

# CARLOS/ISHIKAWA

## Rose Salane

### *Indigo237*

This exhibition comes as the first iteration of an ongoing dialogue between Rose Salane and Deborah Rodi. The objects and images included were collected by Deb from 1981 through 1993 — years she spent working at Windows on the World, the restaurant formerly located on the 107th floor of the World Trade Center North Tower.

In 1981, at 23 years of age, Deb was working in a New York City that was in process of assuming a new identity. Her position as reservation agent at Windows on the World allowed her to witness the city's changes from an elevated observation point in the new World Trade Center towers. First proposed in 1943, in construction from 1966 and completed in 1973, the WTC was designed and built to stand as a symbol of growth, international corporate modernity and global world trade. The towers bridged the gap between two economic eras in the city, one defined by an economy fueled by manufacturing and its supporting industries; another defined by finance, insurance and real estate.

From 1972 until around 1993, New York developed a vast low wage service economy to support its growing financial services industry. Although this new economy helped the city pull itself out of the financial crisis of the 1970s, the transition had a polarizing effect on New York's overall economy with widened wealth gaps and greater social inequalities. Large sections of the population were unable to participate in the benefits of this new economy. At the time the city experienced dramatic increases in crime, drug use, and of course, the AIDS epidemic.

The show is structured using a series of five texts written by the artist in consultation with Deb. Formatted as news clippings, the works follow a chronology and build out their respective narratives as collaged translations of her offered testimonies. Each article is anchored by an artifact as sound bite—the pairings reflect Deb's typical day-to-day within the work environment at Windows. Days that would include swaying hanging plants and moving toilet water due to the wind's effects on the towers at such high altitudes. The disappearance of co-workers in the unaddressed internal war of AIDS becomes more frequent as the 80s proceed. Appearances by well-known figures, such as Nancy Reagan speaking on behalf of her "Just Say No" anti-drug campaign, as well as run-ins with Grace Kelly and Andy Warhol, leading up to the 1993 bombing in the basement of the North Tower, shape Deb's 12 years at Windows on the World.

This exhibition seeks to enter history through the pedestrian entrance into a pre-9/11 city. The World Trade Center had always been an idea as much as a working plan or any realized physical structure. In a post-9/11 city, this point of view would be otherwise unavailable—the information in this exhibition was only accessible through a conversation with a witness.