

ART PLURAL GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE For Immediate Release

Inside the Chelsea Hotel by Julia Calfee

Singapore, April 2012 - Art Plural Gallery is pleased to announce the first exhibition by Julia Calfee in Singapore. The exhibition titled **Inside the Chelsea Hotel** runs from **12th September through 12th October, 2012** with photographs documenting the state of mind that has existed in that unique place In New York City - the legendary residence for artists, writers and musicians.

"The Chelsea Hotel is a place where excess is welcome, where the psyche can be annihilated or resurrected. It has a magical potential for transformation, whether it be rebirth or destruction. Artists such as Jimi Hendrix, William S. Burroughs, Stanley Kubrick, Mark Twain, Edith Piaf, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Jasper Johns, Jack Kerouac, Willem de Kooning, Leonard Cohen, Bob Dylan, and countless others have been drawn Inside the Chelsea Hotel by a seemingly irresistible magnetic force," the artist recounts.

From 2003 until 2008 Julia Calfee has been living mainly in New York City's Hotel Chelsea. The years she spent in the Chelsea Hotel were a visual quest for the unifying elements of the people who chose to live in this place and the ghosts who still lurk in its shadows.

As Julia Calfee describes, "When I photographed at the Chelsea Hotel, I would stay in a space or situation for hours. Time would pass and my presence would become less and less visible. Sometimes I would even disappear."

This long term project has become a well-acclaimed book 'Inside the Chelsea Hotel' published by power House Books New York in 2008 and now to be considered as reference book on this hotel which has existed for over 120 years. This is the subject of the exhibition at Art Plural Gallery with large format photos depicting the life inside of this legendary hotel with its strange atmosphere and even stranger inhabitants who no longer exist today as the Chelsea hotel has been sold and now stands empty on the 23rd Street in New York City. This photo exhibition is a visual way of understanding the intimate life style of the artist and celebrities who spent years in this hotel.

"Julia Calfee's work is a homage to the creativity, eccentricity and talent of the souls who suffered, loved and bled for their art. Julia Calfee is immensely inspiring and we are very proud to distil her artistic sensibility to the Singapore's art scene," comments Frédéric de Senarclens, CEO of Art Plural Gallery.

Inside the Chelsea Hotel

The Chelsea Hotel: a place occupied by ghosts of past lives; a place where many renowned painters, writers, filmmakers, actors and musicians have lived and created important works; a place where, in spite of the changes without and within the hotel, the bohemian tradition is still alive. The photographer Julia Calfee lived there for four years and took pictures that captured the hotel's character as it has been shaped by residents past and present. Her photographs are impregnated with a personal experience of the place, as described by her in words that communicate the unique genius loci: "It was possible to come to live in the Chelsea Hotel without questions about a past, without a job, without any credit or credit card or check book... Here it is possible without criticism to be drunk, stoned, or screaming with the pain of life, and know that the police will not necessarily be called."

"Evoking atmospheres rather than describing situations, and working in accordance with the anarchistic mood of the hotel, I avoided any formal, posed portraits and the use of tripods or artificial lighting. People are always asking me what it is like to have lived in the Chelsea Hotel. Not always easy. At times I was on edge in this sometimes claustrophobic atmosphere, but there were also many great moments of friendship, generosity, complicity and bonding."

-Julia Calfee

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Exhibition Details:

Inside the Chelsea Hotel
12th September to 12th October, 2012

Art Plural Gallery
38 Armenian Street, Singapore 179942
Monday - Saturday from 11 am to 7 pm

About Art Plural Gallery

Art Plural Gallery is a unique space dedicated to Modern, Contemporary Art and Design in the heart of Singapore's cultural district. This innovative platform nestled in a four-storey Art Deco heritage building presents solo and group exhibitions, installations, public art projects, conferences, and art publications.

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