

HK ZAMANI

House of Veneer

November 17, 2007- August 30, 2008

PØST

Ephemerization – the unmaking of HK Zamani’s Inadvertent Protagonists

It has been said that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Or maybe an unequal reaction. Take for example HK Zamani’s *Inadvertent Protagonists* (2007): The suite of digital prints evolved from the detritus of his installation *House of Veneer* (2007), an epic, temporary installation in the former POST (gallery), Los Angeles. Taking as his point of departure the iconic Geodesic Dome, as designed by the 20th Century visionary R. Buckminster Fuller, Zamani embarked on an exploration of the failure of utopian ideals. The very use of *veneer* in the production of the work speaks volumes about the state of the world today.

A veneer is merely a finish, an image, even a reproduction of the real intended to fool the eye and lead the beholder into a state of ignorant pleasure. The veneer has no depth, no weight and no future. It is in point of fact a lie. The image of the dome in elegant decay strikes the viewer like a blow: “What does this mean?” “This is not what I know to be true.” It laid waste to the hope instilled within architecture as object and subject of our salvation. What came to be a symbol of the triumph of the Modern era (despite its journey from hippie to genius) suddenly falls apart. The fabric is tattered and torn, the framework is splintered and broken, and the very essence of the image begins to fade into memory leaving the viewer not with a shining reflection of our moral and intellectual superiority, but rather a dissolving memory, a small sense of loss, nostalgia for what we never knew we didn’t have. We have stumbled, with the artist, upon the ephemerization¹ of the icon itself.

But through the development of *House of Veneer* Zamani declined to waste his effort – his energy, his motion, his thinking – with the disposal of the extra bits of veneer. He simply set them aside, barely outside the frame of his intended creation, to be dealt with at a later hour. Just as the *House of Veneer* took shape, even in its decay and increasing decrepitude, the *Inadvertent Protagonists* began, quite organically (no intentional pun) through Zamani’s unconscious setting aside of his production’s ephemera. Throughout the process of creation there was an unintentional re-creation; an accidental recycle/reuse of the assumed waste materials. Hour by hour and day by day the pieces began to “fit.” One by one, side by side, top and bottom and finally mirroring the half-dome of *House of Veneer*, the building blocks of *Inadvertent Protagonists* materialized into an unintentional other.

The Geodesic form is an obvious fit for Zamani, whose works have always explored the significance of transparency. From transparent “paintings” made of stretched nylon over panel, to his performative spectacles, and video projections on three-dimensional screens², Zamani has taken great care to expose everything to the viewer. There are no secrets, no man behind a curtain, nor complicated technological constructions. What you see is what you get. And it is also what he has done, what he has used, and what he believes he wants to convey with the work. The 10 images that comprise the suite of *Inadvertent Protagonists* embody this notion of transparency, revealing all. More than simply unmasking the latent decrepitude of the dome (as has been the ultimate state of nearly every Geodesic Dome built since Fuller’s early experiments), Zamani takes the viewer

1. *Ephemerization can be loosely defined in this context as RBF’s notion of the making of more with less. In this case, the artist has made two related bodies of work with the materials required for just the one.*

2. *I would encourage the reader to look for reproductions of *Untitled Black and Gold; White on White, Even; and LA Art Court (Dealers)*.*

to task and invites us to examine that failure from every angle. Not only are we faced with the decrepit dome, but with the failures of the materials, the collapse of the form, and the dissolution of the world in which such an object is celebrated. By focusing his attention to the most essential parts of the process, Zamani leads the viewer to an inescapable, if not slightly hallucinatory, loss of faith in the conceptual framework in which the failed object previously thrived. The medium is the message.

