

For Immediate Release:

Karen King

25 March through 22 April 2000

Team will present a solo exhibition of new work by Karen King from 08 March through 13 April 1997. This forms a part of the Team's ongoing project space program, meant to show artists without gallery representation.

Karen King's works elaborate on those painful pictorial captures from everyday life: the ID photograph. King's "found" portraits are digital investigations of driver's licenses, passports, and other forms of identification. The quick and semi-self-conscious moment of an ID photo is combined with qualifying holograms, scratches and wear and tear. In the genre of the identification photo, the subject doesn't get the Warholian 15 minutes—the state is not as generous with its time. These subjects are caught for posterity in an unwitting blink of the eye, as glamour, self-respect, composure, and self-willed presentation fall by the wayside.

King brings a heart-felt humanism to these somewhat bleak portraits of our changing and diminishing world. Her eye is one that forgives and celebrates the mundane, finding within it hope for revision. Personal representations that haunt constantly, these bureaucratic portraits deflate the individual in the service of mass record-keeping. Likewise, King degrades painting through Photoshop assaults, however, despite computer intervention, King's pieces have a strange, haunting trace of the human. These "flawed" individuals, who can hardly be blamed for not putting on a good enough face, have been drastically re-scaled—what might have seemed unflattering in a two-inch square image becomes terrifying at 4 feet square.

These portraits raise questions about the ownership of identity. How much does the state control? At what point do government agencies override the flesh in which they traffic? This theme, central to an understanding of King's project, is clearly put forth in the work, "Japan '79," made from a married couple's passport pictures. This black and white couple, with the word VOID stamped across their representation, have been stripped of their humanity in a violent act of negation. The "ruining" stamp which strips the image of function appears, at the larger scale, to have been made with bullet holes. King's subjects stare down the anonymous eye of state-owned cameras in a futile attempt to retain their selves.

The gallery is located at 527 West 26th Street, between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, on the ground floor.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm. For further information and/or photographs please call 212 279 9219.