

SV



Cindy Tower

# Ruin USA: New Paintings by Cindy Tower

**Over** the last few years Cindy Tower has been going to shipyards and factories around the country in search of suitable ruins. She is motivated by a life-long fascination with the making of things and a nostalgia for artisanal and industrial ingenuity. "I...grew up with a Yankee make-thrift aesthetic," she says, "where community members fixed things themselves and didn't need to buy everything new all the time. I grew up fascinated by materials and liked best to be around people that made things with their own hands. I was lucky to have a grandfather who had been a nurseryman and another who was an engineer. The women in my family were the same way, making things from scratch. I decided to paint paintings honoring vanishing American industries because everything I love is disappearing."

**Tower** has gone to sites in Texas, Connecticut and most recently the Brooklyn Navy Yard, to paint industrial ruins. Ships and shipyards are a particular focus: she has done several paintings of the engine room and other features of the SS Diamond, mothballed in the State Port of Houston in Texas (cover and following photographs).

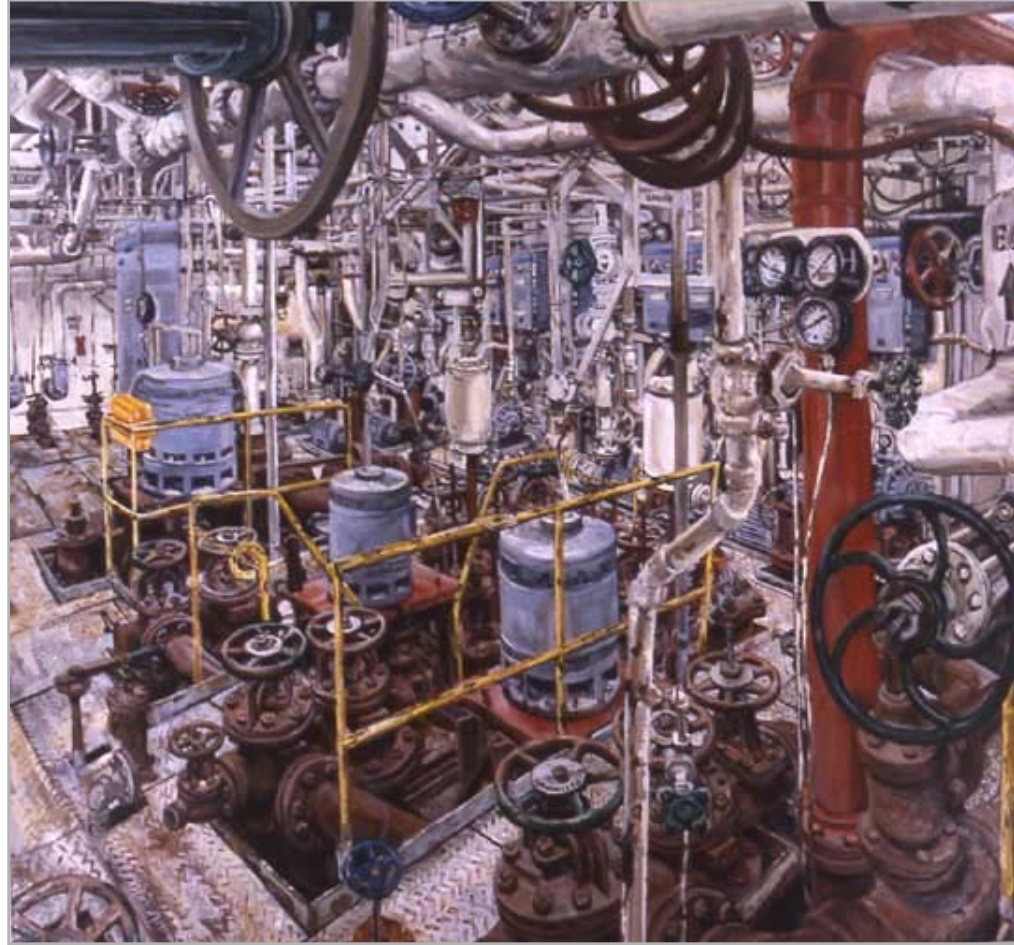


Cindy Tower sitting on the back of her pick-up truck at the Port of Houston painting the SS Diamond State.



