

NEW YORK TRANSIT MUSEUM

Contact:
Chelsea Newburg (718) 694-4915
chelsea.newburg@nyct.com

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DECONSTRUCTION OF THE THIRD AVENUE EL: PHOTOGRAPHS BY SID KAPLAN

Opening March 24th at the New York Transit Museum Grand Central Gallery Annex & Store

In 1955, a 17-year-old Sid Kaplan witnessed the dismantling of New York City's Third Avenue Elevated line, and launched a 60-year photography career. From his perch on the roof of an apartment building, or leaning out the window of an office, his images capture a unique perspective of the removal of a hulking steel structure, the hard-working people who dismantled it, and the ever-changing landscape of New York City. **Opening March 24th at the Transit Museum's Grand Central Gallery Annex, *Deconstruction of the Third Avenue El: Photographs by Sid Kaplan*, features over 40 of Kaplan's photographs taken between June 1955 and May 1956.**

One of four lines that traversed Manhattan, the Third Avenue Elevated began its life as a steam-powered railroad in August of 1878, providing service from South Ferry to the Grand Central Depot. Through mergers and acquisitions, the Third Avenue El eventually extended to 133rd Street in the Bronx and in 1902 was leased by the Interborough Rapid Transit Company (IRT). With the 1904 opening of the IRT Lexington Avenue line, ridership began to decline and the towering steel structures of the elevated trains were regarded as obsolete eyesores that darkened neighborhoods and hindered real estate development. The Third Avenue El was closed in sections beginning in 1950. While the Bronx portion remained open until 1973, the Manhattan segments were all closed by 1955 and demolished in less than a year.

Alongside Sid Kaplan's photographs, *Deconstruction of the Third Avenue El* features selected artifacts from the New York Transit Museum's collections such as original signs from the 14th

Street and 125th Street Third Avenue Elevated stations, vintage Third Avenue Elevated destination signs, and decorative colored glass dating back to ca. 1880 - 1900.

Deconstruction of the Third Avenue El is open to the public through July 9, 2017 at the New York Transit Museum Gallery Annex & Store at Grand Central Terminal. The Gallery Annex is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and is closed for major holidays and special events. It is located in the shuttle passage, adjacent to the Station Master's Office, and is free to the public year-round. For more information on hours, admission and directions, please visit: nytransitmuseum.org/visit.

ABOUT SID KAPLAN:

Born in the Bronx in 1938, Sid Kaplan's love affair with photography began in the darkroom at ten years old, when he watched a print emerge from a blank piece of paper in a process he describes as "magical." Kaplan further honed his photographic skills at the School of Industrial Art (now the High School of Art and Design), which was located on 79th Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenue – so the Third Avenue Elevated was never far from his consciousness. After high school, Kaplan worked many photography-related jobs before finally landing at Compo, where he gained a reputation as a particularly astute black and white printer, printing the work of other photographers – such as Robert Frank, Duane Michals, and Joan Roth – for decades. Today, Kaplan continues to teach the same darkroom magic that enthralled him as a youngster to students at the School of Visual Arts.

ABOUT NEW YORK TRANSIT MUSEUM:

The [New York Transit Museum](http://nytransitmuseum.org) is the largest museum in the United States devoted to urban public transportation history and one of the premier institutions of its kind in the world. The Museum explores the development of the greater New York metropolitan region through the presentation of exhibitions, tours, educational programs and workshops dealing with the cultural, social and technological history of public transportation. Since its inception forty years ago, the Museum – which is housed in a historic 1936 IND subway station in Downtown Brooklyn – has grown in scope and popularity. As custodian and interpreter of the region's extensive public transportation networks, the Museum strives to share through its public programs this rich and vibrant history with local, regional, and international audiences.

New York Transit Museum exhibits and programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Exhibitions at the Gallery Annex at Grand Central Terminal are supported by the Hugoton Foundation.

What: Deconstruction of the Third Avenue El: Photographs by Sid Kaplan

When: March 24 – July 9, 2017

Where: New York Transit Museum Gallery Annex and Store at Grand Central Terminal Shuttle Passage adjacent to the Stationmaster's Office

Images: Please email Chelsea.Newburg@nyct.com to request a press kit.

Media Contact: Chelsea.Newburg@nyct.com or 718-694-4915

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