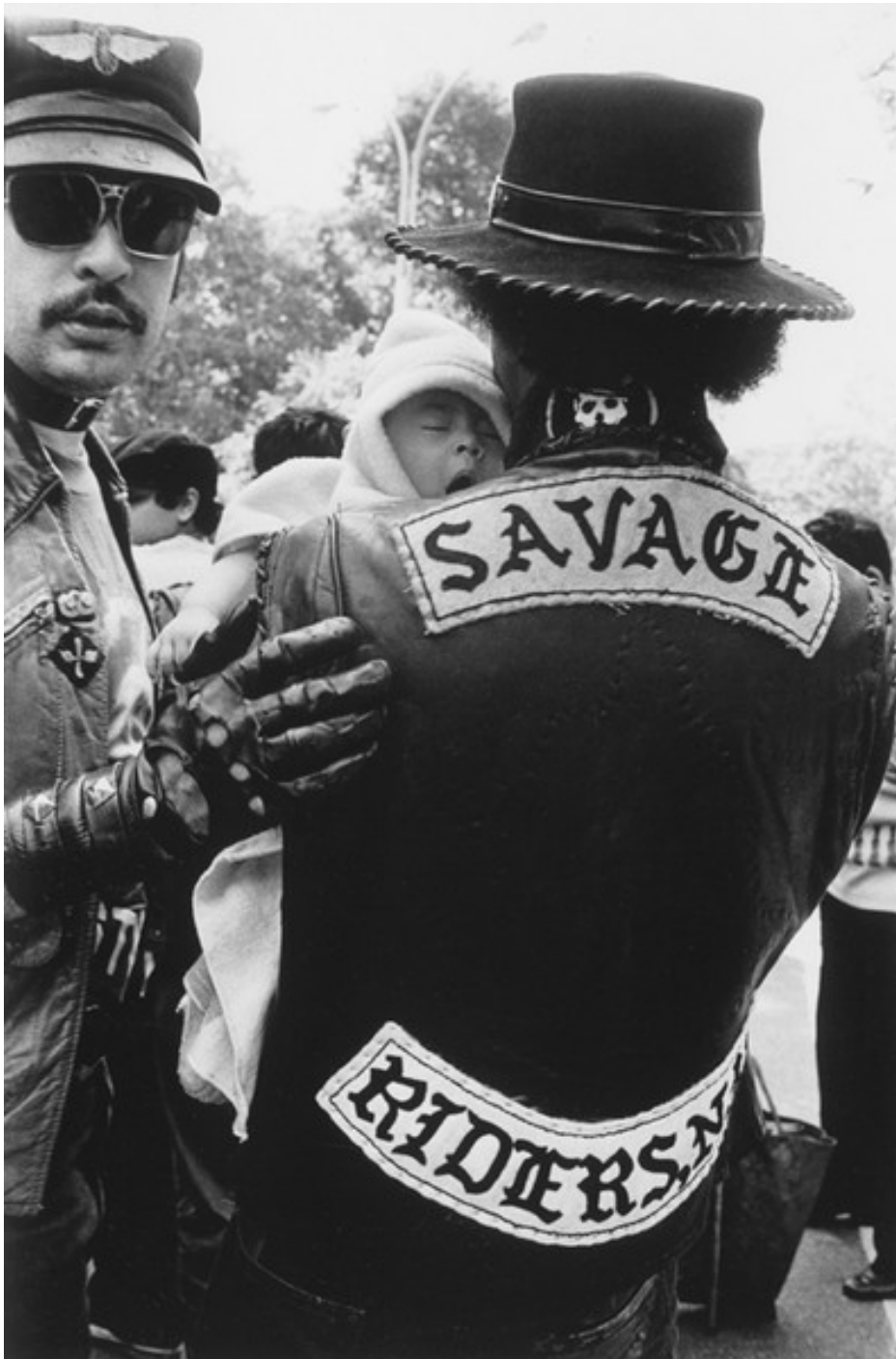




Home » [The Click](#) » Daniel Cooney Fine Art: From the Heart

## Daniel Cooney Fine Art: From the Heart

2014 Nov by Glitterati Incorporated



### Recent Posts

Sara Shamsavari: London Veil | Paris Veil | NYC Veil  
Friday Mar 13 2015

Toby Old: Times Squared  
Friday Mar 06 2015

Wyatt Gallery: Spiritual Sites  
Friday Feb 27 2015

Janette Beckman: El Hoyo Maravilla  
Friday Feb 20 2015

David Gulden: The Centre Cannot Hold  
Friday Feb 13 2015

Navajo Nation 1950: Traditional Life in Photographs  
Friday Feb 06 2015

Lisa Ross: Living Shrines of Uyghur China  
Friday Jan 30 2015

Joe Conzo: Latin Legends  
Friday Jan 23 2015

Lukas Birk: Polaroids from the Middle Kingdom  
Friday Jan 16 2015

Thom Gilbert: Soul: Memphis' Original Sound  
Friday Jan 09 2015

Bastienne Schmidt: Topography of Quiet  
Friday Jan 02 2015

Robert Herman: Cartagena: A Waking Dream  
Friday Dec 26 2014

Phillip Toledano: Provocative, Pristine & Profound  
Friday Dec 19 2014

Lilla Szasz: A Meditation of Self  
Friday Dec 12 2014



Daniel Cooney Fine Art opened in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, in August 2003 before relocating to Chelsea in June 2004. The gallery, which specializes in showing artists such as Nir Arieli, Benjamin Fredrickson and Joseph Maida and Scot Sothern, also conducts fine art auctions online presented by iGavelAuctions.com featuring works by Walker Evans, Peter Hujar, Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Avedon, Edward Weston, and Alfred Eisenstadt, among others.

