

P.A.D.D. is a politically non-affiliated organization of artists committed to the concept that art with political content is a viable art form. P.A.D.D. publishes a newsletter and holds monthly public forums to distribute ideas, criticism and news concerning politically conscious art work. The organization also collects and preserves all forms of political art in its archives.

Some of its artists who wished to be more actively involved in local political work have formed the anti-gentrification subcommittee. The members of the subcommittee have worked and marched in the Lower East Side housing march and lobbied and spoke against the Artist Homeownership Project, working closely with the Artists for Social Responsibility. Finally the group organized the "Not For Sale" art project against displacement at El Bohio last May.

4. We as artists against gentrification do not want to let the... about the... problems, the... and the community of the Lower East Side. We want to engage this group in the community as allies.
5. "NOT FOR SALE" was an attempt to begin this dialogue to raise the consciousness of artists. We want to continue this process by building on these efforts.

In practical terms we are focusing on three general areas with which to accomplish this goal. We plan to include these in any project we undertake.

1. to continue the consciousness-raising dialogue with artists specifically about artist's impact in the gentrification process.
2. to provide ways in which artists can build ties to the community and to community organizations.
3. to include voter registration in our projects.

P.A.D.D. Anti-gentrification Subcommittee Proposal

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. We support the JPC and the Cultural Committee of the JPC and all actions taken by these groups to stabilize the Lower East Side and to fight gentrification.
2. We see that a substantial influx of middle-class people into the neighborhood has proven to be a destabilizing force, raising rents and creating a community-wide situation of wholesale displacement for low-income and working class families.
3. Artists are a significant part of this group. (witness the 15 new art galleries in the Lower East Side this year) Also the city and real estate forces have consciously recognized that artists can be an active force in the process of gentrification and have taken direct actions to court this group.
4. We as artists against gentrification do not want to let the city and realtors organize the artists. We want to speak to these artists about the acute problems, the vital culture and community of the Lower East Side. We want to engage this group in the community as allies.
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## PROPOSALS

### A. GALLERIES:

We plan to approach the owners/directors of the new art galleries that are appearing on the Lower East Side. We want to discuss the problems on the L.E.S. and the art gallery's role in these problems. We want to stimulate some creative responses from the galleries to the community and may suggest some ideas such as:

1. providing time and gallery space to community artists
2. put on shows focusing on the social concerns of the neighborhood
3. participation in the Loisaida anti-gentrification festival 1984.
4. have voter registration and community petition forms available for gallery goers.
5. participation with local block associations and community groups
6. monetary support of the Cultural Committee of the JPC

### B. COMMUNITY PARK:

Our proposal is to organize and create a community park/sculpture garden which would stand as a pro-Loisaida, anti-gentrification symbol. We have discussed examples of sculptures and monuments which provide symbols for cities and nations and wish to facilitate a collaboration between artists and the community to define the symbols for the Lower East Side. From the very beginning, the community would be involved in the idea-making, design and overall look of the park. In the early stages, community organizers would meet with small groups of artists to conceive of the design and contents of the various sculptures and identify the functions of the park. Then at some point these ideas would be presented to the community at public meetings for criticism, revision and eventual confirmation. Through this process, we hope that the park will truly function as a symbol for the people of Loisaida and will provide a place that all people

can use and enjoy.

We would like the support and sponsorship of the JPC and initial help in securing the public land for the park.

The organization also... The organization also... and preserves all forms of political art in its archives... Some of its artists who wished to be more actively involved in local political work have formed the anti-gentrification sub-committee. The members of the subcommittee have worked and marched in the Lower East Side housing march and led and spoke against the Artist Homeownership Project, working closely with the Artists for Social Responsibility. Finally the group organized the "Not For Sale" art project against displacement at El Botic last May.



Dear Gallery Owner,

This letter is an attempt to begin a dialogue between long-term residents of the Lower East Side and artists. With the recent influx of artists and galleries into the Lower East Side, tensions have developed between these two groups. This has not always been the case. The Lower East Side, throughout its history has had an artists community living in harmony amongst the rest of its inhabitants. It is only recently with the destabilized housing situation that relations between the art community and the larger community have changed. Artists are being used by the real estate industry in a gentrification scheme which involves artists moving into a depressed area, fixing it up, consequently raising the value of real estate and then getting displaced with the rest of the low-income inhabitants. The Artist Home Ownership Project (AHOP) of 1982-83 was one such plan. Although the project was eventually shelved, a polarity developed between artists and the community. For those closely watching the development of a neighborhood, the arrival of artists and galleries is seen as the first sign of the gentrification process. Artists must be cognizant of their impact on the neighborhood and take responsibility accordingly.

First we invite you, as commercial lease holders, to take part in the MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION of which information is enclosed. YOUR PARTICIPATION MAY INSURE RENT PROTECTION AT THE EXPIRATION OF YOUR LEASE. Laws are being proposed which would give the commercial lease holder rental protection similar to that of current residential tenants.

Secondly, we are asking galleries to make publicly available information addressed to community residents such as public meeting announcements or housing information. (We will take responsibility of getting the material to the galleries.)

And lastly we urge you to get to know your neighbors, block leaders and community workers and help out in the activities designed to keep the Lower East Side from going the way of the Upper West Side and Soho.

