

Time Out New York October 19–25, 2006

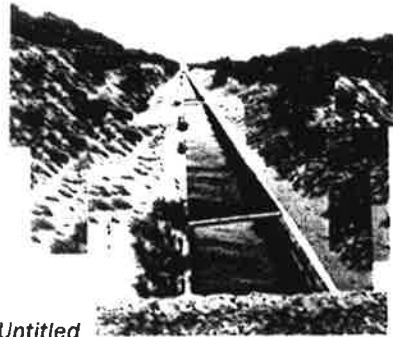
Mary Miss

★★★★★

Senior & Shopmaker Gallery,
through Nov 22 (see Elsewhere)

Mary Miss, a pioneer of the Earth-art movement in the '70s, has been making site-specific works at the juncture of sculpture, landscape architecture and installation for decades. During her travels—from the forests of Finland to Battery Park City—Miss has been taking black-and-white photographs of sites she finds interesting, later reworking the images into elegant composites mounted on paper. It's clear that Miss's two-dimensional pieces are discrete works in their own right, not just reflections on or proposals for projects. Yet Miss's site-specific sensibility is evident in every one.

The artist trains her eye on places that are everywhere and nowhere at once, overlooked no-man's-land intersections of nature and industry: glass tanks at an agricultural station, a water trench and a dilapidated wooden pier. Miss takes photos of the same site from different vantage points, collaging them into a cohesive whole that edges toward abstraction as it teases out formal rhythms. The



Untitled
(Waterworks)

trench is so elongated, it seems to go on forever through the sand and weeds; the derelict pier sinks dramatically, as if the Cyclone at Coney Island became beached at low tide; some droopy chain-link fencing held up by lumber posts is poetically reborn as scalloped, saillike curves supported by wooden masts.

No doubt these delicate works offer the artist, who typically has to wait years to complete a public project, something of a release. Alone in the studio, through careful editing and placement, Miss makes entire vistas shudder with unexpected glimpses of light and sky.—*Sarah Schmerler*

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