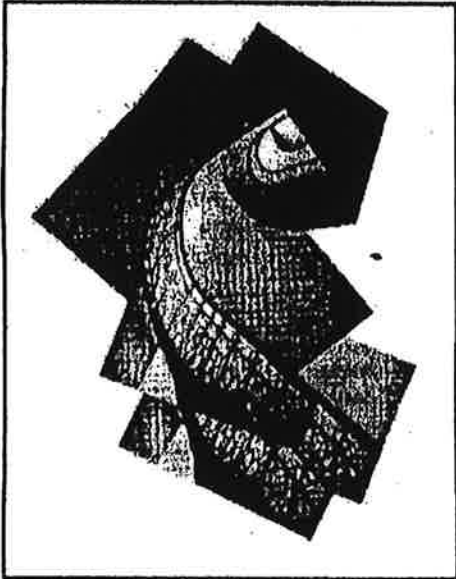


CONTEMPORARY DEALERS' SHOWS

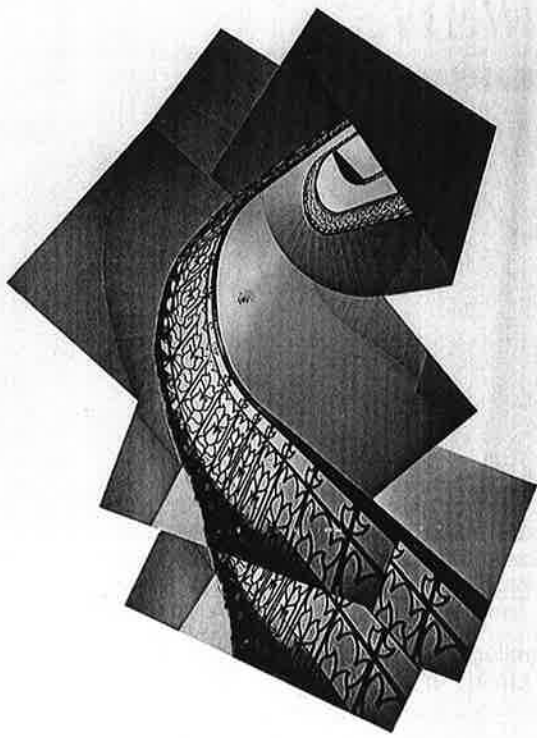


Mary Miss, *Untitled*, 1992-96

Mary Miss Senior & Shopmaker

Mary Miss is probably the most senior figure in that nexus between art, architecture and public sculpture, whose interventions are not always immediately apparent but always grant anonymous spatial reward (left, "Untitled," 1992-96). The small harbour with wondrous blue lights that Miss designed for Battery Park remains a haven of secret

seclusion that still generates a sense of security in that most battered zone of lower Manhattan. How appropriate that her recent projects include a temporary memorial for the World Trade Center, as well as a full-scale riverfront reclamation scheme in Milwaukee. Miss works very much on site, but she also depends on the photographs she has always taken, turning them into rich collage-drawings. Now Senior & Shopmaker grant a rare chance (until 14 June) to study these photo/drawings which may suggest the Cubist snaps of Jan Dibbets, Hockney or Vera Spoorri (those 1963 composite photographs of her room composed of 55 individual shots launched the genre) yet remain uniquely Missian, rather than Miesian.



Mary Miss: Untitled, 1992-96, gelatin-silver print collage, 59½ by 49½ inches; at Senior & Shopmaker.

antecedents) and indulgence (the precipitous, self-consciously mortifying—or transcendent?—tendency to drown in paint). In a catalogue essay, Lilly Wei calls the work lascivious and says it makes you think about food, and indeed it is, and does. It also, as always, makes you think. —Nancy Princenthal

Mary Miss at Senior & Shopmaker

Because Mary Miss primarily makes public art, gallery exhibitions of her work are uncommon. This show did not document her public pieces but presented another body of work, based on travel photos. Far from being visual souvenirs of famous sites, however, these photo-collages—which she calls “photo/drawings”—are demonstrations of her fascination with architectural order.

