

'Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy' At Museum Of The City Of New York (PHOTOS)

By ULA ILNYTZKY 10/24/13

NEW YORK -- NEW YORK (AP) — With her home on Long Island's Long Beach swamped by Superstorm Sandy's unyielding surge, Christina Tisi-Kramer pointed her camera outside and captured an image that summed up her town's destruction — the beach boardwalk reduced to a jumble of sticks just steps from her door.

Tisi-Kramer's photo is one of 200 images of Sandy at an exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York. "Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy," which opens Tuesday on the anniversary of the storm, was culled from 10,000 submissions from New York, Long Island and New Jersey.

Some were taken by professionals like Tisi-Kramer; others by amateurs; and many by people who suffered personal loss.

The exhibition is arranged thematically: Storm, Destruction, Coping, Home, Relief and Not Over. There are images of anguished faces; houses teetering precariously; church pews filled with salvaged clothing; toll plazas under water; an aerial view of New York City's Breezy Point neighborhood, with rows upon rows of homes gutted by fire.

There is a poignant shot of a scribbled sign for two lost cats, a hopeful sign "NO retreat NOT NOW, NO Surrender NOT EVER," and a lone birth announcement amid the ruins of a fire in the devastated Belle Harbor section of Queens.

"We wanted pictures that showed the range of experience, from preparing for the storm to rebuilding ... what happened physically to the area and also the individual humanistic story," said Sean Corcoran, the museum's curator of photography.

Larry Racioppo, a retired photographer for the city Department of Housing and Preservation, created a large 22-page diary and album for his photographs from scrap plywood and orange "caution" tape. The materials were ubiquitous around his Belle Harbor home for months after the storm. He also constructed a crude stand to hold his account, beginning with the day of the storm and ending in early spring with portraits of workers repairing his basement.

Racioppo's house is one of six that sit just 20 feet from the beach. But he considers himself lucky. His was spared major damage when the house in front of his "took the brunt of the hit."

"Our home is pretty much back to normal, but several of my close neighbors are still rebuilding," he said.

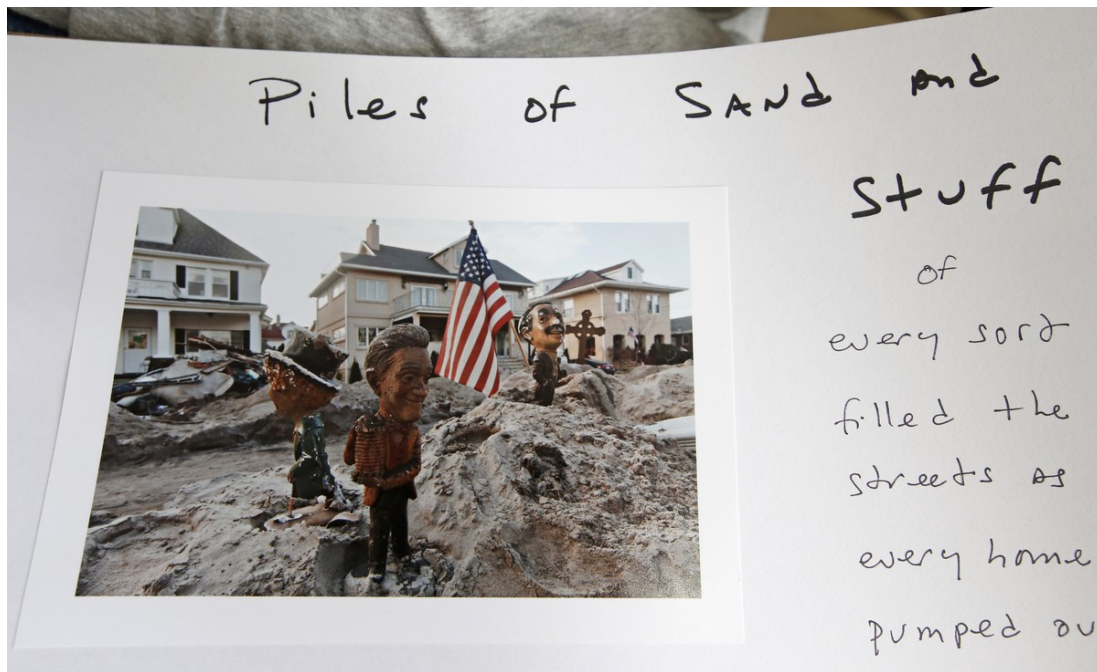
And that's the story the exhibition tells, too, of those still struggling for some normalcy.

