

STREET *Zine*

Offering financial opportunity to homeless and economically disadvantaged individuals.

STREETZine is a program of The Stewpot and a member of **International Network of Street Papers** [inspiring journalism]



SEPTEMBER 2017

Looking for Home: A Yearlong Focus on the Work of Mary Ellen Mark

The MUSEUM OF STREET CULTURE at Encore Park

Opening October 1, 2017

11:00AM - 4:30PM

by Alan Govenar, Founding Director,
The Museum of Street Culture

The Museum of Street Culture is on the street and about the street. Over the course of the next year, the exhibition “*Looking for Home: A Year-long Focus on the Work of Mary Ellen Mark*” will engage different areas of Encore Park, including The Stewpot, 508 Amphitheater, 508 Park, and Community Garden.

The Museum of Street Culture selected the work of internationally-acclaimed photographer Mary Ellen Mark as our opening exhibition because it demonstrates artistic excellence and explores social issues crucial to the revitalization of Encore Park and the surrounding neighborhood.

Mary Ellen Mark’s 33-year documentation of the harsh realities of street life, from 1983 to 2015, of Erin Blackwell, a.k.a. Tiny, in Seattle, Washington parallels, and presents a poignant counterpoint, to the ongoing efforts of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas and The Stewpot to offer a safe haven for homeless and at-risk individuals, providing resources for basic survival needs, as well as opportunities to start a new life.

In 1983, Mary Ellen Mark and reporter Cheryl McCall began working on a story on runaway children for *Life* magazine. They chose Seattle, “because,” wrote Mark, “it is



Tiny in her Halloween costume, 1983
Copyright © Mary Ellen Mark

known as ‘America’s most livable city.’ Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York were well-known for their street kids. By choosing America’s ideal city we were making the point, if street kids exist in a city like Seattle, then they can be found everywhere in America, and we are therefore facing a major problem of runaways in this country.”

In Seattle, Mark and McCall met several children whose life experiences they documented. But one girl, in particular, attracted Mark’s interest in a way that distinguished her from her friends and companions. “The first time I saw Erin Blackwell,”

Mark said, “was in this parking lot [of the Seattle discotheque called The Monastery]. A big station wagon taxi pulled up and two little girls looking about ten and twelve stepped out. The one who looked twelve was actually almost fourteen and her street name was Tiny. The other was her friend Phillis and she was eleven. They both wore tight sweaters, tight jeans, and lots of make-up. They looked like girls playing “dress up” and they were amazing. I approached them, introduced myself, and asked if I could spend time with them to take pictures. They both started to giggle and ran toward a waiting car. The next day, Teresa, a social worker, introduced Cheryl and me to Tiny. She also assured her that that we were journalists, not police. That was the beginning of a long relationship.”

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The Museum of Street Culture is located in Encore Park in the heart of an historic area of downtown Dallas, flanked by the Farmers Market, City Hall, and the Main Street District. Founded as a non-profit organization in 2013, Encore Park works with a diverse coalition of partners to coordinate programming that unites human services, creative arts, and historic preservation in an unprecedented collaborative system focused on building relationships and abundant life.

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Mary Ellen Mark and Cheryl McCall's article appeared in *Life* magazine in July 1983 and they returned to Seattle to produce the documentary film *Streetwise* with Mark's husband, the director, Martin Bell.

When *Streetwise* was released in 1985, it was nominated for an Academy Award. About the film, Janet Maslin, in *The New York Times*, wrote: "One of the things that gives *Streetwise* its impact is an event the film makers could not have anticipated: the suicide of one of the half-dozen subjects they studied

most closely. The film does not overemphasize the sordidness of street life or the bleak prospects it holds for these people's futures (if anything, many of the interviewees are captured at the height of their energy and bravado)."

Mary Ellen Mark and Martin Bell returned often to Seattle, and maintained active contact with Tiny, documenting Tiny's life on and off the streets from 1983 to 2015 and the obstacles Tiny sought to overcome. On April 19, 2015, about month before Mary Ellen Mark died of cancer, she wrote: "I remember every detail from the first time I saw Tiny and photographed her. She was so striking and candid. The camera was meant for her and I knew it immediately. She was a star. Over the years, I've spent a lot of time with other subjects



Tiny (her street name; her given name is Erin) on Pike Street, Seattle, 1983, Copyright © Mary Ellen Mark

often returning to them. But my relationship with Tiny and her family is entirely different from any other photographic relationship I have had. She has always been such an incredible character, so alive and honest. I was always curious to learn what she was doing, and eager to document her life Now, when I look at Tiny, even after so many years and so many difficult life changes (children, addiction, romantic hardships, financial struggles, etc.), I can't help but see the thirteen-year old girl I first met jumping out of a taxicab all dressed up for an evening of fun at The Monastery nightclub, full of hopes and dreams and the great expectations that life can bring."