**Tower's** working method is to paint on site, and directly from observation. Her most recent works are of views of the interior of Building 128 at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, a giant factory interior where warships were built, which is slated to be demolished. She emphasizes the connection between her Brooklyn Navy Yard paintings and the broader context of nearby Williamsburg, the well-known contemporary art epicenter, and the product that issues therefrom. In Tower's words:

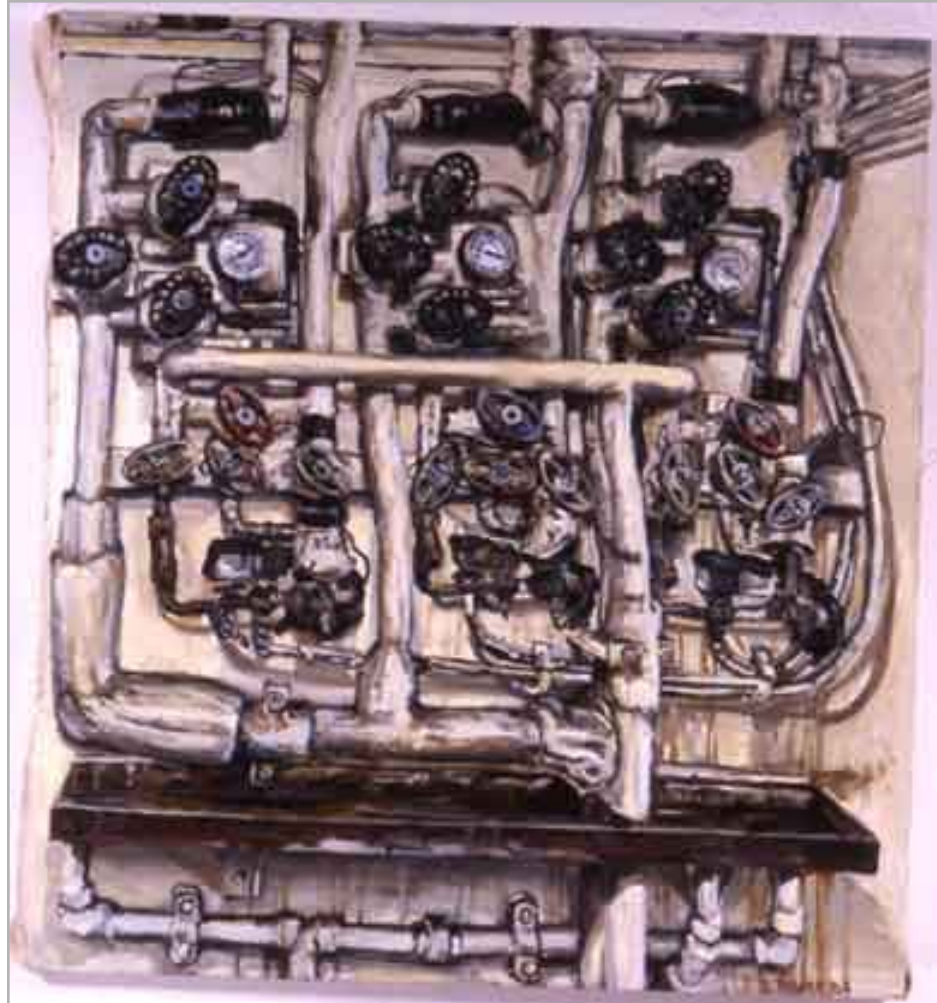
*I think of the rubble in Williamsburg, Brooklyn as the DNA building blocks of the contemporary artworld. Out of its rubble and ashes flashes new art that appears colorful, clean, and shiney with no blemishes or baggage attached. I rarely see any artworks that are rooted, or site-specific anymore. Because the neighborhood has gotten so flossy lately, walking down the streets of Williamsburg feels fake, like Vegas on a smaller scale. I've contributed to Williamsburg's gentrification because I've occupied it since 1980. Since then, I've been watching everything I love disappear and getting white-washed at an exceptionally accelerated rate. Change isn't what upsets*



