



Vol. 2, no. 3

May 1979

PROFILE: hallwalls, buffalo

HALLWALLS is an alternative space located at 30 Essex Street, a quiet backstreet on the west side of Buffalo. The gallery, offices and loft space are a part of a refurbished turn-of-the-century ice factory. In 1974, artists living in the building began exhibiting their work in a hallway adjacent to their studios, hence the name Hallwalls. From a 500 sq. ft. hallway to a 3,100 sq. ft. gallery space, the expanded Hallwalls now includes four large exhibition rooms, a printing press room run by Hard Press director Ann Rosen, and a small experimental space called the Matrix Room.

Hallwalls programming, which covers exhibition, performance art, video, film, artists-in-residence, music, literature, lectures, and symposiums, has helped to develop the gallery into a major arts organization in Western New York state. Indeed, Buffalo artists associated with the gallery have an insatiable appetite for the new and experimental in art. Even though the gallery operates on a modest budget (\$36,000 for the 1977-78 season), Hallwalls managed to get plenty of mileage from its resources. For example, last year Hallwalls averaged one exhibition a week, a third of which occurred in locations other than the gallery itself. In addition to this energetic exhibition schedule, Hallwalls was responsible for bringing over 40 visiting artists to Buffalo.

Hallwalls has a strong tradition of co-sponsoring art events with other galleries, schools, and artist-run spaces, such as the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the art departments of the State University College of Buffalo and SUNY at Buffalo, and CEPA Gallery and Workshop, located across the courtyard from Hallwalls. This cooperation helps to provide Buffalo with a stronger and more cohesive contemporary art milieu. Hallwalls has also participated in exchange exhibitions with galleries in Chicago, New York and Canada, as well as participating in events at Artpark in Lewiston, New York.

A characteristic which sets Hallwalls apart from other artist-run spaces is the nature of its living and working space. Next to the gallery, upstairs in a converted brick stable is a 2,500 sq. ft. area which is the nucleus of Hallwalls' activities. Upstairs, in this plank-floored, season-pine trimmed skylit space, is to be found an apartment, studio, kitchen, library (with wood burning fireplace), archive room, meeting-room with video set-up, offices, and guest facilities for visiting artists. A recent \$5,000 grant from the NEA will help in further developing the library, which houses a collection of video and audio taped documentation of readings and performance events, along with many arts journals and magazines, all of which are open to the public for reference and research.



VISUAL ARTS PROGRAM

Besides the major exhibitions presented each month during the programming season, Hallwalls also supports two related visual arts programs. Our Visiting Artist program provides for direct personal contact between artist and audience. Through discussions with the artists, the Western New York audience has an opportunity to gain new insights and understanding of contemporary art issues. John Maggiott, the director of Hallwalls, plays an important part in programming and developing this relationship.

The second visual arts program is centered in the Matrix Room. Curated by William Currie, this room is designed to encourage local artists to experiment with the dynamics of the space, and to present their work on an informal basis. Exhibitions in the Matrix Room run for two week periods.

FICTION DICTION

A literary program has been firmly established at Hallwalls with the advent of *Fiction Diction*. Equally representing the local writing community as well as bringing prose writers to Buffalo, Fiction Diction, run by Anne Turyn, has provided a format where personal contact with the writers has attracted large, lively audiences (40-50 per event). The success of this program has spawned a new periodical *Top Stories*, and has earned it a high priority in Hallwalls' programming.

Top Stories is a magazine devoted to prose. The magazine, operating on a single-author format, publishes new writers, known and unknown, who have participated in the reading series.

PERFORMANCE ART

During the past few years, Hallwalls has pioneered a program of performance art in Buffalo which has been well received in the community. This program provides the Western New York audience with the opportunity to view new temporal and situational art pieces which could otherwise not be seen without extensive travel to other art centers. This programming also provides the added benefit of enabling the audience to engage in didactic conversations with the artists involved. Program Director G. Roger Denson has scheduled 17 performances for the 1979-80 season.

