

AROUND DAY'S END

This exhibition anticipates the inauguration later this year of David Hammons's *Day's End*, a major public artwork to be located directly across from the Whitney Museum in Hudson River Park. While Hammons (b. 1943) proposed his sculpture to the Museum in 2014, it is nearing completion during a period of profound crisis and uncertainty—a powerful testament to the tenacity and resilience of New York. The exhibition recognizes Hammons's new achievement and pays homage to the historic project that inspired it: Gordon Matta-Clark's *Day's End* (1975). Drawn primarily from the Whitney's collection, the presentation also features selected works from the 1970s and 1980s by artists who explored the Meatpacking District and West Side piers, among other downtown Manhattan locations.

In 1975, Matta-Clark (1943–1978) created *Day's End* in a former shipping warehouse on Pier 52, which stood on the Hudson River across from the Museum's current home. Matta-Clark cut massive openings into the dilapidated pier shed's walls, roof, and floor. He wanted to transform the building into a “temple to sun and water.” Also titled *Day's End*, Hammons's sculpture is a meditation on Matta-Clark's intervention. While it conjures the layered history of the neighborhood and the river, Hammons's project also acts as an evocative landmark for the reimagining of the site.

Matta-Clark's *Day's End* and the other works on view here were made at an earlier time of fiscal crisis in New York. Many structures were abandoned, and social services were stretched thin. But such conditions empowered artists to engage more immediately with the city as a dynamic site, concept, and community. Some created moments of poetry and beauty in unlikely places. Others raised concerns about the privatization of space and the displacement of vulnerable populations, particularly people of color—issues that are equally relevant today. For these artists, and in Hammons's contemporary *Day's End*, the city was and remains material, inspiration, specter, and provocation.

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