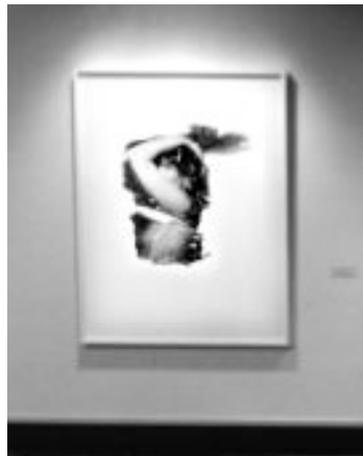


Selections and Excerpts 1992 – 1998



Themes of power and vulnerability, past and present, personal and collective, have engaged Hope Sandrow throughout her artistic career...In 1973 a mishap... precipitated Sandrow's later aesthetic direction. She had shot fifty rolls of film only to discover that the child of her hosts had dropped her camera, sticking the shutter. Only ten images survived—all images of seated people. The resulting prints were half frames—the top halves were black. "Those images changed my whole way of approaching the picture frame—how much needed to be described and how much could be left to interpretation. "

In the series *Men on the Streets*...she would wait until the right man walked by and ask him to pose. The photographs are like film stills, depicting action as time lapsed as the men moved across the picture plane. *Back on the Streets* continued this methodology, but Sandrow now used artist friends instead of strangers. She posed her models against backgrounds that recalled their own artwork. For example, Keith Haring stood before a graffitied sculpture at One Police Plaza. The series *Hope & Fear* that followed further explored the concept of time, expanding it beyond the immediate into the distant past. For the next five years, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art became Sandrow's studio, as she created a series of split images about the movement between past and present. Her models were again her friends, chosen for their relationship of their own art and work to the classical art that they posed with. Recognition came early for Sandrow as works from this and the previous series were acquired by and exhibited at museums across the country.



Sandrow's most recent series, *Memories and Spaces* (1991-1995) depict larger than-life-size figures and hands in states of vulnerability and embrace. She employs a unique process of peeling the fragile emulsion layer of a silver print from its support. The fragments are pinned together to reconstruct the figure. Another component of the exhibition are stacks of brown corrugated boxes filled with photographs and objects. Like the peeled images, the columns are a departure from Sandrow's past imagery - both are somewhat autobiographical. As Sandrow matures as an artist, her underlying inspiration remains the dynamic tension between the past and the present. *Memories* reflect personal experiences related to Sandrow's own vulnerability...But in *Spaces*, Sandrow's allusion to personal history is envisioned in the larger context of culture and religion. For Sandrow, art is a means of reclaiming a universal past.

Susan Talbott, *Hope Sandrow Fragments: Self/History*, SECCA 1995

Top, *Every Hero Needs A Woman* from the series *Back on the Streets* 74"x55" Silver Print 1/3 1984 Collection Metropolitan Museum of Art
Memories Untitled (skinned) XLI 48"x60" Silver Print Fragments, Map Pins 1992 Collection Metropolitan Museum of Art



Installation view, SECCA, 1995 *Fragments: Self/History*, detail, *Memories Untitled (skinned) XXXI, XXXII, XXX, XXXIV* 48"x60" Silver Print Fragments, Map Pins 1993

Flag for the Nineties: Portrait Project commissioned by Vera List (1992)

"to document the diverse cultures of the New York Art Community".

12"x35" 24 Color Polaroid Fragments Print Edition 1/10. Collection Vera List.

Pictured top, left to right: Will Guy, Kathleen Goncharov, Eugenie Tsai, Thelma Golden, Komar & Melamid, Candida Alvarez, Patrick O'Connell, Ida Panicelli, Billie Tsien, Lucy Lippard, Adal Maldonado, Maria Elena Gonzalez, Louise Bourgeois, Vito Acconci, Sur Rodney Sur, Martha Wilson, Maura Sheehan, Sam Reveles, Kay Walkingstick, Thomas Sokolowski, Fred Wilson, Paul Ha, Rob Storr



Art in the Anchorage: MATERIAL MATTERS a Project by Hope Sandrow commissioned by Creative Time



Terry Adkins Jane Dickson Robin Kahn Susan Leopold Christian Marclay Matthew McCaslin
Sara Pasti & Artist/Neighbors Hope Sandrow Glenn Seator John Yau

The Brooklyn Anchorage consists of huge cathedral-like spaces located inside the granite and brick base of the Brooklyn Bridge. An architectural wonder, the bridge inspired many early modernist artists and writers; among them the painter Joseph Stella, and the poets Hart Crane and Vladimir Mayakovsky. At the same time, the demographics of the area around the base of the Brooklyn Bridge has changed considerably from the days when the waterfront housed factories which manufactured, among other things, corrugated boxes and munitions, to the 1970's, when...many artists began moving into the rundown factory buildings, empty warehouses.. Hope Sandrow, the curator of MATERIAL MATTERS and one of the artists who has work in the exhibition, invited a number of artists...to make work using cardboard boxes, something which had once been manufactured in abundance....Sandrow knowingly evoked the possibility that the piece could address the artist's position in society; that artists were both discardable and good for transmitting something, and that art and life are inextricably linked.



