

Alexander Gray Associates

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Dawit L. Petros

October 15 – November 15, 2008



A Total Instance of Reflexivity, detail: western escarpment of the Rift Valley, Sigeneity, Eritrea; looking south to Kenya, 2008, c-print, painted plywood and Plexiglas, 48" x 60" x 6"



A Total Instance of Reflexivity, detail: western escarpment of the Rift Valley, Naivasha, Kenya; looking north to Eritrea, 2008, c-print, painted plywood and Plexiglas, 48" x 60" x 6"

Alexander Gray Associates is pleased to present Dawit L. Petros' first New York solo exhibition. New York-based Petros makes conceptually-based art employing photography, installation, performance and video to explore issues of homeland and trans-nationalism in a globalized age. In Petros' work, landscape and portraiture are used as devices to construct and de-construct site, language and diaspora.

The exhibition debuts new photographic works created in Eritrea and Kenya. These resulting photographs, of East African landscape, architecture, and residents, are highly formalized through Petros' lens. His images are further distanced through their presentation; mounted under darkened Plexiglas, and arranged in grids of multiple sizes, the photographs create an architectural experience. Like a reversal of Jeff Wall's lightboxes, Petros' "darkboxes" have a psychological luminosity, which further mediates the imagery. Reflective, dark surfaces negotiate the physical experience with the viewer, skewing the reveals of information in the photographs.

Describing his process, the artist states: "Living between geographical locations; Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Canada and the United States, has required the navigation of myriad terrains. This process has provided a set of expansive relationships; an awareness of the necessity of simultaneity; and recognition of the contradictory ties that bind the dispersed to physical and psychic places. In my work, I synthesize ideas and information, in an attempt to integrate visual materials and my own experiences into broader debates of culture, history and ideology."

Dawit L. Petros was born in Asmara, Eritrea, and received his MFA in 2007 from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He is a 2008-2009 Artist-in-Residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem. He has exhibited his work in group shows throughout Canada and in the United States, including the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Wedge Curatorial Projects, Toronto; the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; Photographic Resource Center, Boston; Massachusetts College of Art, Boston; Harbourfront Gallery, Toronto; Observatoire 4, Montreal; Maison de la Culture Frontenac, Montréal; and Prefix Gallery, Toronto. He has received Fulbright and Bombardier Internationalist fellowships, as well as an Art Matters Foundation grant.

The artist has received generous support for this exhibition from the Canada Council for the Arts.



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Alexander Gray Associates is a contemporary art gallery and advising firm based in New York. Our exhibition program focuses on mid-career visual artists who emerged in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Through consulting and collection advising, we provide expertise for our individual and corporate clients. Our ultimate goal is to provide a direct experience with Modern and contemporary art that encourages discourse around art's role in the advancement of culture. Gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM.