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GALLERY HOP AROUND TOWN WITH YAELE AMIR

The End, Again

The End of the Remake

Roebling Hall

606 West 26th Street, New York, NY 10001

October 10, 2008 - November 15, 2008



In his recent exhibition *The End of the Remake*, Christoph Draeger examines our culture's fascination with looming disasters ranging from self-destructive pop figures to historical atrocities. As alluded in its title, the show is comprised mostly of restaged renowned art and film works. In *Shipping Disaster (Large Glass Stripped Bare)* (2008), Draeger presents a simplified version of Duchamp's ambitious glass sculpture "The Large Glass," which was damaged in transport after being exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum in 1926. In *Schizo Redux* (2004), he has overlaid Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho" with Gus Van Sant's shot-for-shot remake of the film. Running simultaneously on a single screen, the current version echoes the past almost in complete unison, yet not without a tinge of cynicism.

The works generally highlight a sense of imminent calamity or an awakening to harsh disillusionment, as in the case of *Hippie Movie* (2008). Forty years after the fact, Draeger formed a hippie community in Warsaw to re-enact the Summer of Love. With ideals of utopia, communal living, and free love now widely dismissed as naïve, his attempt appears detached and futile. *Mushroom Cloud (Nagasaki)* (2008) is perhaps the most straightforward and effective demonstration of the overall temper of the exhibition, as it displays the iconic mushroom cloud image over Nagasaki in 8,000 jigsaw puzzle pieces. This work calls attention to the notion that the new and advanced at once unites and divides our culture. It encapsulates the manner in which the products of modernism and technology afford us an escape, though are in essence also what we are fleeing from.

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black abstracts



Images: *Mushroom Cloud (Nagasaki)* (2008); *Schizo Redux* (2004). Courtesy Roebbling Hall.

Posted by [Yaelle Amir](#) on 10/18

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Nature Always Wins

The Good Land

Morgan Lehman Gallery
 317 10th Ave., New York, NY 10001
 October 5, 2008 - November 8, 2008



Eric Beltz's exhibition *The Good Land* draws an amorphous connection between the aggressive policies of America's colonial leaders and our nation's disregard of nature's inherent healing powers. His meticulous graphite drawings present recurring imagery pertaining to American history and culture, including the founding fathers, a turkey, and an eagle. This iconography is subtly underscored by meticulous depictions of remedial vegetation, as well as historically charged shrubs.

In *Tree of the Evil Eagle* (2008) Beltz successfully combines these differing sources of imagery as he references a legend fabricated by George Washington's biographer. As the story goes, the first president cut down his father's beloved cherry tree in his youth, and took full responsibility for the action. In the drawing, a voluminous tree hovers above ground as a reminder to childhood guilt, while Washington prays for direction at Valley Forge. Rather than portraying a cherry tree, Beltz illustrates a Brugmansia shrub, which is also referred to as the Tree of the Evil Eagle amongst healers. Coming full circle, the American emblem of the eagle appears perched atop the tree, menacingly eyeing Washington.

Although the figures in Beltz's drawings are typically depicted in desperate conditions, they each appear to have a chance at redemption. This is usually introduced via the streams of associative text derived from the Bible, and Tibetan and Egyptian Books of the Dead. Yet these quotes function more as mood-setters than illuminations, as they have been taken out of context and consequently lost their original meaning.

In a group of four drawings, *Asthma*, *Cancer*, *Delirium* and *Hysteria*, (titled after lists in Jethro Kloss' book *Back to Eden*, 1939), Beltz depicts a headless anonymous farmer. In each drawing, the man lays in a pile of wooden logs from which different medicinal plants sprout and prosper. This series embodies Beltz's recognition of the discrepancy between human violence and the ultimate opportunity nature presents for



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