"A lot of people haven't even started to rebuild. The point is it's an ongoing thing a year later," Corcoran said.

Visitors will see how the storm dramatically altered parts of the landscape while leaving places just a few miles away unscathed. That was the case in Ocean Grove, N.J. The storm wiped out its famous pier but spared other parts of the charming Victorian town.

Bob Bowne, a carpenter and lifetime resident, captured the pier as a turbulent surge lashed against it. He perched himself high on a third-floor balcony of a grand home as the town evacuated. He says he's glad he stayed because that image "preserved the memory of the pier — not the destruction — but shows the ferociousness of the storm."

The exhibition runs through March 2.



Professional photographer Larry Racioppo displays a page from his personal Superstorm Sandy photo album and diary at his home in the Belle Harbor section of the Rockaways, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2013, in New York. The album is part of "Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy," an exhibition of 200 pictures taken in New York, Long Island and New Jersey after Superstorm Sandy ravaged the area. The exhibition opens Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2013 at the City of the Museum of New York. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Photographer Larry Racioppo affixes a tiny camera he found among debris that washed through his neighborhood to the cover of his photo album and diary while displaying it in the basement of his home in the Belle Harbor section of the Rockaways, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2013, in New York. Racioppo's work is part of "Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy," an exhibition of 200 pictures from Superstorm Sandy and its aftermath taken in New York, Long Island and New Jersey. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Professional photographer Larry Racioppo displays a library stand he created from scrap lumber, yellow "caution" tape, and orange plastic construction fencing to display his personal photo album and diary in the basement of his home in the Belle Harbor section of the Rockaways, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2013, in New York. The album is among 200 photographs culled from 10,000 entries from the exhibit "Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy," which opens at the Museum of the City of New York Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2013, on the one-year anniversary of Sandy's destruction. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Larry Racioppo, a retired staff photographer for the New York City's Housing and Preservation Department, stands on a balcony at his home just 20 feet off the ocean in the Belle Harbor section of the Rockaways, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2013, in New York. Racioppo created a 22-page diary and photo album, constructed of scrap plywood and orange plastic construction fencing, documenting his neighborhood beginning the day of the Superstorm Sandy, and ending in early spring with portraits of workers repairing his flooded basement. Racioppo's house is one of six that sit just 20 feet from the beach. But he

considers himself lucky. He was spared major damage when the house in front of his "took the brunt of the hit," said Racioppo. The album is part of "Rising Waters: Photographing Sandy," an exhibit of 200 photographs taken after Superstorm Sandy ravaged New York, Long Island and New Jersey. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Photographer Larry Racioppo displays a page from his personal diary and photo album at his home in the Belle Harbor section of the Rockaways, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2013, in New York. The album will be on display as part of "Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy," an exhibit of 200 photographs taken after Superstorm Sandy in New York, Long Island and New Jersey. The lower photograph was taken in the gymnasium at St. Francis de Sales Parish where residents could go to pick up food, clothing and supplies to replace items they lost in the storm. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Larry Racioppo displays photographs and text from his personal photo album and diary at his home in the Belle Harbor section of the Rockaways, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2013, in New York. The album is part of "Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy" featuring photographs by amateurs and professionals like Racioppo, many of whom were personally affected by the storm.

The exhibit, which opens on the one year anniversary of the storm, presents 200 dramatic images culled from 10,000 submissions from New York, Long Island and New Jersey. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)