

By FRED ADELSON

ART REVIEW

Views of New York, in Moorestown

IN the 1830's, New York City was already seen as "a frisky young giantess, bustling with energy." The metropolis became the city of cities. On Sept. 11, 2001, this American icon was wounded, but New York demonstrated extraordinary bravery, compassion, and resilience.

Hope Proper, curator of exhibitions at the Perkins Center for the Arts, was inspired by the empathy of non-New Yorkers for a city that many had not personally known prior to the horrific assault. She has organized a juried multimedia show that does not focus exclusively on the terror attacks, but honors the place where she was born and raised.

The call for entries solicited visual arts and poetry completed within the past 25 years that revealed "the character, personality and essential spirit of the people and places that make up New York."

Ms. Proper invited Thomas Roma, director of photography at the School of the Visual Arts at Columbia University; Christopher Schmidt, owner and director of the Schmidt/Dean Gallery in Philadelphia; and J. C. Todd, a Philadelphia-based award-winning poet, to work as guest jurors. They considered 725 works submitted by 201 entrants from San Francisco, Dallas, and Montreal, among other cities. The jurors selected 86 photographs, paintings, sculptures, art books and works on paper by 62 artists, as well as 17 verses by 13 poets.

The show looks at more than the cityscape and its people; it confronts time before and after the attacks. For example, Deborah Harse's "World Trade Center Salsa" is a rather banal picture. Though dancers in the foreground are the subjects, the architectural backdrop now gives a poignant irony to an otherwise innocuous genre scene.

With the exhibition's contextual focus, it is understandable that the documentary medium of photography dominates the show. "Untitled" by Jerry Arcieri is a seemingly casual photograph that captures the reality of pedestrian life. He has successfully



caught the determined gait of an Upper East Side woman. On the other hand, Sandy Alpert's "Morning, New York" depicts rush hour in Grand Central Station.

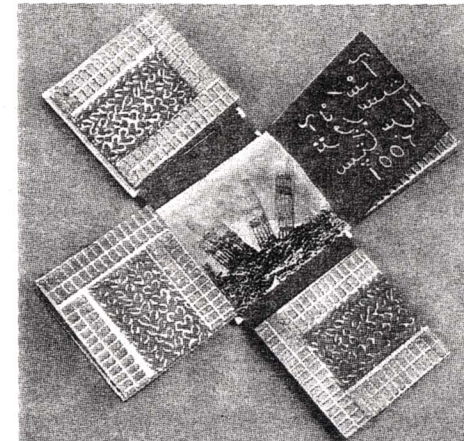
Removed from the hectic pace of Midtown, Emily Weinstein's "Russian Couple" focuses on the recent wave of immigrants who have settled in the Brighton Beach section of Brooklyn. Her relaxed couple seem to enjoy a New York state of mind, while the elderly figures in the relief prints by Herb Appelson of Cherry Hill look emotionally connected to their former lives in the shtetls of Eastern Europe.

As an international arts center, Manhattan offers a rich array of cultural fare. "A Day in New York" by Zarko Stefancic is a trompe l'oeil still life of admission receipts documents visits to the Metropolitan Mu-

seum, the Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, Carnegie Hall and the Metropolitan Opera House. He has chosen flat objects and arranged them on a solid yellow field to enhance the illusion.

Two powerful pieces are displayed in an upstairs gallery devoted specifically to the terror attacks. "Structure No. 3" by Eric Jean-Marie is an abstract stainless steel object with a sense of monumentality that goes beyond its physical measurements. Dating from 1999, the design has the look of construction beams with a polished, cantilevered, curved form. The sculpture now takes on a more narrative quality, suggesting an airplane part slicing through an architectural fragment.

In contrast, "The Message" is a post-Sept. 11 response by Kitty Caparella. This



"Russian Couple," left, by Emily Weinstein, and "The Message," a multimedia work by Kitty Caparella, are on view in "A Tribute to New York" at the Perkins Center for the Arts.

small white book is tied with a muslin sash that brings to mind a makeshift tourniquet. As the intimately sized volume is carefully opened, the viewer initially admires patterned squares that recall the tradition of Islamic tile work. When all the sections have been unfolded, the illuminated manuscript is transformed into a swastika shape with a central image of the collapsing World Trade Center towers surrounded by portraits of the 19 hijackers and 3 major leaders of Al Qaeda. Ms. Caparella is not trying to celebrate the evildoers, but rather emphasize how their philosophy of hate is akin to that of the Nazis.

"A Tribute to New York," Perkins Center for the Arts, Moorestown. Through Nov. 17. Information: (856) 235-6488.