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Downtown Alliance Unveils *Downtown Dogs*, A Re:Construction Public-Art Project



Malin Abrahamsson/ARTEA projects

New York, NY, (February 10, 2011) — The Alliance for Downtown New York today announced the installation of Malin Abrahamsson's *Downtown Dogs*, which borders the Department of Environmental Protection [Water Tunnel #3](#) shaft site at Grand and Lafayette streets. While the Downtown Alliance's northern boundary extends to Chambers Street, the Re:Construction program can be applied throughout the LMDC's catchment area, which extends north to Houston Street.

The 250-foot mural is printed on mesh and covers a 12-foot-tall wire fence. Ayelet Danielle Aldouby and Elinor Milchan of [ARTEA Projects](#) served as curators for the piece. The Downtown Alliance's Re:Construction program began in 2007 and has produced 21 pieces, 12 of which are up for viewing.

"Now residents, workers and visitors in Lower Manhattan, Chinatown and SoHo can enjoy Malin Abrahamsson's *Downtown Dogs*, part of our program to recast construction sites as canvases for innovative public art and architecture. Thanks to the LMDC, our program is available anywhere south of Houston Street," said Elizabeth H. Berger, President of the Downtown Alliance. "Re:Construction is an ongoing opportunity for

government, artists, curators, property owners and business people to work together to make something beautiful. It's a win-win for everyone."

Re:Construction is produced by the Downtown Alliance and funded by a \$1.5 million grant from the [Lower Manhattan Development Corporation](#). Engaging, thoughtful and whimsical, the temporary artworks are creating colorful landmarks and brightened streetscapes as they help mitigate the impact of Lower Manhattan's numerous building projects.

Downtown Dogs is an artwork inspired by the children's game "Pass the Pigs," a board game using little pigs as die. Scores are left to chance and depend on the way the pigs land on the board. Using the game as a starting point, Abrahamsson substituted the figurines with dogs, an animal dear to her but also one that's more commonly encountered in the city. Intended to liven up the streetscape with its playful graphics and vibrant colors, the work serves as a reminder to all hard-working New Yorkers to always leave some time for play, but also of the infinite and unpredictable chances the city offers.

"Commercial art, graphic design, and underground street art—originally three separate visual practices—become one in *Downtown Dogs*," Abrahamsson said. "Not only do I enjoy taking my art practice outside of the studio, but the collaborative aspect of a project like this is also incredibly rewarding. I hope this piece will be a bit of a colorful surprise to those who happen upon it. That would be the ultimate reward."

"Hundreds of feet deep beneath the streets of NYC is one of the city's largest capital projects ever undertaken—the construction of City Water Tunnel No. 3," said Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway. "This vital project improves the entire water supply system for more than eight million city residents by providing an invaluable redundancy to our water supply. Though absolutely necessary, construction sites aren't exactly pretty. But now, because of a new artwork installation—Downtown Dogs by Malin Abrahamsson—that covers the construction site of a shaft tunnel, residents and visitors alike will see a colorful and unexpected 'treat' that will no doubt give them 'paws.' It all adds up to a more beautiful and vibrant Lower Manhattan community. I want to thank Downtown Alliance for helping to bring this wonderful artwork to the site."

Born and raised in northern Sweden, Abrahamsson completed the two-year Fine Arts Program at Sunderby Folkhögskola, Luleå, Sweden, in 1994 before moving to New York City. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts with an Honorable Mention, from the School of Visual Arts, in 1998. Since then, she has participated in numerous one-person shows and group exhibits in the U.S. and abroad, most notably at the *New York Transit Museum*, New York, *Sara Nightingale Gallery*, NY, *Rochester Contemporary Art Center*, NY, and *Konstens Hus*, Luleå, Sweden. In 2007, she was awarded a large-scale permanent public art commission by LIRR & MTA Arts for Transit, New York, and in 2009 she spent one month at NY Arts Residency in Beijing, China.

Grants include a travel stipend from *Helge Ax:son Johnsons Stiftelse*, Sweden, 2008; *Premier Project Grant*, funded by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and COAHSI, 2006; *Skellefteå Kulturnämnds Arbetsstipendium*, Sweden, and the *Exhibiting Arts Award* from JPMorgan Chase and COAHSI, New York, both awarded

in 2004. Additional images and information about Malin Abrahamsson can be found at: www.malinabrahamsson.com.

Previous Re:Construction projects have been installed at:

- 50 West Street: *Life, Actually**
- Hudson Street between Franklin Street and Ericsson Place: *Star Sun Burst**
- W Hotel New York – Downtown: *Hours of the Day**
- Chambers Street: *Secret Gardens**
- Fiterman Hall: *Restore the View**
- 99 Church Street: *Walking Men 99**
- 56 Leonard Street: *Rendering Leonard**
- Hudson River Park: *Botanizing the Asphalt**
- 50 Trinity Place: *Poster Project at 50 Trinity**
- 99 Washington Street: *Flying Animals**
- East River Waterfront Esplanade, South Street: *Fence Embroidery with Embellishment**
- Titanic Park, Fulton and Pearl streets: *Water Movements*
- West Thames Park, Battery Park City: *It Takes Time to Turn a Space Around*
- The Fulton Street Transit Center, John Street at Broadway: *Best Pedestrian Route*
- Fulton Street reconstruction site, between Broadway and Nassau: *Fulton Fence*
- Fulton Street Transit Center, Broadway between Ann and John streets: *Concrete Jungle*
- Goldman Sachs headquarters, 200 West Street: *Untitled*
- AIG building, 175 Water Street: *Green Gate, Summer*
- Street reconstruction site at Houston and Broadway: *Houston Fence*
- Louise Nevelson Plaza, Maiden Lane and William Street: *Rainbow Conversation*

* currently up for viewing

For more information on the Re:Construction program and hi-res images of the projects, go to: www.downtownny.com/reconstruction.

About Water Tunnel No. 3:

City Water Tunnel No. 3 is one of the largest and most complex capital construction projects in New York City history and has often been referred to as one of the world's engineering marvels. The tunnel will enhance and improve the City's water delivery system, and allow for the inspection and repair of City Tunnels No. 1 and 2 for the first time since they were put into service, in 1917 and 1936, respectively. Since 1998 and the completion of Stage 1, City Water Tunnel No. 3 has been delivering water to some residents in the Bronx, Manhattan and Queens. The \$750 million Brooklyn/Queens section has two distinct legs. The Brooklyn leg runs 5.5 miles from Red Hook, Brooklyn to Maspeth, Queens. It will also connect with the Richmond Tunnel, which delivers drinking water to Staten Island. From Maspeth, the Queens leg runs 5 miles through Woodside and Astoria. The Brooklyn and Queens legs connected on January 31, 1997, and concrete lining of both legs was completed in May 2001. The 8.5-mile Manhattan portion of Stage 2 of City Tunnel No. 3 consists of three segments and is located at an average depth of 540 feet below street level. Current construction of the different segments of the Manhattan leg originates from the same location on the far West Side. The first 3.5-mile segment runs south to lower Manhattan. Following this, the second 2.5-mile segment runs north to Central Park, and the final crosstown segment advances eastward before turning north. The Manhattan portion of the Stage 2 Tunnel is expected to begin delivering water by 2013.

The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to be the principal organization that provides Lower Manhattan's historic financial district with a premier physical and economic environment, advocates for businesses and property owners and promotes the area as a world-class destination for companies, workers, residents and visitors. The Downtown Alliance manages the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District (BID), serving an area roughly from City Hall to the Battery, from the East River to West Street.

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