A representative from our group will be coming by to follow up on this letter.

Thank you,

Not For Sale Artists  
in conjunction with the  
Cultural Committee  
Lower East Side Joint Planning  
Council

Ed Eisenberg  
392 E. 7th St.  
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11218  
438-7249

Dear Keith,

Enclosed are responses to your questions on NFS's experiences.

- A. In the fall of 1982 the PADD study group, influenced by a dialectic of theory and practice, decided to mount an exhibition. Gentrification was the issue that was selected because of the experiences of some members. We focused on the Lower East Side because that was where we felt the struggle was currently most intense. I live in Brooklyn.
- B. We met with Frances Goldin and were advised that we could help by organizing artists into housing activism.
- C. We attempted to collaboratively create a unified exhibit against displacement-gentrification but the clock ran out on us as we debated the appropriate visual imagery. The NFS logo (Indian and Dutchmen take-off on NYC seal) is a representative example of this collective effort.
- D. The open exhibit of individual works became the primary event and we recognized that the exhibit itself furthered the process of gentrification by advancing the neighborhood's artworldliness. Although I would have preferred that the study group return to theory at this point, it was decided that we had a commitment to follow up on our project and we established ourselves as a standing committee of PADD. After unenthusiastically developing some proposals that would attempt to organize artists into the community, we decided simply to get some art out on the issues. By switching to an exhibit on the streets, we hoped to distance ourselves from the gallery situation while in the process reaching a broader audience.
- E. Our call for proposals indicated that work will not be returned. This shift in emphasis from art as object towards art as message stimulated some interesting work. Putting the exhibit up was kind of fun. It's been well-received by the community but hasn't been any more effective in organizing artists than was the El Bohio exhibit.



- F. Good intentions are not enough to achieve much more than transitory gains. Artists want to live close to galleries which in turn are situated close to business districts and upper class enclaves. This aspect of gentrification was not addressed during our project, nor was explored the impact of gentrification on outer rings of the city (where e.g. blockbusting and redlining can exacerbate racial polarities). Understanding how the city grows may suggest new ways of organizing.
- G. The NFS committee has for now disbanded. The energy within NFS will manifest itself in some future project.
- H. Individual buildings may be saved but the neighborhood is rapidly being transformed. Witness the repavement of <sup>E</sup>Houston St., plans to renovate Tompkins Sq. Park, Operation Pressure Point against drugs, buildings currently undergoing renovations east of Ave. B, and clubs locating on Ave. C.

643 EAST 9TH ST. TENANTS ASSOCIATION

NEW YORK 10009  
(212) 982-1606

# FINAL EVICTIION

Our building is in Housing Court for  
Final Eviction. Come and Join us in  
making a stand to save our building.

Thursday, Aug. 23, 1984

Housing Court

111 Centre Street, NYC

Part D, Room 523

- 9:30 am -



# POLITICAL ART DOCUMENTATION/DISTRIBUTION

339 LAFAYETTE ST. N.Y.C.

(212)-420-8196



APARTMENT  
 in lively neighborhood  
 clean secure building  
 with friendly landlord,  
 very affordable.

Rare or impossible in New York City? You bet, and it's getting worse. Real estate speculation is wiping out low-income housing. Hardest hit are the city's poor and elderly who are being displaced by those willing and able to pay higher rent. The gentrification of many neighborhoods is destroying community and culture. Central to this process is racism, harrassment and homelessness.

In an effort to encourage decent housing over investors' profits, P.A.D.D. (an artist organization committed to progressive change) is working on a series of exhibits focusing on the housing issue. A collaborative project exploring the causes, effects, and alternatives to the present housing situation will be exhibited at El Bohio 605 E. 9 St. (Ave. B). Gallery 345 (Lafayette St. near Bleecker) will show individuals' work concerned with housing. Video and slide presentations, performance, music, and speaker events are being planned.

## WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

### ARTISTS

New York streets and buildings are primed for your work about this issue and P.A.D.D. invites you to use them. We also invite you to give us work for exhibition in several locations on the lower east side. If you want us to include your activity in publicity, contact us by April 15. The deadline for work for exhibition is May 14.

### MUSIC & PERFORMANCE ARTISTS

The month of May will be very important for tenants in N.Y.C. and you can help by coordinating events with us. We will be happy to publicize your activities. We are also planning one outdoor event and several indoor ones for which we will need you.

### ACTIVISTS & GROUPS

The more voices we raise, the better our chances of making an impact. The deterioration of the housing situation affects all of us. Your participation can help us direct our energies into effective areas. We urge you to mobilize in such forms as street fairs, community meetings, or demonstrations.

### TENANTS

New York City is quickly becoming the fantasy island for the rich, and your home is in the way. This event will bring together the strength and creativity of the communities we are trying to preserve. You can help by participating and being aware of your housing rights as they are and how they should be.

**TIMETABLE**  
 General Meeting - Friday March 25 at 7:00  
 Publicity Deadline - Friday April 15  
 Exhibition Entry Deadline - May 14  
 El Bohio Opening - Saturday May 21  
 345 Gallery Opening - Thursday June 9  
 Outdoor Events - Early June