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76 GRAND STREET NEW YORK NY 10013



Y. Z. Kami Dry Land

November 11 - 27, 1999

Deitch Projects is pleased to present Dry Land, an installation combining new paintings and photographic works by Y. Z. Kami. Haunting portraits are juxtaposed with evocative photographs of facades and landscapes to create a powerful vision of the end of the century.

In the opening section of the exhibition, 170 pages of a handmade book are installed floor-to-ceiling like a film storyboard. Painted portraits are paired with iris print photographs of the facades of apartment houses, industrial structures, and desolate landscapes, taken in New York, Detroit, and the artist's native Iran. The faces, mostly of older people, display the same sort of worn, weatherbeaten, yet resolute quality of the facades. The pages of the book follow a process of desolation, destruction, and transformation to finally achieve a sense of arriving home. The people portrayed affirm the continuity of life through civilization's cycles of decay and rejuvenation.

In the main gallery, the artist has installed two mural-sized paintings, featuring sparse grids of portraits. The head-on portraits alternate with blank rectangles painted in the color of desert sand. The sitters are a cross section of the people one might encounter in the daily routine of urban life. They represent the constant juxtaposition of diverse lives without real human interchange. The grids of faces parallel the stark facades and empty windows in the photographic works. Many of the sitters are older and display the effects of fatigue and degradation. Some of the people have damaged eyes, a reflection of the visual pollution that they have witnessed. The sitters ultimately display a feeling of endurance, however, not a feeling of defeat. As in all of Kami's work, one gets a sense of the continuity of life over the expanse of time. The sitters wear modern dress but seem to embody the spirit of the ancient world.

GALLERY HOURS ARE TUESDAY – SATURDAY, 12 – 6 PM.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT SUZANNE GEISS AT 343-7300.