Miss assembles multiple large black-and-white prints, usually focusing on some feature of an antique structure’s interior. The photos are overlapped, turned or trimmed to emphasize the unfolding of planes or curved surfaces, and to define an envelope of space. Her interest is always spatial or constructive. The works, which date from 1988 to '96, are untitled but usually numbered. Miss withholds from viewers the specific loca-

tions where she took the photos. She’s unconcerned with history, local color, politics or other matters that accompany particular places; these works are pure architectural sensation. Yet the different systems of organization and ornamentation arise from various specific cultural traditions, which can sometimes be identified in general terms.

The arrangements are mounted on board, then framed behind glass. A generous band of empty space around the irregular perimeter of the prints allows room for reverie, even as it emphasizes that the specific subject is an excerpt from the larger whole of a building. *Untitled No. 19* presented the most restricted space in the show: a small, low-ceilinged room with painted board walls in what might be a very old house. Four horizontally abutted prints capture its boundedness and highlight its angular irregularities. In *Untitled No. 16*, five prints, both horizontal and vertical in format, depict a wood-roofed stone passage around

a cylindrical tower. Peeled logs rise diagonally into darkness as they support the roof. Light pours in from an unseen opening in the distance, and a low doorway is framed by huge stones. This might be a vignette from an ancient world—except for a soda can abandoned on the floor.

Several works focus on domes, one perhaps in a mosque, another perhaps Chinese. An untitled and unnumbered work isolates an elegant, curving staircase with a striking tulip-design rail. The foreground is open and airy, while two more floors can be seen in the upper distance. Here, the photos are angled as if to mimic the vertiginous climb; the view is both spatially disorienting and seemingly endless. Qualities or features repeated in these works—looking upward, circular spaces, passages, light from hidden sources—are engaging in themselves and also for the hints they give about the nuances of Miss’s public works. —Janet Koplos

Dawoud Bey at Gorney Bravin + Lee

Devoted to the portrayal of young people, Dawoud Bey increasingly particularizes the humanity of his subjects, a feat more easily said than done. After nearly a decade of candid work with 35mm cameras and black-and-white film, Bey took up the large-format, 4-by-5-inch view camera in 1991

he was offered access to a relatively enormous bellow-chassis of a 20-by-24 Polaroid camera, which allowed him to produce the sequential large images arranged and exhibited as diptychs and triptychs in the 2000 Whitney Biennial. In this recent show, Bey returns to the view camera for a series of portraits taken in Chicago’s South Side. He adjusted his focal length to create a relatively shallow, intimate depth of field that begins to blur just beyond the picture plane and produced mostly vertical prints, large at 50 by 40 inches, presenting his subjects up close and personal, bigger than life and not confrontational.

Dated 2001, these chromogenic portraits combine the psychological impact of the candid moment with the grace of a casual pose. He titles them with the subjects’ names. There is no mediation between the viewer and the subjects. In *Muhammad*, a young, curly-blond Aileen, who is freckled and has blue-green eyes and a downy upper lip. Bey’s camera is reflected in her eyes, and a few fine strands of hair are in closest focus, and it is not for the larger-than-life scale of the print, one might think her face reflected in a mirror. The young Muhammad rests his head on his elbow, his bicycle striking a shadow on the wall as he looks up to the lens. A composed light and shadow dapple Top Moses, who appear together horizontally framed in a portrait. The hand of one rests on the shoulder of the other, who in turn calmly regards the photographer.

Bey deems his work to be an expression of himself as much about the photographer as it is about the subject, a kind of self-portraiture. He conducts community workshops, distributing cameras to young people and instructing them in photography techniques while asking them to critically consider the creation of forms of representation and to understand how images can be used by the mass media. If portraiture has come to seem commonplace, there are vast distances of alienation and intimacy between

Dawoud Bey: Muhammad, 2001, chromogenic print, 50 by 40 inches; at Gorney Bravin + Lee.

