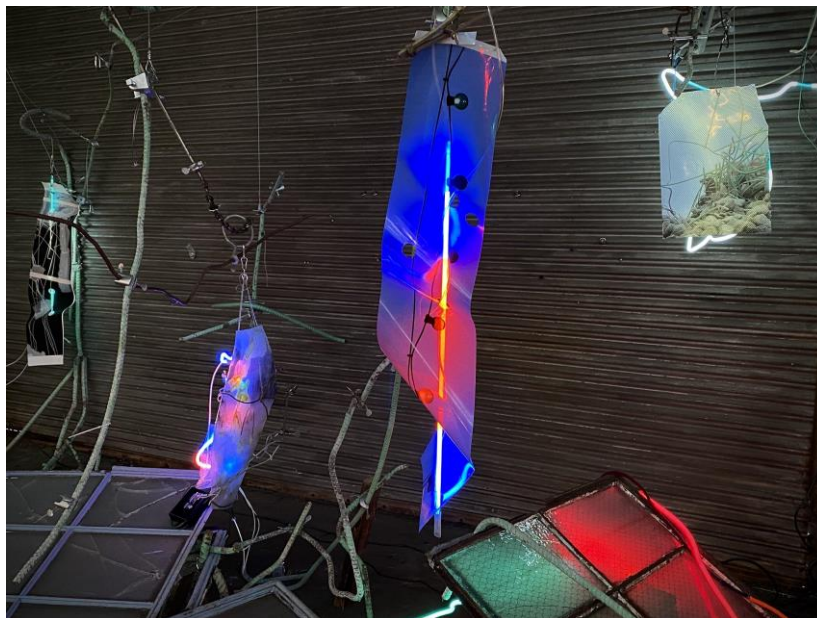


**CHERRY
STREET
PIER** No. 9

PRESS CONTACT:
Almaz Crowe
Director of Communications & Marketing
Delaware River Waterfront Corporation
C: 267-269-0184
O: 215-629-3217
acrowe@drwc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW, LARGE-SCALE NEON INSTALLATION OPENS AT CHERRY STREET PIER
Artist John Schlesinger's site-specific installation opens to the public on November 6th



PHILADELPHIA (November 2, 2020): Opening on November 6th, 2020, multimedia artist John Schlesinger's *After the Fall* is a site-responsive installation that roots and twists through Philadelphia's Cherry Street Pier, a 65,000 square-foot arts-focused public space along the Waterfront. Schlesinger, an award-winning photographer-turned-sculptor with work in permanent collections and museums around the country, presents his largest exhibition to date with this collection.

Embracing the history on the Waterfront through its use of architectural materials reclaimed from it—skylight windows salvaged from Cherry Street Pier and metal and stone from construction projects.

Schlesinger uses materials that have seen 100 years of sunlight, rebar and concrete that have witnessed the rise and fall of our built environment. Visitors will be presented with the narratives of trauma, loss, memories, and renewal through the eyes of architectural features both present and gone.

The wrecking ball smashing into the base of the former Tram Tower at Penn's Landing; 100-year-old windows being shattered out of their casings; timbers torn from a roof—from each of these acts, memories are lost, histories are forgotten, and wounds are opened. And yet, from the destruction, comes a new history.

The show, which is on display through March 31st, 2021, features a large chandelier welcoming visitors into Cherry Street Pier, a full 2,000 square-foot immersive display inside the gallery space, and multiple pieces punctuating the Pier. The exhibition is free and open to the public during Cherry Street Pier's daily hours. Visitors are required to wear masks inside the Pier and practice physical distancing.

By presenting this installation at Cherry Street Pier, Schlesinger studies the idea of renewal in situ. The authorship, and the presentation of the memories, is handed over to these architectural sites themselves as Schlesinger bends neon to fit twisted pieces of rebar and concrete, resin-soaked photographs, found waste, and shattered glass. When presented with these memories, visitors will be able to collectively feel the sense of loss while simultaneously welcoming the rebirth of Philadelphia's waterfront. As time passes, the exhibition will constantly change and evolve with the addition of new pieces, a video installation, and additional collaborations.

Working alongside construction crews on the Waterfront, Schlesinger spent the last seven months shooting stills and video and collecting cast offs from two major Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) projects—the removal of the Penn's Landing Tram Tower and the replacement of the Cherry Street Pier roof. During that process, he collected pieces of concrete and twisted rebar and windows and brackets, all of which are bent, hung, punctured, and wrapped by neon. While working inside the Pier, Schlesinger embraced the spirit of the artistic community and collaborated with Cherry Street Pier artists in residents Jason Alexis Ramirez, James Abbott, Keni Thomas (Tomcat23), and members of SpArc Services Cultural Arts Center. This installation also features work by artist Tra Bouscaren as part of a longstanding collaborative team with Schlesinger called *Dear Volunteers* and builds upon a previous installation by artist Noel Wilmore.

“This installation by John Schlesinger is a great representation of our hopes for Cherry Street Pier and the Waterfront Arts Program,” said DRWC president, Joe Forkin. “We’ve built a collaborative relationship with an artist who has used Waterfront resources to create a truly site-specific exhibition.

While working in the Pier, he also developed collaborations with the artists-in-residence, which are literally woven into the exhibition.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST

John Schlesinger is an award-winning photographer-turned-sculptor with work in permanent collections around the country. He began his career in Minneapolis, resided in Brooklyn for 20 years, and has lived in Philadelphia since 1999. He recently completed a fellowship at the Center for Emerging Visual Artists (CFEVA).

Schlesinger’s work evolved—while earning an MFA at the University of Pennsylvania—from the strictures of photography to hybrid sculptural installations that incorporate neon, casting, found materials, video, and photographs.

Accolades include the Rome Prize, Louis Comfort Tiffany Award, Aaron Siskind Award and two NEA Fellowships. His work has been reviewed in Art in America, Village Voice, Aperture, Bomb Magazine, Art News, New York Times and the Washington Post. Schlesinger’s pieces can be found in the permanent collections of MoMA (NYC), the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Houston Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Art Institute of Chicago, Brooklyn Museum, Princeton University, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art. He has taught at SUNY Rockland, Drexel University, School of Visual Arts (NYC), and Rice University.

ABOUT THE DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT CORPORATION

DRWC is a 501(c)(3) created in January 2009, exclusively for the benefit of the City of Philadelphia and its citizens. The fundamental purpose of DRWC is to design, develop, program and maintain public amenities such as permanent and seasonal parks, trails, and streetscape improvements to transform the Waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural, and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia as is consistent with the goals of the Master Plan for Central Delaware. Daily programming throughout the entire year is changing the way Philadelphians see and converse about the Waterfront, and is helping to create spaces and communities that connect residents and visitors to the waterfront. Visit delawareriverwaterfront.com for more.

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