The photographic process begins to straddle a line between abstraction and representation, whereby the process (rather than the image) is both exactly what it appears to be and something more complex at the same time. Each vignette digitally extracted from the mass of cast off sticky bits is on the one hand, just an assortment of sticky bits, but on the other hand a quietly expressive narrative of opposites – natural/unnatural, surface/solid, temporary/permanent, lie/truth. Through the permanence of the medium (and its existence in a numbered edition), the former cast-offs of the production of *House of Veneer* become the chief actor in a larger dialogue, and *Inadvertent Protagonists* is the main event. One might assign a hallucinatory appeal³ to such works, insofar as they draw the viewer into a pleasant struggle to assign a more concrete image to the admittedly random and haphazard compositions in the suite. The material is “wooden” yet plastic; it is organically shaped yet sloppily torn and cut; the bits and pieces begin to lie in rows and columns, stacks suggesting intentionality, then collapse again when the lines don’t connect the dots. The material makes a virtual 180-degree turn, landing very nearly in the same

place (it remains a disposable plastic), yet presents itself as opposite: it has form and formal value, intention and concept where there was only “veneer.”

At the end of the day, Zamani has given his audience another example of his uncanny ability to ephemeralize in most every medium. He has presented optically warped paintings, video on transparent screens, performances without mask or script, and sculptures that collapse. With *Inadvertent Protagonists* he has taken material waste and created, without irony, high art. His attention to detail is matched by his tenacity at ignoring the rules of the establishment. For the artist, there are no consequences, only new truths, in his lifelong experiment in understanding “Universe.”⁴

Tim Christian

Tim is a life-long professional art administrator and consultant. He is the principal of Real Art Works based in Los Angeles.

3. Elizabeth Kolbert. “The Dymaxion Man: The visions of Buckminster Fuller.” *The New Yorker*, June 9, 2008. Kolbert outlines that Fuller’s inventions had a powerful appeal to a broad audience, despite the fact that all were technical and practical failures.

4. Fuller was famous for not assigning the definite article to the essential subject of his journey to establish new ways of knowing.

House of Veneer
2007 – 2008
(Installation view)
Vinyl on wall
12 x 13.5 feet



House of Veneer and Inadvertent Protagonists

2007 – 2008

(Installation view)

Vinyl on wall

12 x 13.5 feet



Suite of ten prints:

House of Veneer

House of Veneer with Inadvertent Protagonists

Inadvertent Protagonists # 1-8

2007

Archival Epson prints

13 x 19 inches

edition of 30

Inadvertent Protagonist #1

Inadvertent Protagonist #2



Inadvertent Protagonist #3



Inadvertent Protagonist #4

Inadvertent Protagonist #5



Inadvertent Protagonist #6



Inadvertent Protagonist #7

Inadvertent Protagonist #8



House of Veneer Exhibition
(Installation view)
2007 - 2008



HK Zamani (a.k.a. Habib Kheradyar)

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2008 Shelter from the Storm, SolwayJones, Los Angeles
- 2007 House of Veneer, PØST, Los Angeles
- 2006 Star Spangled Banner, Flood Gallery, Asheville, NC
- 2004 The Ride, Linc, San Francisco, CA
- 2003 Edifice/Oedipus, London Street Projects, Los Angeles
Fabric & Armature Paintings, Miller/Durazo, Los Angeles
- 2000 LA Art Court, Pierogi 2000, Brooklyn, NY
New Work, Linc, San Francisco, CA
- 1998 Red, Patricia Sweetow Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1997 Stretch, Miller Fine Art, Los Angeles
DNA Windows, DNA Gallery, Provincetown, MA
- 1996 Dot to Dot, Room, Catalog, New York, NY
More Dots, Gallery LASCA, Los Angeles
- 1995 Pierce College, Catalog, Woodland Hills, CA
- 1994 Food House, Santa Monica, CA
- 1991 Mendenhall Gallery, Whittier College, Whittier, CA
- 1990 Karl Bornstein Gallery, Catalog, Santa Monica, CA

