

P·P·O·W 511 W. 25th Street, Room 301, New York, NY 10001 Tel: 212-647-1044 email: info@ppowgallery.com

Martin Wong Everything Must Go

Curated by Adam Putnam

December 10, 2009– January 30, 2010
Opening Reception: Thursday, December 10, 6-8pm



Martin Wong, *Everything Must Go*, 1983, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 60

P·P·O·W is pleased to announce an exhibition of work by Martin Wong, curated by Adam Putnam. Martin Wong, who died in 1999 due to an AIDS related illness, was born in 1946 in Portland, Oregon and moved to New York City in 1978. He received a degree in ceramics, but decided to become a painter when he was thirty years old. He first started exhibiting at the Semaphore Gallery in New York. Martin Wong's last exhibition at **P·P·O·W** was in 2000.

For most of his time in NYC, Martin Wong stayed nestled in the Lower East Side, enmeshed in the fabric of his neighborhood and the people around him. His work has traditionally been described as a document of that time in the 1980's and 1990's, capturing a moment in the history of the city marked by vacant lots, graffiti and a burgeoning club culture.

This exhibition presents an intuitive ramble through the estate left by this unique and visionary artist. It offers a glimpse into a private world populated by crumbling tenements, vacant lots, prisoners (with those burning eyes), closed gates (and open legs), downtown poets, hustlers, and if we are lucky, perhaps an off-duty Fireman.

Martin Wong wanders through an urban landscape and refashions it into something new. His paintings take us inward, through a hidden, alternative landscape of longing and deeply felt subjectivity. Following this logic of desire, a crumbled brick tenement can become laced with the erotic or a painting of a single cactus can carry all the restrained passion of an unmet gaze from a sexy stranger.

Also on view are several rarely seen photo collages on loan from The Fales Library archives as well as drawings and sketches. These photos are remarkable for the fact that they not only exist as source material for some of the larger paintings but also as a rare document of the long walks the artist would take in and around the Lower East Side.

The vacant lots have long since been filled in, but don't let the glass facades fool you. There is always the torn seam or frayed edge... you just need to know where to look.

The exhibition is accompanied by a full color illustrated catalog with an essay by Carlo McCormick.

Adam Putnam is an artist living and working in NYC. His work has been exhibited at P.S.1, Art Statements Basel, the 2008 Whitney Biennial and most recently, at Taxter and Spengemann Gallery. In 2006 Adam Putnam, with artist Shannon Ebner, curated the show *Blow Both of Us* at Participant Inc.

Upcoming exhibition: Dinh Q Lê, February 4 - March 13, 2010.

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Please call 212-647-1044 for additional information or photographic materials