In *Nature Monochrome IX*, Hope Sandrow erects a column out of cardboard boxes, thus subverting the modernist ideal associated with Brancusi's *Endless Column*. Instead of rising majestically toward the sky, Sandrow's column rises precariously out of a haphazard pile of boxes, many of them open. In the open boxes the viewer sees large photographic images of a hand. The emulsion (or skin) has been peeled off. The artist doesn't simply make images. Rather as *Nature Monochrome IX* suggests, the artist both constructs and peels away; the process of artistic creation is precarious. The toppled boxes remind us that we, as viewers, can intervene and destroy art. However, while Sandrow's peeled photographs remind us that the process of creation includes an element of destruction, the toppled boxes serve to remind us that acts of intolerance and aggression produce only ruins. John Yau, MATERIAL MATTERS, 1995

Installation Views, ART AT THE ANCHORAGE, MATERIAL MATTERS Hope Sandrow *Nature Monochrome IX*



In 1972, the sculptor Robert Smithson noted, "Art should not be considered as merely a luxury but should work within the process of actual production and reclamation." Although Smithson was referring to land reclamation, within about a decade it had become clear that in addition to poisoned, devastated plots of land (and abandoned, "bombed-out" buildings), people, too, had become part of the detritus of the nation's commodity driven progressive-obsessed social structure. If, as Smithson suggested, art can serve as a means of reclaiming areas of land devastated through misuse or neglect, can similar applications be made where people are concerned?. Hope Sandrow, founder of A&HC, would surely say art can. For Arlette Petty, A&HC "gave me hope. Hope for the future...and also I was lucky enough to meet Hope Sandrow." Andrea Wolper, 1995

Memories Untitled (skinned) XXVI Silver Print Fragment 14"x11" 1/3 1992 Private Collection



Memories Untitled (skinned) XXXVII
11"x14" Silver Print Fragment 1/3 Private Collection 1993

For the past six years, artist Hope Sandrow has marshaled a .. radically unpredictable, and consistently enthusiastic coterie of art workers and has transformed them into ... The Artist & Homeless Collaborative. She founded the Collaborative as a component of her art making which has become a fertile ground for the creation of innovative and moving works of art. The fruits of A&HC labors have been exhibited at the Alternative Museum, The Whitney Museum, Henry Street Settlement, Art in General, and the Aldrich Museum. Hope has shown all of them the way. Perhaps the ultimate compliment comes from one of the participants herself, shelter resident Lonsetta Poole; "I often wondered what the quotation meant "Without art a nation perishes or is reduced to the bare essentials of life. Comparing this idea to the shelter means the same. With art we are better for these positive effects."

Thomas Sokolowski, 1994

Skowhegan Governor's Award: Hope Sandrow



Installation View, SECCA, 1995 Fragments: Self/History, Spaces Untitled VI, VII, VIII 48"x60" Silver Print Fragments, Map Pins 1994 and Artist in the Community: Nature Monochrome VII Boxes with personal objects made by 15 Wake Forest University Art Majors

All of the elements of the exhibition are united by Sandrow's overall artistic vision. *Memories* responds to the past and the fragmentation of memory. *Spaces* exists in the present and uses universal iconography....In preparation for this body of work, Sandrow spent a great deal of time studying the European and classical collections in Greece, Italy and New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Spaces* presents androgynous figures embracing or with outstretched hands and extended arms drawn from art history and traditional religious icons...The reference to historical architecture is both literal and metaphoric...which..serves as a metaphor for this break with nature... *Nature Monochrome*, refers to the modernist ideal of art as a utopian enterprise capable of spiritual illumination. Like the series *Spaces*, *Nature Monochrome* looks to the past for enlightenment, but reorders its elements to respond to the present...In fall 1994, Hope Sandrow was the driving force behind a project designed to create bridges among diverse segments of the local population... by creating columns representing their lives or their relationship to the community allowed Sandrow to reclaim individual and collective histories...

