

Karen Roth's art has always portrayed the urban environment. She was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, once a very dynamic city, and earned a BS in education at Wayne State University and an MFA in painting and mixed media at Eastern Michigan University. As the city where she had lived all of her life began to deteriorate Roth developed a process that would express her distraught feelings. By combining paint, plaster, acrylic gel, cardboard and other materials and then layering, scraping, rubbing, scratching and peeling she was able to imitate abstractly the rough facades, fading colors, traces of walls and other detritus that she saw in the crumbling homes and buildings.

In addition to her paintings which were exhibited at several galleries she was responsible for two major art projects. In one she produced a program for WDET-FM radio in which she interviewed Judy Chicago regarding the artist's controversial exhibit, *The Dinner Party*, which was being displayed at the Detroit Institute of Arts. She also created a painting on a billboard sponsored by Eller Outdoor Advertising. She worked on the piece in their indoor studio which was later displayed on a busy street. Roth married, raised two sons and held positions as an assistant at a downtown art gallery, teacher, newsroom secretary and graphic artist at a major television station.

Moving to New York in 1988 and to Williamsburg, Brooklyn in 1993, she continued to use the city as inspiration and painted impressions of the buildings, bridges and other structures in her surrounding neighborhood. Her current work consists of images of brick and cement but have been extended to include people, plants, trees and other softer and more organic objects which act as a counterbalance. The consistency in all of her art is that she utilizes the process of painting on highly textured surfaces. The work is gritty and a metaphor for the industrial, urban environment. The roughness is antithetical to slick technology. Roth now lives and works in Sunset Park, Brooklyn and displays her art at local galleries.