Daniel Cooney observes, "To make a good living in this business is nearly impossible. Even if it looks shiny and sparkly on the outside, it's a different story on the inside."

It is this empathy and understanding that makes Cooney the perfect gallerist for artists such as Arlene Gottfried, whose exhibition, "Sometimes Overwhelming: New York in the 70s & 80's" will be on view through December 20, 2014.

Born in Brooklyn, Gottfried started photographing her personal experiences around the City during a time when it was rough, rugged, and a raw, a time so long ago and far away that her photographs are more than art, they are part of the historical record. They are evidence of a way of life that has all but disappeared, a way of life that said, Do It Yourself, an ethos Cooney embodies to a T.

The exhibition will feature 29 vintage prints of images made in Brooklyn, Soho, the Lower East Side, Riis Beach, Riker's Island, Central Park, Coney Island, and other parts of the city that Gottfried photographed. Her portraits,

at once beguiling with an innocent knowingness, are becoming icons of a New York that has all but slipped away.

Cooney observes, "Arlene Gottfried's work predates my time in New York. We romanticize and have a nostalgia for this time period, when the rents were still affordable."

A native of Binghamton, New York, Cooney received a BFA in photography from SUNY New Paltz, and an MFA in photography from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. He recalls, "I moved to New York in 1996 with the intention of being an artist but through my day job working at galleries, I started to like that aspect of it. Curating and working with collectors became more interesting to me.

"I think I've always been interested in looking at people's artistic output, thinking about it, thinking about private collections, and how it all comes together. The artist produces work as a contribution to the world. As a gallerist, I feel like what I do is very personal to me. If I don't do it, no one else will. I won't see it unless I do it."

Cooney began his gallery career at the James Danziger Gallery, where he first discovered the pleasures of curatorial work. Cooney remembers, "I had the opportunity to organize the work of Peter Hujar. It took me a long time, and I really got to look at the full body of work: mentally disabled people, Lower East Side artists, of animals, portraits, the list goes on. Hujar was dead at the time, and I got to look at an artist's lifetime of work in the world and make sense of what we were presenting to the world.

"Because this is a whole lifetime of work, you have to start somewhere. With Hujar, I got to understand what a gallery's function could be: to educate collectors and to collaborate with the artist. Collectors don't understand artists, and artists don't understand collectors. It is the job of the gallerist to help them understand each other because you can deal with what people are passionate about. Collectors are building their collections, and that is their contribution to the world. Their passion is their collection and they have a plan for it. As a gallerist, you're in the middle, between the artist and the collector. I love when people come in; you talk and look through drawers. That's fun.

"When I thought about opening a gallery in Chelsea, the first question I asked myself is, 'Why bother? There are already 300 galleries. How am I going to stand out?' All I have is myself. That is the only thing that will make it unique and special. I don't have a subject or theme that I specialize in showing. I go on my intuition. It drives me and through that, it drives the gallery.

"I think that the artists I connect to work from their own experience and instinct, from deep within their own psyches. I work from my heart. I work on what I am interested in: portraiture is a kind of psychology. People are mining their own personal experience and being honest with themselves.

"Take Arlene Gottfried's work, for example. New York City street photography is genre of photography itself. How many photographs of New York have been made? What makes Arlene's work special is Arlene herself. We see Coney Island as Arlene sees it. It is not the subject matter, because the subject matter is not new. It is Arlene. She is what is original.

"I represent emerging artists. I am helping them to form their work. We meet every couple of months to talk, and think about the work. I also work with older artists, such as Scot Sothorn and Arlene Gottfried. It is fun and exciting to discover people who are young or older.

"Being trained as an artist, I think of things as creating something. The gallery is my existence in the world. It's an on-going thing. It morphs and evolves as time goes on. I'm not the same person that I was nine years ago, when I first opened the gallery. And the gallery is not the same either.

"I put a lot of thought into the sequencing of the shows. I think of what shows are next to each other. I want people to have a certain expectation of the quality they will see at the gallery, but still be surprised whether they come in once a month or once a year."

Indeed, "Sometimes Overwhelming" reminds us of this, of the magic that is New York, whether the year is 1984 or 2014. It is to expect the unexpected, lest we forget.

## Links

Photographs courtesy of Daniel Cooney Fine Art

Photographs by Arlene Gottfried

Curated by Miss Rosen