Jeff Fleming, *Hope Sandrow: FRAGMENTS; SELF/HISTORY*
SECCA, 1995



Nature Monochrome: Column, 10"x11"x14"

Spaces Untitled I, Silver Print Fragment, Boxes 1/3

Installation view, Inside/Out, Aldrich Museum 1994



Memories; Spaces; Time

“Like those in late 18th and 19th century landscape paintings”, writes Hope Sandrow of her photographs in the *Time* series, “these figures are surrounded by the awesome vastness of nature.” One sees what she means, for the works do suggest a magnitude of luminous, underwater space. But instead of being struck by awe—which in art historical terms connotes grandeur seen from a distance—the viewer is seduced by the intimacy of her pictures. In them the weightlessness of the sublime is confined to a pool of water. How the artist manages to convey the sense of an illimitable environment in a contained space is a mystery. Rather than advised to behold a panoramic spectacle from on high, the gaze is invited up towards a fluttering or drifting figure...(which)reminds us of the watery content in our own bodies. Her isolated swimmers are our alter-egos. Their weak buoyancy refracts a state of being, suspension in a medium that is precarious and yet also ecstatic. These nudes often hold out their arms, as if about to embrace; some also suggest the orant gesture of saints ...Yet, a sense of emphatic physical pleasure and of release, even delirium, is sometimes imparted to the spiritual reference.

A metaphor of water also plays a role in *Memories* and *Spaces*, the two other series in the trilogy that includes *Time*. The excruciating process of peeling the emulsion off the photographic paper that backed images Sandrow made of dark human body fragments had the effect of crinkling them, as if they'd once been waterlogged. This recall of the action of water deliberately stresses and ruins these erstwhile pictures, which no longer have any physical integrity, and have to be pinned down like bedraggled specimens. Torn, dismembered, and unjoined, such decomposed presences seem fished up from the deep...and then displayed literally as bas reliefs, not pictures...

Now, in the *Time* pictures, a slowness of movement and the distention of time are rendered in bleached form, without the fullness and weight of water. Instead, they resonate with a symbolism that comes with the brining of light...Everything is qualified by a serenity that has reached beyond the material, so that the longing for contact remains delicious for its own sake. The *Time* pictures are reminiscent of what Paul Valery had to say about Berthe Morisots paintings: Made up of nothing, they multiply that nothing, a suspicion of mist or of swans, with a supreme tactile art...that scarcely feathers the surface. But that featheriness conveys all: the time, place, a season...the..gift for seizing on the essential, for reducing matter to a minimum and thus giving the strongest possible impression of an act of mind....

Max Kozlof, 1997

top, *Time* Untitled XXII, XXV
Memories Untitled(skinned)VI
Time Untitled XIII

Iris Prints on Handmade Kozo Paper 48.5" x 33" 1/5 1997
 Silver Print Fragments 60"x48" 1992 Collection Charlene Engelhard
 Iris Print on Handmade Kozo Paper 40.5" x 27" 1/5 Private Collection 1997



Installation View, detail, *Water Life* from the series *Time* Whitney Museum at Philip Morris 1998

Water Life features Hope Sandrow's first series of color photographs, figures suspended in swaths of brilliant blue, in a merging of sea and sky. The resulting color prints are part of a series entitled *Time*, the last in a trilogy that opened with *Memories* and *Spaces*. Sandrow... deliberately chose blue because of its reference to the modernist tradition—to the Blue Period paintings of Picasso and the Blue Monochrome series by Yves Klein. The...*Water Life* installation comprises ninety-three rectangular cardboard boxes containing thousands of spiral snail shells, collected from an Atlantic Ocean Beach near the Mecox Bay Inlet. Sandrow is fascinated by the relationship of the spiral shape of the proportions of the golden rectangle.



Water Life: Clouds, Tree, Water from the series *Time* 40"x26" Inkjet Print 1/3 Collection Whitney Museum of Art 1998

In *Water Life*, the combination of photographs and shells evokes Mecox Bay, a site of harmonious reconciliation between people and nature..Despite the apparent contradiction between the world of nature represented in Sandrow's art and the overtly urban environment of the Whitney Museum at Phillip Morris, the artist draws connections between the two realms. Reading about the history of midtown Manhattan, she discovered that the area was once a marshy meadowland, with rocky bluffs and streams. A river ran northwest from Kips Bay past where the Whitney Museum at Phillip Morris currently stands. There was, moreover, an abundance of shellfish in the area. A third element of the installation, the sound of running water, audible in some parts of the gallery, evokes this river that might still run through the depths beneath the Museum. With this recording, Sandrow invites us to imagine what Manhattan was like in the past, when its flora and fauna resembled that of present-day Mecox Bay.

