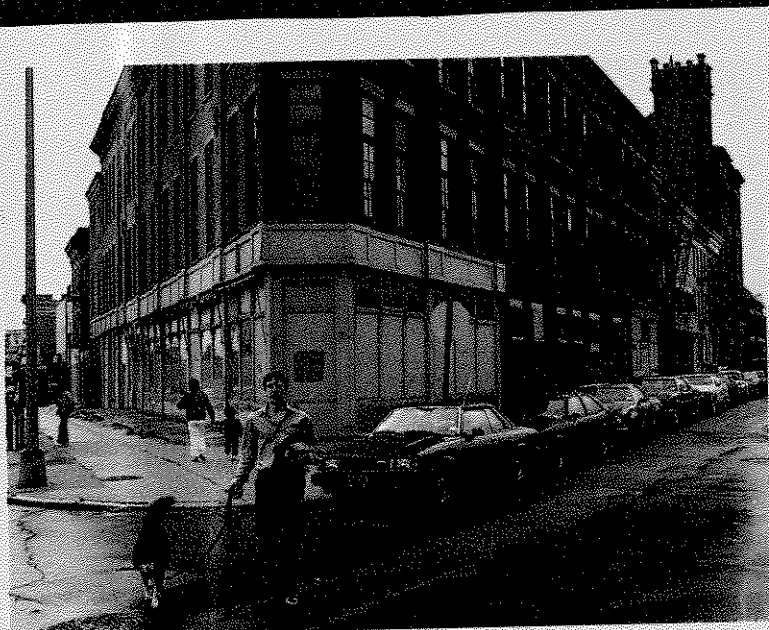


NEW YORK

EXODUS

How Creative Young People Are Being Driven
Out of Manhattan • By Patricia Morrisroe



ARTISTS' SUBURB: Ken Bernstein in front of his Long Island City studio.

Long Island City, too, is fast becoming an important artists' "suburb." Though it has already been discovered, and real-estate prices have risen dramatically, many artists have been able to find cheap lofts there in run-down manufacturing buildings. "There are literally hundreds of artists here," says painter Ken Bernstein, who owns Studio K, Long Island City's first art gallery.

"Unlike SoHo, Long Island City isn't a real art community—yet," says Bernstein. "A lot of artists are living above one another in the same building and they don't even know it," Bernstein says that Studio K has helped bring a lot of them together. "They'd run into one another at the gallery and say, 'Gee, I didn't know you were here,'" he says.

But some artists like Long Island City because it's *not* an art community. "It's got a lot of working-class people, and there isn't the kind of social pressure you had in SoHo," says sculptor and painter Thom Cooney Crawford. "Here, there are no

distractions, except the Manhattan skyline. In a very urban way, it's peaceful."

But it may not be for long. A second art gallery—the Forefront—just opened, and TriBeCa's Oil and Steel Gallery is scheduled to move in next year. Then there's the newly opened International Design Center, and a planned luxury high-rise complex on the waterfront. "Will I still be here in five years?" Crawford asks. "Check back."