. All surfaces were mirrored, like a Kusama installation. Lights were dim, but it was almost impossible not to see yourself lost in there, wandering and coughing and failing to find purchase. Its alienation was deeply bodied, out of time but of history. There were memories of the air around the fallen twin towers in there, of cocaine disco nightmares, of star-crossed science fiction. But staring obliterates distinction: to see it was to be in it.



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And in this way, Pope.L's work inverts the excavation of Matta-Clark. In 2002, Pope.L showed a piece called *Hole Theory* at MoMA, based on his book by the same name. A voice spills out of from a wall's hollow: "When I say holes are conduits," Pope.L said, "a means to, or space, or intersection. I mean holes are occasions, opportunities." *Impossible Failures* showed possible successes, as Pope.L didn't fill in Matta-Clark's cavities, per se, but saw them *as* fillable—even if what contains them might be the unthinkable.

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Short, Aaron. “What’s Really Luring New York City’s Galleries to Tribeca?.” *Hyperallergic* (May 2, 2023) [ill.] [online]

HYPERALLERGIC

What’s Really Luring New York City’s Galleries to Tribeca?

Dozens of galleries have sprouted between Canal and Chambers Streets and west of Lafayette, one of NYC’s priciest neighborhoods. What gives?



Aaron Short April 30, 2023



Historic buildings on Tribeca’s Hudson Street (photo deberarr/Getty Images)

Loren Munk was cycling through Lower Manhattan about five years ago when he saw some unusual construction activity happening on a quiet side street off Broadway.

“I rode the street and saw someone building walls and a gallery,” he told *Hyperallergic*. “At one point early on, I heard six galleries would be on the strip.”

Munk, an artist and critic also known as James Kalm, is best known for pioneering the [guerrilla online video art review](#). During openings, Munk pedals up to a gallery on his mountain bike, pulls out a small digital video camera, and records his spontaneous impressions of the show that he later uploads to YouTube. The project has taken him to wherever an art scene had developed and informed his meticulously documented [map paintings](#) that track the diaspora of New York’s galleries. The works have also become a hagiography of artist studios and the gallery spaces that existed, even briefly, in the city’s overlapping eras.

Lately, Munk has found himself in Tribeca, where a cluster of art spaces has begun to rival Chelsea. This spring, Munk returned for the [Gordon Matta-Clark and Pope.L show](#) at David Zwirner on Walker Street, where two dozen people wandered inside. The atmosphere reminded him of Soho in the mid-1980s, when hundreds of artists congregated in loft spaces with galleries on the ground floors.

“I’ve seen the cycle go five or six times and if it’s good it takes 20 years to run through a cycle,” he said. “You start out with this area that’s pretty rugged with garages and warehouses, then people move in and start changing it. It takes five or six well-known galleries to solidify a neighborhood. Once entrepreneurs start seeing that’s where people want to make money, the gold rush starts.”

Artists have long gravitated to less popular or overlooked areas where commercial studio space was plentiful and affordable. Galleries often followed, remaking the corridors where they put down roots as they did in Soho in the 1970s, the East Village in the 1980s, Williamsburg in the mid-1990s, Chelsea in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and the Lower East Side and Bushwick in the mid-2000s.

But Tribeca has inverted that model. Nearly 60 galleries have sprouted in central Tribeca in the area between Canal and Chambers streets and west of Lafayette Street, triple the number that set up shop in the neighborhood in 2019. That growth occurred even though Tribeca is among the priciest places to live in the city: Homes sold at an average price of \$4.73 million last year, making Tribeca the city’s third most expensive neighborhood, the Real Deal reported. (Nolita and Times Square North topped the list.) Its studios had average rents of \$5,683 per month for non-doorman buildings, while its one-bedrooms nearly reached \$7,000 per month, easily the highest in the city, according to a March 2023 MNS Real Estate rental market report.



Bortolami Gallery (photo by Roland Halbe; courtesy Bortolami)

And yet, its retail prices have remained largely stable and affordable compared with other parts of Manhattan. The average asking rent for Lower Manhattan stores in the first quarter of 2023 was \$253 per square foot, two dollars less than landlords wanted the same time a year ago, per a 2023 Cushman and Wakefield retail [report](#). Rents in Tribeca are about 20% lower than those in the Meatpacking District and Soho, and a third of the price of Madison Avenue, the report said.

Savvy brokers familiar with Tribeca's nooks and crannies have often found even better deals. One of the neighborhood's most prolific salesmen, Redwood Property Group partner Jonathan Travis, who placed 34 galleries in Tribeca over the past decade, said rents on the side streets where art spaces have concentrated now range between \$95 and \$125 per square foot.

"It's unique in that it's a luxury area with an affluent zip code but the retail rents did not reflect the affluence of the neighborhood where in many other places of the city they would," he said. "There's a lot more of a neighborhood feel in Tribeca than in Chelsea." Travis has received much credit for luring galleries to Tribeca. His first client was Alexander and Bonin Gallery, followed by Bortolami, Casey Kaplan, and Andrew Kreps. As he met more gallery owners, clients told him they were unhappy with new development around the High Line and Hudson Yards. Owners began doubling the price of their leases once they expired or simply tore down their one-story garages to make way for multi-story condos and tech offices.

