

Public Art Fund's

# Urban Paradise: Gardens in the City

## Kristin Jones & Andrew Ginzel

### *Apotheosis*

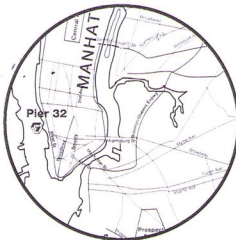
Proposal for Pier 32, Manhattan

In consultation with Hudson River Park Conservancy

*Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel bring to our attention what they term "the physics of existence". Fascinated by invisible forces that coexist in the natural world but which are seemingly extinct within the context of urban life, the artists weave a complex series of metaphors and symbols into their environmental constructions exploring ideas of tension and equilibrium. Pier 32, on the Hudson River, provided the ideal location for their proposal.*

We are challenged by the possibility of transforming the derelict landscape of the once vital commercial waterfront and piers in the New York Harbor into a place of reflection and purity. The Hudson riverfront has infinite possibilities to be transformed from a wasteland into a paradise. The city experiences deprivation of nature. Within the city the horizontal is vertical. In the site we have chosen there is perspective. We want to create an environment where citizens can experience the ever-present mercurial forces

of nature - the fluctuating tides, the dramatic forces of wind, the changing cycles of light. We want to look anew at the infinity of sky which New Yorkers are deprived of, to renew the wonder which



nature inspires. In the caverns of the city street, sky and water are rarely seen or felt.

In our search for a site to work on, we particularly looked for places which were lost, wasted or forlorn. We discovered an old pier within the area to be reclaimed by the Hudson River Park Conservancy. This organization was created in 1992 by the City and the State of New York to assess, design and

build a vital new park along the Hudson from Battery Park City to 59th Street. The Park will add over 550 acres of essential open space to Manhattan. Pier 32 is a legacy of earlier times when Manhattan's waterfront was a mecca for trade. Today the pier is a vacant concrete deck, barricaded and slated for removal. Under current legislation, if removed, nothing can be built on this site again.

Pier 32 presents dramatic potential: it projects directly into the Hudson River in one of the oldest parts of the city, in a portion of the new park designated as an area of ecological study and interpretation. Built on wooden pilings driven into the river bottom, this pier is an aquatic forest, a haven for life.

The pier should be saved. Respecting the original boundaries of the former pier, the site can be interpreted in multiple ways. Options include stripping the deck, leaving the piles above or below the waterline, or replacing some or most of them; detaching the

pier from the shore and creating an island.

The Hudson River Park will serve a broad based community, as well as a host to plant and animal life. The process of transforming the total 4.5 mile waterfront into the new park will be gradual. The Conservancy is motivated and spirited, open and receptive to working even on the most abstract level. As the eventual fate of Pier 32 is unknown at this time, we have hereby chosen to consider a number of options.

Interpreting the pier generates many questions and considerations about the relationship of the natural to the manmade world. It is our hope to contribute a greater awareness of the natural to the urban. Ultimately we hope that this pier might be saved and become a natural resource to enhance life for the citizens of the City.

K.J. & A.G.

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James M. Clark and Tom Eccles

Projects



Kristin Jones & Andrew Ginzel