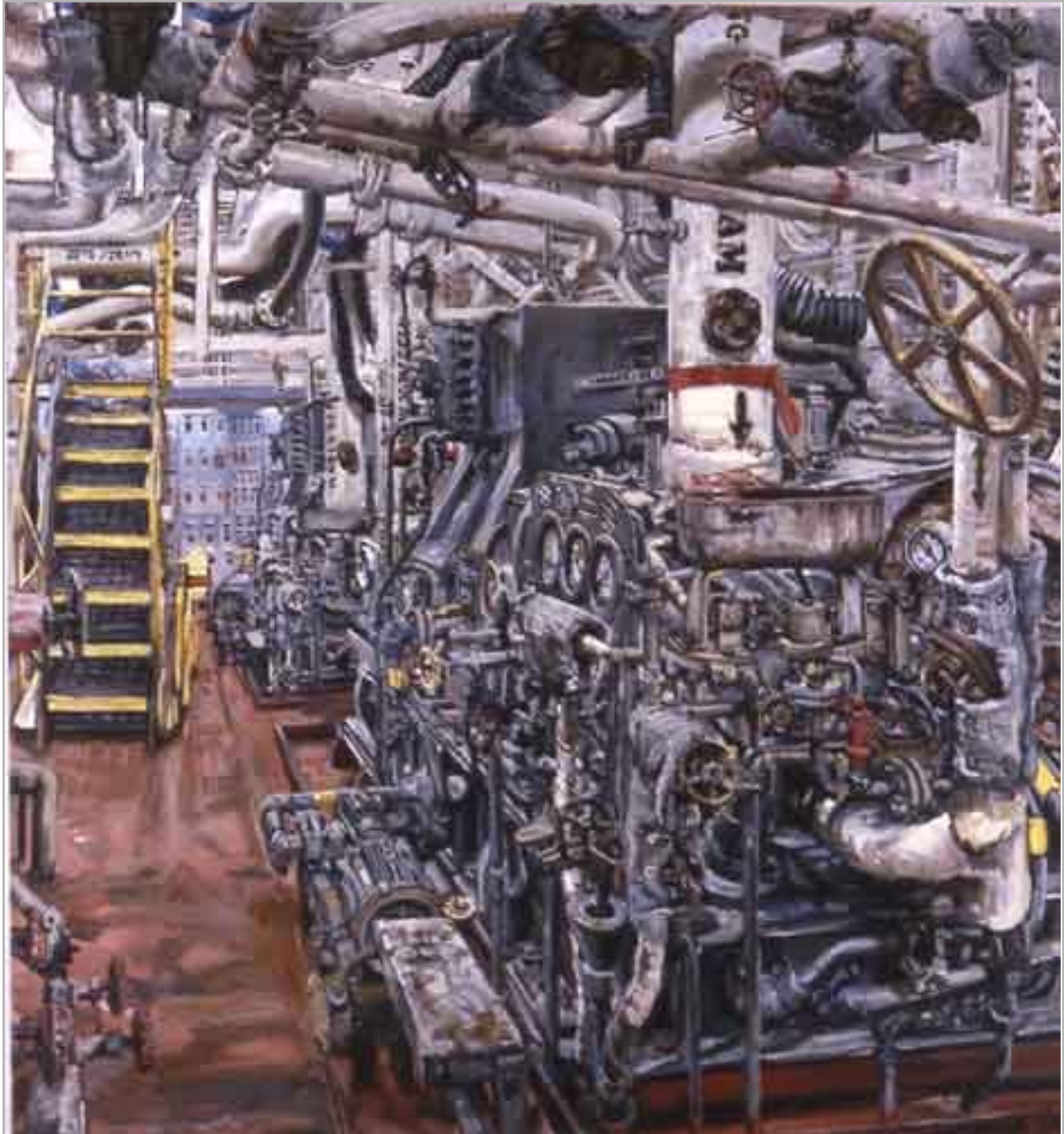
Engine Room, SS Diamond State. Oil on Canvas.

