

DOWNTOWN

ISSUE NO. 323 THRU JULY 21, 1993

Summer Strolling Through Soho

East Village artist **Rick Prol's** work is a dedicated response to the ultimate human tragedy of the embattled city dweller struggling with his/her environment. His canvases explode with battered time-weary travellers. Shell-shocked figures, doomed to the pain and artillery of city life, are eventually swallowed up by the furnace of America. Prol uses the city as his theater, its rubble as props. A typical painting shows contorted figures staring numbly out of an urban setting and the Brooklyn Bridge crumbling in the nuclear sunset.

His ideology suggests that we are all victims in conflict with our environment, as his work explores two perceived realities—a personal and searing reaction to psychological relationships with the self, and a preoccupation with the environment's threat to everyday life. In the best tradition of expressionist art, Prol, using layered self-parody through allegorical references, invites us to communicate with his sad, damaged world, observed critic Dorothy Friedman-August.

Prol's work was recently on view at the "A" Gallery in Soho, and also graced the cover of *Downtown* (Issue No. 318) this past May.