

HEALING HEARTS - BY JOHN COBURN

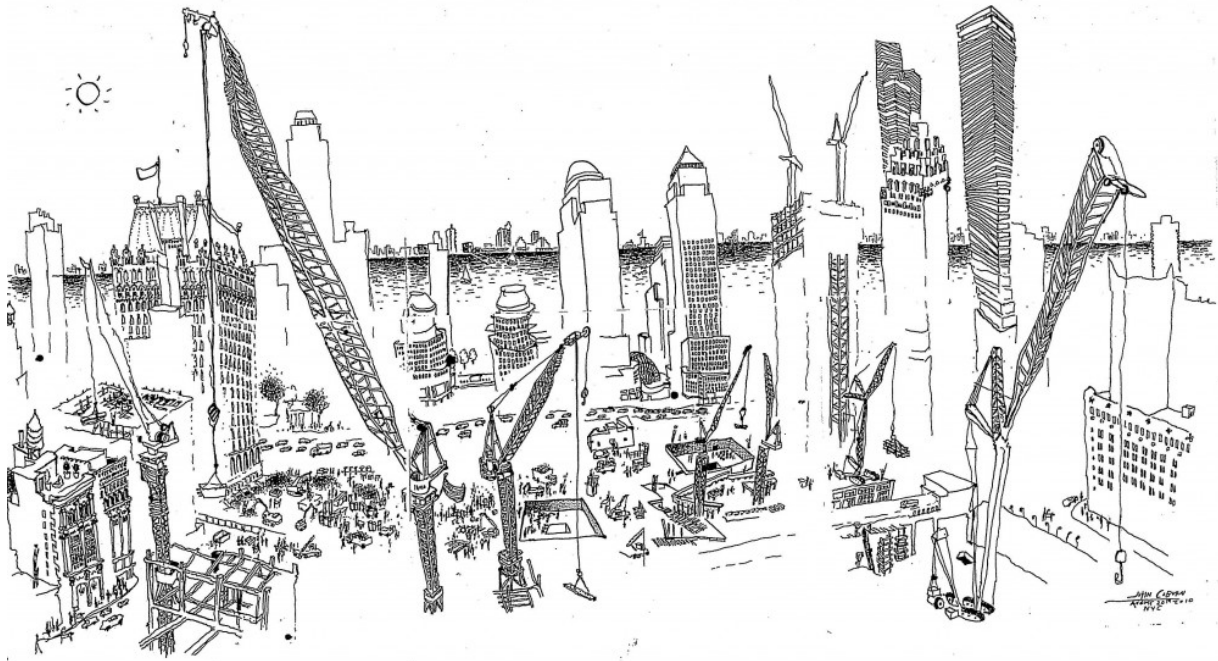
In 1975 Canadian artist John Coburn at the age of 17 stepped off a Greyhound bus in New York City. While standing in the Museum of Modern Art, he realized his life's career would be dedicated to art. "One day of observing Manhattan could keep me drawing a life time." said Coburn. As it turns out, it's been a three decade love affair culminating in four books on the city, Central Park, Hotels and neighbourhoods of New York. The unspeakable happened on September 11th, 2001 and suddenly the world changed. "I couldn't watch it on TV anymore and had to go there. I was not someone who lost a loved one, but I was just so saddened that I needed to do something and that something was draw," he said. And so began Healing Hearts.

12 months and 42 drawings later, and with the support of hundreds of people – 2,800 copies of Healing Hearts were printed and in 2002 the book was distributed to the families of 9/11.

Five years later at 4am, John received a phone call telling him his studio was on fire and by the time he arrived, the entire building was engulfed in flames. The next morning – something miraculous happened. The September 11th drawings from the book were all found burned around the edges but still intact... the only art saved out of thousands of John's works. As one family member told John: "It's like the drawings were so soaked in emotion they couldn't burn."

As a 10th anniversary tribute and for the first time ever, the original drawings are being exhibited to the public at Sciame Construction at 14 Wall St in New York City Sept 1st – 15th 2011.

As Thomas Taylor, a chaplain at St. Paul's Chapel said: "With all the love and compassion you capture in your work – maybe in some tiny way these drawings can deal with the theme of healing." And as Rosemary Caine, mother of fallen firefighter George Caine, said: "If your little book can help four people remember my son George, I think it's worthwhile."



Bryan Chadwick in the forward to Healing Hearts writes:

The pen and ink line drawings in this book have come from that need we've all felt so desperately as a result of September 11th – the need to let something out, to express our sorrow, to pay tribute. It's a need felt not only in New York, not only in every American city, every American town, farm, and household, but one felt in most countries of the world, probably even in the greater part of the countries we might consider adversaries.

“The Healing Hearts Art Exhibition is curated by Toronto – based Beckett Fine Art, and has been generously supported by Fairfax Financial Holdings Limited from Toronto and Sciam Construction in New York.

Sept. 2016 - The 15th Anniversary was celebrated at The Canadian Consulate in New York City and this is where the announcement was made that the collection was being donated by artist John Coburn & Thomas Beckett of Beckett Fine Art to The September 11 Memorial and Museum for their permanent collection in New York City.

“Some brought candles. Some brought love notes, poems, flowers and photos. John brought his sketch pad.”

–Foreword from Healing Hearts, by Bryan Chadwick.