At the center of Sandrow's work is the subject of the body. In *Memories* (1993), photographs of the fragmented body—torsos and hands—suggest indelible afterimages of brutality. The most self



consciously autobiographical of Sandrow's work, the series alludes to rape and sexual assault. In *Spaces* (1994), the body fragments are given religious connotations, out-stretched arms suggesting crucifixion or supplication. In both *Memories* and *Spaces*, Sandrow skinned the shiny emulsion from the photographic paper to heighten the effect of fragility and pain. In the initial black-and-white images of *Time*, swimmers often appear with outstretched arms. Unlike the looming body fragments on a blank ground in the two earlier series, the small figures of *Time* float in a luminous, aquatic environment.

With the recent addition of color photographs to the *Time* series, Sandrow summons the transcendent feeling she experienced while immersed in water. The photographs and the shells in *Water Life* evoke not merely a place of extraordinary beauty in the natural world, but a place of personal significance, where Sandrow can be born anew, whole and unbroken.

Eugenie Tsai, *Hope Sandrow: Water Life*

Water Life: Three Clouds from the series *Time*
40"x26" Inkjet Print 1/3 Collection Whitney Museum of Art 1998



Moral principles are sometimes at stake in the strange and uncanny objects we call art. In *Hope Sandrow's* case, this moral contingency is worn on the sleeve of the medium, of the process, of the subject, and of the artist. Like that of other obviously moral artists (Barbara Kruger, Jenny Holzer, Krystof Wodiczko, among others), Sandrow's understanding of art as a site for a change of consciousness is always close to the surface. But, and it is an important but, Sandrow is not attempting to produce a critical subject, which is the aim of much political and activist art, as much as she is trying to produce an undecidable subject. By this I mean that her artistic and social oscillation from the personal to the political, the mantra of feminist and, now, postmodern art in general, is colored by a poetics of materials and process which is, finally, benevolent rather than extreme or sensational...

In *Memories*, for instance, the body, having been photographed, is distorted, crumpled, and extended by literally peeling off the skin of the silver print-its emulsion- and reconstructing the body parts, which are then pinned to the wall. The original impassive images undergo a procedural violence akin to a real bodily violence. Although they become powerful images of injury, they



Water Life: Water from the series *Time* 26"x40" Inkjet Print 1/3 Collection West Family 1998
Memories Untitled(skinned)XIII 11"x14" Silver Print Fragment 1/3 Private Collection 1993



metonymically introduce and reproduce the rupture they reference. This is a traditional avante-garde procedure, a Brechtian device of alienation and a desire to translocate experience to a viewer's own body through emphatic transfer.

In *Spaces*, the next stage or act in this particular morality tale, the images undergo a nearly equivalent physical torture before being installed...Rather than bodies alone, the images are also from art history –images which are already representations or icons of the collective imagination and memory. Out of the debris of historical culture, new images emerge—images which suggest reconstruction, rehabilitation, and renewal. Art history serves as a reminder, not only of the violence of history, but of the memories which are both possible and potentially replenishable. This is hope, or, at least, its dormant possibility. Bodies here are eternal and continuous, even if distressed and worn. From *Memories* to *Spaces*, we travel from metonymy to metaphor— from frozen literality to the abstract amplitude of expectancy.



In *Time*, the most abstract and the most complex of the series, both the body of *Memories* and the condition of *Spaces* come together in images and materials in which a redemptive hypotenuse is offered. Water, the symbol of both flux and gravity, overflows and overwhelms the body. Nature, of both body and world, is presented as redemption. The body finds itself floating in a space which is uncontrollable, immense, and immeasurable. This is the body freed, the body suspended, and the body unviolated. Neither nature nor culture betrayed. And then comes the snail. The ideal body. Already its own redemption. Already its own consummation. Already its own ecology. Already a body which is home and a wont and a habit. Each individualized and each a part of a greater whole. A series which is also a unit.

Bruce Ferguson, *Spirit Matters: Hope Sandrow: Water Life*, Whitney Museum at Philip Morris 1998



Water Life, top, from the series *Time*
Sun Clouds Water 40"x26" Inkjet Print 2/3 1998
Purple Marlins, Water 26"x40" Inkjet Print 1/3 1998
Two Sea Gulls 26"x40" Inkjet Print
 1/3 Collection Museum of Modern Art 1998