"The common denominator that we frequently heard was, 'We think we'd like to leave West Chelsea but we don't know where to go,'" Travis said. "Instead of galleries saying, 'I want to pay more to be in Chelsea,' they said, 'We don't want to be here now.' It felt like our opportunity."

The neighborhood's cast iron lofts have been a fruitful match for gallerists' needs. Many 19th-century industrial buildings were once used by textile merchants and printers but have since been landmarked and converted to condos or co-ops. Their retail spaces are often too small for a chain or luxury retailer but large enough for galleries that don't need to renovate. Some ground-floor Tribeca locations have also been too cumbersome to build out a restaurant or bar. The neighborhood's community board must also approve new liquor licenses, which have been increasingly tough to come by in Lower Manhattan as its residents prefer peace and quiet, restaurant advocates say.

"Although the law allows business to serve alcohol until 4am, some community boards demand stipulations with much earlier closing hours or they outright reject an applicant because they don't want a nightlife business at that location," said Andrew Rigie, New York City Hospitality Alliance executive director. "A raw space that opens up as a gallery is a much lower barrier to entry than conversion to a restaurant."



Canada's storefront in Tribeca (photo courtesy Canada)

Other larger forces have shaped galleries' migration south. A handful of spaces had opened in Tribeca at the turn of the century, but the September 11 attacks shut down Lower Manhattan for months, stunting retail development there for much of the decade. Chelsea began to mature as the city's pre-eminent art destination until Hurricane Sandy flooded many ground-floor spaces in 2013, destroying millions of dollars worth of work. Tribeca became an alluring destination because its buildings offered basement-level storage out of a flood zone.

Once the pandemic occurred in 2020, some gallery owners who contemplated a move for years ditched Chelsea or the Lower East Side as retail rents in Tribeca dropped considerably. Many stores and restaurants in the area closed permanently, but galleries stayed afloat because customers continued to purchase art online. "The art world fared pretty well," Travis said. "A lot of dealers had solid years in 2020 because dealers ramped up their focus on online offerings. People were bored at home and the art buying population still had disposable income."

But the most significant reason gallerists gave for moving to Tribeca was that another gallery they admired was already doing business there. Bortolami moved from Chelsea to Walker Street in 2017 when their lease was up and their landlord decided to gut the building and build offices above it. Tribeca had Alexander and Bonin and a couple other galleries nearby, as well as a space 30% larger than what they paid for in Chelsea.

“It was just bigger spaces, a more interesting neighborhood, an easier commute ... It wasn’t a hard sell,” said Claire Bergeal, senior director at Bortolami gallery. “We had thought about the Upper East Side — that’s where the money is — and some people told us we should look at the Lower East Side, but the spaces in both those places were not as generous. We also want to be mindful of who would be around us, the kinds of clients who would visit.”

One year later, the owners of the contemporary art gallery Canada decided to move from Bowery Street to Lispenard Street after they were recruited by other dealers including Stefania Bortolami and Andrew Kreps.

“I remember running into Andrew [Kreps] and asking, ‘What do you think?’ and he said he was all for it. He wanted the shift to happen,” said Canada Co-Founder Phil Grauer. “Galleries wanted to move there because it was affordable and the rooms were big enough.”

Charles Moffet, who opened his eponymous gallery in Chinatown in 2018, moved to a ground-floor space on Washington Street in 2022, just west of Tribeca’s art epicenter, because he liked the area’s critical mass of galleries and its accessible location. “We have a nice community thread of Tribeca galleries and we’re in communication about openings,” Moffet said. “It’s been super convenient. We’ve spoken with collectors who pop right off the West Side Highway. It’s a really easy way to drop down in a car or the subway.”

The art scene's momentum has shown little sign of slowing down even as new construction has surged north of the neighborhood in Hudson Square. Google opened a 630,000-square-foot campus on Pier 57 last April while Disney's 22-story headquarters at Four Hudson Square is expected to be ready by 2024.

Chris Roth, managing director at Hines and the developer behind both corporate megacomplexes, wants to attract more galleries to his ground-floor retail spaces as white-collar workers return to offices in the area. "There's going to be a lot of opportunity for art galleries and community-driven space activation at the street level," he said. "We would love to have them, in all candor."

Galleries are likely to remain in Tribeca for a long time. Travis predicts many of his tenants will renew once their current 10 or 15-year leases run out. He doesn't envision commercial rents rising more than 20 to 25 percent. But the art world's physical footprint has always been fleeting, especially in New York where it can be hard to stay rooted in one neighborhood without generational wealth.

"When something like this starts to happen you realize it's a groovy thing, if it's authentic," Munk said. "It's a cultural power spewing out this energy. People can come in and be part of this community, and learn and do strange weird things. And when it falls apart, that's it."