Between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018, the photographic exhibition of Mary Ellen's Mark's work will be updated quarterly revealing four distinct periods of Tiny's life.

1. October 1, 2017 – *Streetwise: Tiny and Runaway Children in Seattle* (1983)
2. January 27, 2018 – *Tiny and Her Children* (1985-1999)
3. April 14, 2018 – *Tiny's Family Life* (2003-2005)
4. June 16, 2018 – *Tiny Revisited* (2014)

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ENCORE PARK DALLAS, TEXAS

THE MUSEUM OF STREET CULTURE

Opening Day Celebration in Encore Park - Schedule of Events
October 1, 2017 11:00AM - 4:30PM

11:00 AM | Community Volunteer Orientation in the Community Garden

Ongoing docent tours and street performances by Lone Star Circus and buskers

12:00 PM | Opening Remarks and Light Crust Doughboys in the 508 Amphitheater

12:30 - 1:30 PM | "Gourmet" lunch in The Stewpot - Free and open to all

1:00 PM | Clementino Lopez in the 508 Amphitheater

1:15 PM | Los Morales Boyz in the 508 Amphitheater

2:00 PM | Interfaith Blessing of the Animals in the 508 Amphitheater

3:00 PM | Dallas Street Choir in the 508 Amphitheater

3:30 PM | Tribute to Robert Johnson by Trinity River Blues Society and Special Guests in the 508 Amphitheater

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Looking for Home is curated by Alan Govenar (Founding Director, The Museum of Street Culture), and Martin Bell, Meredith Lue, and Julia Bezgin (Mary Ellen Mark Foundation). Exhibition design is by Studio Adrien Gardère.

Looking for Home is supported in part by Encore Park Dallas, Documentary Arts, The Florence Gould Foundation, The Kaleta A. Doolin Foundation, The Stewpot, First Presbyterian Church of Dallas, Moody Foundation, The Summerlee Foundation, and the Restoration Fund of Communities Foundation of Texas.

In conjunction with *Looking for Home: A Yearlong Focus on the Work of Mary Ellen Mark*, The Museum of Street Culture is planning a broad range of programming, including the screening of Mary Ellen Mark and Martin Bells's documentary films (*Streetwise* and *Tiny: The Life of Erin Blackwell*); a public dialogue series; and a partnership with The Stewpot's Saturday Kids' Club, Junior and Venturing Crew, and The Stewpot Art Program.

Upcoming exhibitions, to be installed in Encore Park

Picturing Homelessness – Opening January 27, 2018
Presented in partnership with the Saturday Kids' Club

The Stewpot staff with support from The Museum of Street Culture will work with the children in the Saturday Kids' Club to develop their ideas about homelessness and how they visualize it. Children will create artworks portraying homelessness in terms of both the way things are now, and what they would like to see happen to the same people in the future. Staff will facilitate discussions about how this type of change occurs, and how art acts as a catalyst for changing the world around us. Participants will be able to view their artworks in an exhibition at The Stewpot and at the opening reception at The Stewpot Alliance's Soup's On luncheon in January 2018.

Photography and Social Justice – Opening April 14, 2018
Presented in partnership with the Junior and Venturing Crew

The Museum of Street Culture will partner with The Stewpot staff for this special program offered to middle and high school students involved in the Junior and Venturing Crew programs. Participants will gain understanding of homelessness and will explore photography as a means for documentation, with an introduction to photojournalism. An exhibition of their works will open in April 2018.

Think of Me as an Artist: Breaking Down the Stereotypes of Homelessness - Opening. June 16, 2018
Presented in partnership with The Stewpot Art Program
Multimedia group exhibition featuring The Stewpot artists

The Museum of Street Culture's mission is to validate the history and everyday experience of people in public places through diverse forms of art, education, and new ideas, activating social change and building community.

The Museum of Street Culture is located in Encore Park in the heart of an historic area of downtown Dallas, flanked by the Farmers Market, City Hall, and the Main Street District.

For more information, see: www.museumofstreetculture.org



Mary Ellen, Martin, Erin, and Keanna, Seattle, Washington 1990. Copyright © Mary Ellen Mark



Tiny holding her daughter, Kayteonna, with her children Julian, E'Mari, and Ranaja, 2004, Copyright © Mary Ellen Mark



Tiny and her dogs, Bean and Khloe, 2014, Copyright © Mary Ellen Mark