

My name is Christopher Wood. My parents Arthur and Cynthia Wood were the creators of Broken Angel. I support myself as a stone carver, restoring New York's landmarks. My family first moved into Broken Angel because we were evicted from the home we were renting in Brooklyn. The eviction occurred because the landlord had 3 families living in a building that was only supposed to house up to two families. As artists with two children my parents had a difficult time finding another rental property they could afford, and this was back in the 1970's. As my parents could not find housing they decided to pioneer what was considered at the time a dangerous or bad neighborhood. It was crime infested, littered with abandoned buildings and resembled what was at the time war torn Beirut. My parents found the building now known as Broken Angel in an unknown cul-de-sac in Brooklyn. They fell in love with the building and bought it in a city auction. They won the bid because at the time no one was interested in buying into this type of neighborhood.

Life growing up there as a child was not easy. The first year we moved we in we were greeted by a gang of teenagers who tried to shoot my father while breaking into our home. After that I grew up watching the crack epidemic explode across the streets of Bedford Stuyvesant. Conditions within the house were reminiscent of living in a century past. We used wood burning stoves created by my father to heat our home. It took 20 years for the neighborhood to change, drug dealers were replaced by developers offering large payouts for property. This never interested my father. He was just happy to have a home of his own, where he could do his artwork and be left alone and never have to worry about being kicked out again.

Over the years that the neighborhood was changing the local authorities were aware of the work my father was doing on the building. The fire department would regularly tour the building. During that time numerous inspectors from various agencies visited the building. Realtors in the neighborhood would use views of our building as a selling point, it was never considered an eyesore. It appeared in numerous newspaper articles, was the focus of television reports and was even used as the back drop for a major motion picture. The existence of the house and the changes my father had wrought were not a secret.

In 2006 at the height of the housing market all of this changed. A small fire of unknown cause occurred in the an upper part of the structure one afternoon while my parents were out. It was put out quickly with no injuries occurring. Even when exposed to the power of a fireman's hose with 250 lbs of pressure only roofing tiles were knocked loose from the building. Clearly this was not a structure imminent danger of collapse. After the fire my parents were allowed to return to their home, the Red Cross left as there was no need for them and the building department was at the scene and witnessed the FDNY allowing my parents back into the building.

About 2 days later the deputy commissioner the department of buildings paid an unofficial visit to Broken Angel. He walked up two floors and then told my parents they had 15 minutes to grab their belongings get out of the building. There was no engineer present during this "inspection". A notice that was not signed by a judge was placed on their door for their eviction. When they did not comply the police with the same notice in their hands came with 6 cop cars and told my parents they had to vacate the premises or they would bust down their front door and drag them out. My mother wanted no part of this so she left on her own accord, my father refused to leave. My father was

handcuffed and put into a police car. My mother and their dog accompanied him to the police station in the back of a police car. When the car arrived at the police station my mother was also handcuffed and within the station they cuffed her to a railing. They were charged and released. I came down to the police station to get them and took them home with me to my 400 sq foot one bedroom rent stabilized apartment in Brooklyn which I shared with my wife. After 1 month they had to leave as we all faced possible eviction if they stayed. My parents then moved into a volkswagen bus on the lot next to their home in the middle of the winter. Because of this situation and threats to tear down the building by the department of buildings they were pushed by a local politician into a partnership with a local developer who turned out to be crooked. A bank that was also crooked ended up financing the attempt to turn the building into condominiums. We believe the developer embezzled a large amount of money from the project. Now the bank is attempting to foreclose on the building, while in no way holding the developer accountable. My parents have been in the fight of their life to save the building. They went to numerous city agencies for help and still have not received any. In the middle of this my mother was diagnosed with liver cancer. She lost that fight and passed away on January 30th. I am sure the stress of the last few years contributed to her early death.

I think it is crime that a country which prides itself on upholding the rights of its citizens and policing the rights of others around the world would allow this type of abuse to occur in the name of greed and capitalism. My parents owned their home outright for over 20 years and because of the department of buildings of the city of New York they now face foreclosure. Please help us put a stop to this type of abuse.