

LEE BROZGOL 1977—1981

NEW CANONS

150 Barrow Street, New York

May 7 – June 15, 2025

open weds–sun 12–7pm

In *FUCK ANY HOT ASS TODAY*, 1980, Lee Brozgol (1941–2021) stages a period tableau of queer ecstasy amid the filth and faded grandeur of the Christopher Street Piers—a place he was known to visit and photograph—a sacred site where men gathered in intimacy and disappeared into collapse. At its center, bathed in a sacred light, a wilted cruciform figure is suspended mid-release, arms slack, ropes taut. A forensic image of a vanished world, refracted through a surreal, cartoonish lens. Graffiti scrawled across ruined walls gives the work its name. Painted on the heels of a free and decadent decade, as the contours of the AIDS epidemic began to sharpen, the work carries a hushed, haunting prescience—a terminal vision rendered in devotion. A world without salvation. Release without rescue. Ecstasy edged by erasure.

LEE BROZGOL 1977–1981 brings together seven previously unseen paintings from an early, incandescent period in the late artist's practice. Made between 1977 and 1981, these works chart a vanished New York—erotic and violent, sacred and profane—across personal and mythic registers. Installed inside the former Keller Hotel—once home to Keller's, the city's oldest leather bar—the presentation unfolds in dialogue with the vanished Christopher Street Piers, Manhattan's long-since razed queer sanctuary, just beyond the exhibition's walls. Like the piers, the Keller Hotel was a space suspended between use and abandonment—a station for bodies passing through, lingering, disappearing.

Brozgol's canvases do not witness; they stage. He resurrected dreamworlds the way some build altars: obsessively, piece by piece. These are not confessions, but controlled hallucinations—myths of ruin and desire, rendered with an exacting hand. His figures revel, rot, and collapse beneath lights he alone controls.

Café Society (1981), painted the year Brozgol married and would soon become a father, is the final work in this arc—a curtain call of sorts. Here, for the first time, he renders himself as the maître d', quietly orchestrating a scene of social performance. A man trying on the costume of belonging, of public life, of normalcy—while directing the scene from the wings.

If Brozgol ever returned to the piers after 1981, it is undocumented.

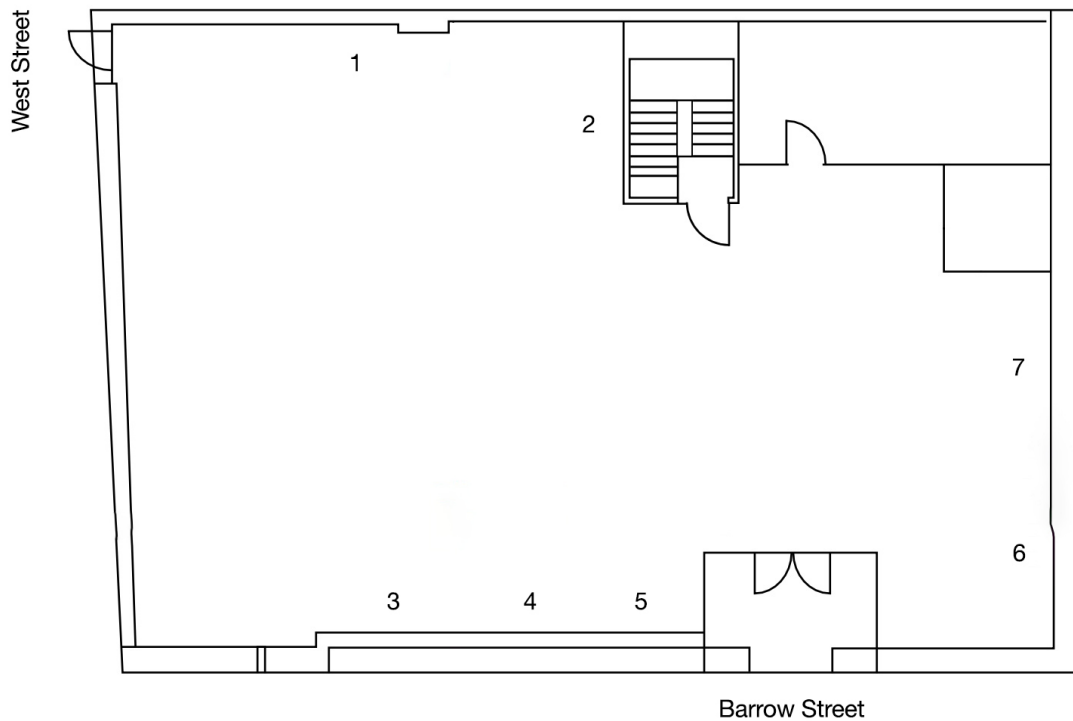
He left few declarations, only traces:

In my personal life, I am married and I am a father.

Culturally, I am a Jew; religiously, I am not.

Professionally, in addition to being an artist I am a licensed clinical social worker.

Lee Brozgol 1977-1981 is presented by New Canons, in collaboration with Foreign & Domestic and the estate of Lee Brozgol.



1. *FUCK ANY HOT ASS TODAY*, 1980, oil on canvas, 66 x 72 in
2. *Café Society*, 1981, oil on canvas, 66 x 72 in
3. *The Death of a Porno Queen*, 1979, oil on canvas, 66 x 66 in
4. *The Fire at the Everard Baths*, 1977, oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in
5. *What do you want with an old lady?*, 1977, oil on canvas, 66 x 60 in
6. *The night was made for love*, 1980, oil on canvas, 66 x 66 in
7. *My Romance*, 1978, oil on canvas, 66 x 72 in