SELECTED PERFORMANCES

- 2007 Open Situation, Prague Quadrennial, Wenseslas Square, Prague, The Czech Republic.
Open Situation, Performance Art Center, Lublin, Poland
Scheherazade I and II, BWA Gallery, Bidgoszcz, Poland
- 2006 Southern Veil, Flood Gallery, Asheville, NC
1972, (collaboration with Amitis Motevalli), Track 16, Santa Monica, CA
- 2004 Edifice/Oedipus IV, Kampa Museum, Prague, The Czech Republic
Certain Traces, (collaboration with Tomas Ruller), Karlin Space, Prague, The Czech Republic
Face to Face, (collaboration with Tomas Ruller), Municipal Gallery at Barnsdall, Los Angeles
White on White, Even, Guggenheim Gallery, Chapman University, Orange, CA
- 2003 White on White, Even, Ise Cultural Foundation, New York, NY
Impasse/In the Veil III, Riva Gallery, New York, NY
Edifice/Oedipus III, Art Omi, Ghent, NY
Edifice/Oedipus, London Street Projects, Los Angeles
- 2002 Impasse/In the Veil, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA
Impasse/In the Veil II, Frankfurt International Art Fair, Germany
- 1999 Blue Seai, Arizona State University Art Museum, Online Catalog, Tempe, Arizona
- 1997 Dotman, Kulturzentrum bei den Minoriten, Graz, Austria
Martyrdom, W139, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 1996 The Climb, Municipal Art Gallery, Video, Barnsdall Park, Hollywood, CA
- 1989 East/West, Gong, (collaboration with Tomas Ruller) Prague, The Czech Republic

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2007 A Certain Slant of Light, Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation, New York, NY
- 2006 Materialwise (Revisited), domestic setting, curated by Carl Berg, Venice, CA
- 2005 C.O.L.A Anniversary Exhibit, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Barnsdall Park
- 2004 C.O.L.A Exhibit, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Barnsdall Park
Irrational Exhibits, Traction 16 Gallery, curated by Lida Abdul & Deborah Oliver, Santa Monica
Coverage, M+R space to fill, curated by Shane Bradford, London, England
Dialogue Prague/LA, curated by Barbara Benish, Los Angeles and Prague, The Czech Republic
Minimal Form, Galerie Dionisi, Los Angeles
Poetics of Proximatey, curated by Lida Abdul and Gul Cagin, Guggenheim Gallery, Chapman University, Orange, CA
Continental Divide, curated by Mark Zimmermann, Planet Tyland, Brooklyn, NY
Lotusland, curated by Nancy Gregory, Connecticut College, New London CT
- 2003 -[not (painting)], curated by Koan Jeff Bysa, Ise Cultural Foundation. New York, NY
Specificity, Riva Gallery, curated by Odili Donald Odita, New York, NY
In the Gloaming, Art Omi, curated by Koan Jeff Bysa, Ghent, NY
Sequel, curated by William Radawec, domestic setting, Los Angeles
25 Years of Separation, curated by Farzad Karimi, ArteCultural, Los Angeles, CA
Gridlock, curated by Kristina Newhouse, West LA College Art Gallery, Los Angeles
- 2002 Transit: survival skills, Park Paradise Complex, curated by Leo Bravo, Scottsdale, Arizona
Painting's Edge, curated by Roland Reiss, Idyllwild Art Foundation, CA
California Dreamin', Davis-Keil Gallery, Naples, Florida
Five, Superior, curated by Bill Radawec, Cleveland, Ohio
- 2001 Big Plastic, Armory Center for the Arts, curated by Jay Belloli, Pasadena, CA
Ocular Spectrum, Raid Projects, curated by Carl Berg, Los Angeles
- 2000 08-30-00, Gallery 138, Kent State University, curated by Bill Radawec, Kent, Ohio
Murals, Irvine Fine Arts Center, curated by Carl Berg, Irvine, CA
- 1999 Sig-Alert, Arizona State University Art Gallery, curated by John Spiak Online Catalog, Tempe, AZ
Ulema, Galerie Hohenthal und Bergen, Berlin, Germany
Venus, ARC, Vienna, Austria
- 1998 Painting Language, L.A. Louver Gallery, curated by Kimberly Davis, Venice, CA
Other Related Areas, University Gallery UCI, curated by Brad Spence, Irvine, CA
- 1997 New Acquisitions, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles
Papier, Galerie Hohenthal und Bergen, Berlin, Germany
118 W / 24 N, Kulturzentrum bei den Minoriten, Graz, curated by Sam Erenbeg, Austria
CA90001-185, W139, curated by Theo Tegelaers and Carl Berg, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- 1996 Investigations, The Municipal Art Gallery, curated by Noel Korten, Catalog, Los Angeles
Pyuntack City Museum, curated by Carl Berg, Catalog, Pyuntack City, Kyungkido, Seoul, Korea.
- 1995 Summer Show, Room, curated by Richard Dickens, New York, NY
Bumpy, POST, curated by Habib Kheradyar, Los Angeles
- 1994 House of Styles, TRI Gallery, curated by Rory Devine, Hollywood, CA
Group Show, domestic setting, curated by Bill Radawec, Los Angeles
Current Abstraction, The Municipal Art Gallery, Catalog, Los Angeles
1993 Soft Surfaces, TransAmerica Building, San Francisco, CA
World News, Muckenthaler Cultural Center, Catalog, Fullerton, CA
- 1992 Emigrant Abstraction, Butler Art Gallery (Municipal Museum), Kilkenny, Ireland

