

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Prevailing Climate

July 13 – August 18, 2006

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Sara Meltzer Gallery is pleased to present *Prevailing Climate*, a group exhibition curated by Rachel Gugelberger and Jeffrey Walkowiak. The exhibition will be on view July 13 through August 18, with an opening reception on Wednesday, July 12, 6 – 8pm. Gallery summer hours are Monday through Friday, 11am – 6pm.

Prevailing Climate examines two meanings of climate: the average course of a location's weather conditions and the feeling or atmosphere that characterizes a period in time. Using severe weather and natural disasters as points of departure, *Prevailing Climate* comments on the various consequences of man's actions on nature and society, and in doing so, examines the tragedy, fear and distrust that connects our history, politics, consumerism and mass media.

Based on documentary photographs culled from the Internet, **Joy Garnett's** apocalyptic paintings evoke romantic landscapes that explore the conflict of culture, technology and politics through a decontextualized media lens. Using disaster photos from newspapers as the basis for somber, gray-scale paintings that feature anonymous human figures, **Boukje Janssen** awakens the deep psychology of the original images' subjects that may be lost in the overload of images in the mass media. **John Jurajj** combines imagery of war-torn Lebanon taken from journalistic images and personal travel and employs a variety of painterly tropes to investigate territory, genealogy and displacement, creating a disequilibrium interlaced with exuberance, melancholia and political disturbance. **Jason Middlebrook's** landscapes are in-depth examinations of land as sites loaded with symbolism and history, reflecting in particular, on the devastating effects of land development on indigenous plant, animal life and human life.

Questions of empowerment and participation are at the core of **Andrea Bowers'** artistic practice. Imbued with social, political and feminist critique, her video projects, drawings, photography and sculpture are reminders of the continued struggle for rights in anticipation of the political landscape of the future. Crafting simulated consumer goods out of soft vinyl sewn together with long, uncut lengths of thread, **Margarita Cabrera** explores the economic gap between those who manufacture consumer goods and those who purchase them. **Yumi Janeiro Roth** transforms everyday objects into forms that contemplate our relationship with material culture and the language of design vis-à-vis function. Domestic objects such as kitchen towels, for example, have been altered so as to serve as distributors of information and propaganda in our fear-driven and safety-prepared society. **Catarina Leitão** offers a refuge from the urban environment in her *Artificial Retreat Devices (A.R.D.)*, portable tents designed to satisfy the desire for escape. Color and audio simulate a natural experience in order to provide a superficial retreat.

Anna von Mertens' hand-stitched works depict the rotation of the stars during violent moments in history, functioning as a memorial, landscape and as a study of astrological forces. More importantly, von Mertens reminds us of the deep psychological impact that history has on our lives and yet, the cycle of nature is oblivious and impassive to its violence. **Christoph Draeger, Anthony Discenza** and **Karina Aguilera Skvirsky** reconstruct images from the mass media to investigate the ways in which information is dispersed. **Draeger** collects images and translates them into a variety of media including video, photography and painting. His "disaster jigsaw puzzles" suggest that the media conveys disasters to the public in the form of entertainment. **Skvirsky** appropriates and transforms media coverage of victims of war and natural disasters into cinematic compositions that critically investigate media's intentions and cultivation of our interpretation of events and their implications. **Discenza** culls visual material from commercial film and television, re-organizing, compressing and collapsing original information into a moment of simultaneous destruction and reification.

Questioning the nature of authority, **Type A's** photograph "Ours/Theirs" exposes and imitates the subjective meaning of the Prime Meridian. By creating their own "line" and documentation of evidence, they expose the arbitrary nature of Greenwich Mean Time and the "civilized" world's measure of time and space. **Joan Linder's** pen and ink drawings explore and claim the sub-technological process of observation and mark making. Her series of images of bound bodies, void of human presence, are suggestive of power play as a tool in both sexual and political practices. **Eric Anglès'** quarterly publication is a blank broadsheet newspaper that is circulated via placement in arbitrary sites and on a free subscription basis. Lacking content or images of any kind, the publication instead bears only the marks of the printing process itself, a nod to the potential for information to stand in for knowledge.

Events at Sara Meltzer Gallery

In conjunction with the exhibition *Prevailing Climate*, Sara Meltzer Gallery has organized a series of events:

Wednesday, July 19 at 7pm: eteam event: International Airport Montello.

This program is presented in conjunction with International Airport Montello, a project by **eteam** and the people of Montello commissioned by Art in General, New York. The project uses as canvas a 10-acre piece of land that eteam purchased in an auction on eBay.com. It includes the production of events and memories about an abandoned airstrip (approximately 6,000 feet and located nearby **eteam's** land) that make it a local cultural paradigm.

Tuesday, July 25 at 8:30pm: screening of **Andrea Bowers'** *Vieja Gloria* (2003)

Vieja Gloria documents a tree-sit in that took place in suburban Santa Clarita, California. Activist John Quigley lived in a 400 year-old oak for 71 days to protest the large suburban development plans that called for the tree's demise. Narrated by Quigley, *Vieja Gloria* documents the process of the events surrounding the protests and celebrates the quintessentially personal act of individual determination and communal support as the basis for local political agency and activism.

Wednesday, August 16 at 8:30pm: a screening of films and videos

A screening of videos and film by **Carlos Motta, Karina Aguilera Skvirsky, Gabriel Acevedo Velarde** and others. This collection of films and videos address issues ranging from the individual negotiating the mourning process in post-9/11 New York City, to political and philosophical issues associated with taking photographs in the public and the human condition, viewed through a peculiarly satirical lens.

Events are free and open to the public.