NEW MUSIC

Hallwalls will formalize its New Music program according to the guidelines established at the Kitchen's June conference for New Music Presenters. We will be participating in the proposed Network which is designed to take best advantage of funding resources. Eight musical performances are planned for next year.

VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

Hallwalls will continue its video program which is intended to complement other already existing programs in Buffalo. The program planned so far is entirely composed of video-makers not yet shown in Buffalo. Based on our earlier film program, we will continue to offer local video-makers a showcase for presenting their work in a situation which features a number of artists each evening. In addition, visiting video artists will help provide a context to heighten local work. The video series, curated by Anne Turyn, will include 12 video artists.

DEVELOPMENTS IN DANCE

Western New York has always had a deficiency in its dance programming, particularly in explorative dance. Accustomed to ballet and the veteran forms of dance, Buffalo audiences have rarely been nurtured in their tastes by young choreographers and dancers. Since 1976, Hallwalls has taken on the responsibility of introducing vanguard choreographers and dancers to the community. Some of the artists presented have been Trisha Brown, Steve Paxton, Douglas Dunn, Simone Forti, and others. Hallwalls now wishes to expand its audience by acquainting it with an even younger generation of dancers, through workshops and educational experiences, as well as dance performance situations.

Hallwalls is always interested in hearing from other artists and people involved with alternative spaces in other regions. If anyone would like more information concerning Hallwalls, write John Maggiotto, Director, or William Currie, Asst. Director, Hallwalls, 30 Essex St., Buffalo, NY 14213.

—William Currie

Ours is a time for crossing barriers, for erasing old categories, for probing around.

—Marshall McLuhan



MEMBER OF ASSOCIATED ART PUBLISHERS NETWORK

UMBRELLA is a bimonthly newsletter of art news, reviews and art information of current trends. UMBRELLA is published by Umbrella Associates, P.O. Box 3692, Glendale, CA 91201 and issued in January, March, May, July, September and November. \$12.50 a year, individuals, U.S. and Canada; \$16.50 for institutions, U.S. and Canada; Foreign: \$14.50 surface, \$17.50 airmail; Foreign Institutions: \$18.50 surface, \$21.50 airmail.

Copyright © 1979 by Umbrella Associates

JUDITH A. HOFFBERG, Editor
AMY NAVRATIL, Book Review Editor
KEN FRIEDMAN, Contributing Editor
JUDITH AMINOFF, Contributing Editor
MICHELE FIELD, Contributing Editor
LIZ LYDIATE, Contributing Editor
A.L. STUBBS, New York Correspondent
LINDY NARVER, Book Review Staff

Typesetting: JUDITH A. HOFFBERG
Printing: GLENDALE INSTANT PRINTING

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

TO OUR READERS: Because of all the news that has poured in these past few weeks, we had to delimit the book reviews. We will be sure to resume our reviews in the next issue of UMBRELLA, the July issue.

Remember, that we have a Classified Section for Artists at 10 cents a word. Deadline for the next issue is 10 July, so do not hesitate to use our Classified Section for your wants.

Also, remember to tell your friends about UMBRELLA. The only way we can continue to publish is to increase circulation, and that is up to you. Have a good summer!

DATES TO REMEMBER

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| Artefiera, Bologna, Italy | 5 - 10 June 1979 |
| AAM, Cleveland, Ohio | 3 - 7 June 1979 |
| ACRL Art Section, ALA
Fort Worth/Dallas | 25-26 June 1979 |
| Venezia '79 - La Fotografia | 16 June - 16 Sept. |
| 20 exhibitions and 45 workshops and lectures, sponsored by Venice, Italy and UNESCO in collaboration with the International Center of Photography. U.S. Coordinator is Michael Edelson, photo critic, photographer and director of photography program at SUNY/Stony Brook. | |
| Seattle Earthworks Symposium | 30 July - 19 Aug. |
| World Art Exposition, Boston | 26 - 30 September |