

More Life: Mark Morrisroe

Opening June 24, 2021
34 East 69th Street, New York

It's a photographer's job to introduce work from an older generation to a newer generation of image makers.

All the young photographers these days love film. Mark Morrisroe's (1959–1989) work is as gritty-dreamy as film gets. You can feel his hand in every print with their frenzied pen marks and scratched emulsions. His own special unpolished film sandwich.

I learned about Mark in 1999, a decade after he had died, right when I started creating my own photos.

I saw one of his self-portraits in a homoerotic photo anthology and thought, Who is that nude guy with a cast in that gritty photo?

A few years later, I made the connections that brought me deeper into his work. My brother died of AIDS in his early thirties, around the same time Mark passed away.

Later in my life, I became very close with his early Boston crew; Jack Pierson and David Armstrong became my early mentors.

I identify with Mark's story: a radical queer hustler, addict in a torn T-shirt, who photographed his close friends and lovers with an artistic vision.

—Ryan McGinley