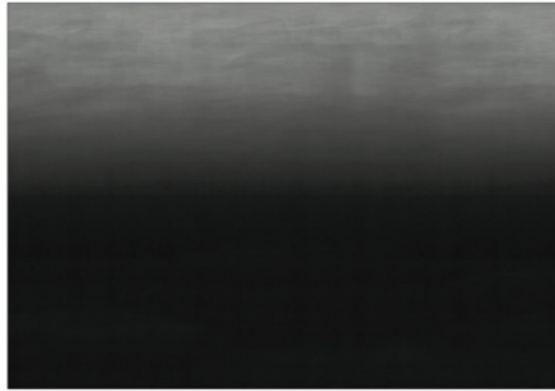


reviews: new york

Eugene Lemay

Mike Weiss

Eugene Lemay creates atmospheric tableaux, large and small, composed of layers of digitally altered Hebrew text, so dense the content cannot be discerned even if you know the language. The artist, who spent time as a navigator in the Israeli army, lifted these scrawls from a collection of old handwritten letters meant for the families of fallen soldiers, but the effect was far from sentimental.



Eugene Lemay, *Solo 2*, 2012, ink-jet print on archival paper, 120" x 180".  
Mike Weiss.

In the bigger works—ink-jet prints on archival paper as long as 20 feet—the script, when examined closely, turns out to be a raised gravure, and the tones vary from pale silvery gray to the deepest black. The works read as subtly gradated nocturnal landscapes with shadowy silhouettes of mountains, or visions of the night sky through the eyes of a pilot hurtling through space.

Lemay exacted variations on the theme in a massive monolith, ten feet high and four feet deep, standing at the entrance to the gallery, as well as in smaller prints. An installation of six iPads inside a long vitrine showed looping videos. These captured the script in the process of being written, picked up the images of visitors to the gallery, and burst into starry constellations (and sometimes regrettably conjured an unseen hand playing with an Etch A Sketch), all to the accompaniment of faint music piped into the room.

The huge format of the bigger works, together with the subtle play of colors, inevitably recalled Rothko's late paintings or an overblown Whistler "Noc-

turne." But at its best Lemay's work does indeed trigger notions of the sublime and offers an inventive example of the written word transformed into something awesome through the magic of technology.

—Ann Landi

Adam Bartos

Gitterman

Quiet, dusty, and far from the center of things, Adam Bartos's 1980s and more recent color photographs are elegantly

composed, delicately colored views from Egypt, Kenya, Mexico, and Long Island. They are pervaded by a sense of slowness, perhaps a result of the deliberate movement and framing created by his large-format camera. Bartos's photographs describe the texture of places.

Unhurried figures inhabited several images. In one, *Luxor, Egypt (Nile riverbank)*, 1980, people in pastel robes stroll

along the banks of the Nile; in another, *Mombasa, Kenya (park)*, 1980, men sit on cement benches in an overgrown park facing a riot of cacti and a view of the sea. *Cairo, Egypt (Ramses Hilton under construction)*, 1980, shows signs of progress in the crane-topped building across the river, but the image verges on the abstract. A gorgeous patch of sunlight on the blue balcony wall fills half the frame, leaving the smoggy, palm-lined city nearly an afterthought. In a few images, the undercurrent of sleepiness becomes literal. At a cement plant in Mombasa, Bartos catches the gray dust covering the trees and workers sleeping in the grass in their shade. In the show's most intimate image, *Nairobi, Kenya (Lillian)*, 1980, a topless young woman dozes in the glow of daylight passing through light curtains, her dark skin outlined by white sheets, her arm thrown casually over her head.

Upstairs were more recent photos taken in the United States. Although smaller, they were equally interested in the silence and romance of places where not much happens. Made using the expensive and little used color-carbon process, they revealed in rusted, small-time marina life. Several even included a kind of photographic wink, as in *County Road 80, Southampton, NY* (2010), in which a bare tree grows in front of an abandoned building with a sign reading "Florist" in curly script.

—Rebecca Robertson



Adam Bartos, *Cairo, Egypt (Ramses Hilton under construction)*, 1980, pigment print, 31½" x 41½".  
Gitterman.