Tribute

David Fisch’s angry legacy

June 1, 1994 By Nancy Blechman

He died after a long struggle with AIDS. Isn’t that how they all begin, those poignant obituaries in *The New York Times*? David Fisch gave new meaning to the word struggle. A very successful muralist whose work exists in numerous public buildings, David turned to painting on canvas around the time he realized he was HIV positive. He painted as a way of remembering and as a way of declaring his fight. David said, “Artists can sound the alarm when conditions exist that are being ignored or are not generally known.” David the activist raged in his art, painting homeless shelters and cops wearing rubber gloves dragging away a civil disobedient. He made portraits showing artist who are no longer with us surrounded by the essence of their work. He captured love in the midst of a hospital room.

David devoted himself to AIDS activism. Using one of his many creative skills, he started cooking for PWAs and co-founded the People With AIDS Coalition. David steeped himself in facts about the disease. He was a vigorous participant in civil disobedience and belonged to several of the ACT UP cadres, helping to create CRI (Community Research Initiative) and Housing Works, of which he ultimately became a client.

Someone wrote to me recently saying that he admired David’s anger. David’s anger fueled him in his fight against this disease. His rage, although hard on his friends, energized him and helped him fight for as long as he did. It was in his paintings that David’s paintings, his rage, his activism got translated into visual beauty.

May David’s vision live forever.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Tribute-15835-3868