



Now Open: Mattress Factory Showcases Its Greer Lankton Archive

The renowned museum displays never-before-shown art, artifacts and journals from the late artist's work and life.

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania (11/13/2017) – Beyond a tall gate and a narrow alley stands a dilapidated house. The AstroTurf patio is littered with fall leaves. You are about to experience “It’s all about ME, Not You,” the final masterpiece of artist Greer Lankton. The installation, which premiered at the Mattress Factory a few weeks before Lankton’s death in 1996, is part of the museum’s permanent collection. Now, the Mattress Factory delves into its exclusive Lankton archive for an unprecedented retrospective of the artist’s life and work.

The current exhibition is drawn from a detailed collection of the artist’s belongings donated to the Mattress Factory by her family in 2014. Spanning Lankton’s entire life, the materials include journals, sketches, correspondence, newspaper articles, and even the objects she had in her pockets on her very last day. These personal items share the archive with a treasure-trove of artwork from various stages of Lankton’s process and her career, as well as photographs documenting an important era in art, taken by and featuring her fellow artists and friends including Nan Goldin, Peter Hujar and David Wojnarowicz.

In a 2009 interview about the archive, Greer’s mother, Lynn Lankton, observed, “We thought she had a real statement that ought to be heard, and...” “This is the place to do it,” finished her father, William Lankton. Lynn added, “I feel like... there’s a chance that maybe this will be helpful to somebody else.”

One of the most influential creators in the East Village art scene of the 1980s, Lankton was known for striking dolls and environments that conveyed her experiences as an artist, a transgender woman and a drug addict; explored norms of gender and sexuality; and interrogated the imagery of pop culture and consumerism. Her work has been described by critic Holland Cotter as "art of a superbly disciplined and unusually distressing beauty."

Several of Lankton's figures were included in the 1995 Whitney Biennial and the 1995 Venice Biennale, but she created only one large-scale installation. “It’s all about ME, Not You” features dolls, figures and shrines she crafted over the course of her life, crowding a recreation of her Chicago apartment. The piece reveals Lankton’s artistic pursuits through the mid-1990s, exploring her personal struggles and documenting the artistic and social ferment of the East Village.

The collection is so extensive that the museum plans to present it in waves, with multiple mini-openings over the run of the exhibit – each one offering a rare glimpse into the creative life of an icon.



MATTRESS FACTORY

Interviews can be arranged with Mattress Factory archivist Sarah Hallett, based in Pittsburgh, and show curator Margery King (who also curated the 1996 show), based in New York City. Please contact Katie Urich, Marketing and Communications Manager, at 412.325.1556 or kurich@mattress.org.

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About the Mattress Factory: Hailed as the best museum for installation art in the U.S., the Mattress Factory invites visitors to experience “art you can get into.” Over the past 40 years, the museum has presented and commissioned new installation and performance works by more than 750 artists, both established and emerging, who have challenged themselves and their audiences through the support of the museum’s exceptional residency program. The Mattress Factory’s outreach programs serve more than 20,000 students, teachers, adults, and families every year, and its activities as an educator, visitor attraction and employer continue to invigorate Pittsburgh’s North Side. For more information, call [412.231.3169](tel:412.231.3169) or visit mattress.org.