

# *A Day in the Life of a Firefighter in the South Bronx*

## Artist's Statement

I began this project on January 2, 1993 and culminated in September 2002. My original intent was to document the work firefighters do in the flames and smoke of burning buildings. As I settled in, I realized a strong bond existed within the firehouse and extended outward to the community the firefighters served. There is a sense of company pride in each house as they maintain it and the equipment much like a homeowner performs daily domestic tasks. A genuine concern for the safety, well-being and quality of life for the public is also very apparent.

Besides extinguishing fires, firefighters respond to many needs of the community from medical to after hour utility problems such as flooded apartments, oil burner emergencies, gas leaks and stuck elevators. The public knows that they can always rely on a rapid response from the FDNY.

Firefighters have an unselfish generosity for helping others and local residents benefit; from children needing air in their bicycle tires to Christmas dinners for the neighborhood's senior citizens. This is a tradition that dates back to the 1800's where the firehouse focuses on the particular community in which they serve. In addition, firefighters sometimes act as mentors to the neighborhood children.

Most importantly, firefighters have a love for life and their families, which is shared to the extended family of the firehouse. This is evidenced in their comradery on the job; be it between runs while eating, cleaning and recharging or... when preparing to enter a burning building to save a life.

John Jordan

August 1, 2007