*me however. What I am concerned about as an artist has to do with a lack of memory and a diminished material sense, due to the lack of working with ones hands, in the art world. So, I've sat myself down in Williamsburg and gotten to work, out in plein air, painting the latest property scheduled for demolition this coming November. It happened to be building #128 in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. There is no Navy left at present. There are actually only 300 ships flying the United States Flag at present. So this is why buildings are being torn down there, security systems put in place and television studios are taking over the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Building #128 was built at the turn of the century to build ships in. It is a magnificent structure still standing although ravaged by a century. The intent of this show was to preserve the feeling of the place--its exhausted depleted expansive qualities--and bring the whole thing into Robert's space.*

(Tower's Brooklyn Navy Yard paintings are on exhibit at Open Project Space during September 2005. Open is Located at 62 Leroy Street, 2E, and is open Saturday 12-6 and by appt. For more information please call 917.340.3760).



Engine Room, SS Diamond State. Oil on Canvas.



SS Diamond State. Oil on Canvas.











## Education

MFA University of California at San Diego, CA  
 BFA Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

## Solo Exhibitions

September 2005 Open Gallery, Building 128, curated by Robert Knafo, New York, NY  
 January 2005 Realform, Road Show, Brooklyn, NY  
 May 2004 Uzi New York Gallery, Clutter, painting exhibition, New York, NY  
 Fall 2003 Tank, commissioned by Southwest College of Arts and Crafts, San Antonio, TX  
 Nov.-Jan. 2003 New Haven Public Free Library, CT, Fertility Hut, commissioned by Artspace  
 Winter 1999 Merrill Lynch Corporation, American Landscapes 1993-1998, New York, NY  
 April-May 1998 Serge Sorokko Gallery, Pretty Dot Remake, New York, NY  
 February 1998 Trans Hudson Gallery, Pirate Cindy, New York, NY  
 June-Nov. 1998 New Jersey Center for Visual Art, Gardenia, Summit, NJ  
 Summer 1993 New Museum for Contemporary Art, Westward Expansion Inwards, New York, NY

## Group Exhibitions

April-May 2005 Jack the Pelican Presents, Culture Vulture, Brooklyn, NY  
 April 2005 Sun Valley Center, Everyday Objects, Sun Valley, Idaho  
 September 2004 Streit's Matzo Store, Shared, New York, NY  
 June 2004 Dish, Studios, New York, NY  
 2004-2005 State of Connecticut, Centennial Tree Project, traveling exhibition, CT  
 September 2004 Mattactuck Museum, Waterbury, CT  
 May 2005, '04 Silvermine Guild Arts Center, Art of the Northeast, New Canann, CT  
 March-April '03 Paul Mellon Art Center, Nutmeg Steel, Workplace series, Wallingford, CT  
 March 2003 The Dylan Hotel, Scope '03, David Gibson Suite, New York, NY  
 Feb.-March '03 Cynthia Broan Gallery, Recession '03 \$99 Show, curated by Tim Thyzel, NY, NY  
 May 2002 Ace Gallery, Artist to Artist, New York, NY  
 June 2000-2002 Franconia Sculpture Park, group sculpture show, Baltic, Schafer, MN

## **Publications and Reviews**

The Hartford Courant, May 19th, 2005, Industrial Arts by Adrian Brune, p.1-3, Lifestyle sec.

Artnet magazine, reviews,Culture Vulture, by Maine, April 15,2005, p. 6 of 8

The New York Times, Oct. 10, 2004, p. C15

American Craft Magazine, December/January 2004 issue, p. 10

The New York Times, New York, NY, Michael Rush, July 7, '00, sec. 2, p.31

Art in America, New York, NY, November 1998

Time Out, March 12-19, 1998, p. 60

The New York Times, March 6, 1998

The New York Times, September 14, 1997, NJ Sec., p. 8

Art in America, New York, Dec. 1996, p. 92

The New York Times, Sept. 13, 1996, p. C30

Time Out, New York, Aug. 21-28, 1996, issue 48, p. 29

The New York Times, August 9, 1996, p. C24



# Paul Pagk

at  
Open

Oct.5 - Nov 5, 2005.

Open Project Space is located at  
62 Leroy Street, Ste 2E, NYC.

Open is open Saturday 12-6 and  
by appt. For more information  
please call 917.340.3760.

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