

CRISTIN TIERNEY

On peter campus' *Head of a Sad Young Woman*, 1976-77, in Times Square Arts'
Midnight Moment Screening

By James Dearing

There we were last night, surrounded by 100s and 100s. Young energy—venting,
proclaiming.
Active, jittery. Speaking loudly all the languages of this earth. Dressed to outrage, to
sell and to seduce.
Then, surprised, it began... a woman's voice rose from the crowds of hotel guests—
“Peter Campus!... that's it!... Look!.. Peter Campus!”.
Suddenly all the garish commercial heat...the thunder and lightening was gone. In a
moment everything changed—a softening against the din.
Color to black and white—squirmy shouting, changed to the unimaginable...
The street became quiet and still... even the traffic slowed.
It reminded me of a solar eclipse—but more abrupt—
Was that her mind behind the eyes? or mine?
blinking back tears? or just taking exposures.
The whole crowd paused and took in a breath.
we opened our eyes and looked.

Something “else”... then it was “over”...
but something had changed.
the ads seemed less big...less bright.
Something different, lingering, still.