- 1992 Art from Ashes, Pauley Pavilion/UCLA, Los Angeles
Far Bazzarr, Old Federal Building, Los Angeles
- 1991 World News, Beyond Baroque, Venice, CA
Amnesty International, Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles
- 1990 Faculty Exhibit, University Art Gallery, CSU Dominguez Hills, Carson, CA
New Edge, Karl Bornstein Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 1989 Dialogue: Prague/Los Angeles, Gallery Mladych, Prague, The Czech Republic
Dialogue: Prague/Los Angeles, Lidovy Dum, Prague, The Czech Republic
- 1988 VEX, Lindhurst Gallery, USC, Los Angeles
3rd International Art Fair, Convention Center, Los Angeles
- 1987 Salon des Independents, Richard/Bennett Gallery, Los Angeles
Fringe of the Fringe, Hinshaw Gallery, Pitzer College, Claremont, CA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Myers, Holly, "C.O.L.A. Exhibit," LA Times, May 31, 2004
- Goldman, Edward, "C.O.L.A. Exhibit," Art Talk-KCRW, May 11, 2004
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- Schwarzman, Carol, "Specificity," Artpapers, September-October, 2003
- McGovern, Thomas, "Habib Kheradyar at MillerDurazo," Artweek, April 2003
- Newhouse, Kristina, "domestic setting," Artnet Magazine, April, 2003
- Frank, Peter, "Art Picks of the Week," L.A. Weekly, February, 2003
- Zimmerer, Kathy, "'Habib Kheradyar at MillerDurazo," Artscene, February, 2003
- Knight, Christopher. "Big Plastic," Los Angeles Times, Friday, November 30, 2001
- Berk, Amy, "Habib Kheradyar at Linc," Artweek, January 2001, vol. 32, issue 1, pp.16-17
- Schmerler, Sara, "Habib Kheradyar at Pierogi 2000," Art in America, December 2000, p.117
- Roche, Harry. "Habib Kheradyar," S.F. Weekly, November 2000
- Baker, Kenneth, "Kheradyar's Objectivity," San Francisco Chronicle, October 28, 2000, D1-2
- Pagel, David, "Abstract View," Los Angeles Times, August 29, 1998, F 26
- Roche, Harry. "Habib Kheradyar and...," Artweek, September 1998, pg 19
- Ianacconne, Carmine. "Habib Kheradyar," Art/Text, November-January 1997-98, pp 76-81
- Kandel, Susan. "Stretch," Los Angeles Times, April 18, 1997, F21
- Wilson, William. "Investigations," Los Angeles Times, June 4, 1996, F4
- Greene, David. "Painting the Town," L.A. Reader, September 29, 1995, p 14
- Kugelman, Kerry. "Bumpy," Art issues., November/December 1995
- Kandel, Susan. "Bumps and More Bumps," Los Angeles Times, October 6, 1995, F24
- Zimmerer, Kathy. "West Coast Abstraction," Artweek, September 1996, pp 14-15
- Butler, Brian, "The Acceptance of History; Building of Hope," Visions, Summer '93, pp 26-27
- Scarborough, James, "L.A. Prophet and Loss," Art Press International, October 1993, p E11
- Frank, Peter, "Art Picks of the Week," L.A. Weekly, June 22, 1990, p 116
- Levin, Kim, "Blank Czech," The Village Voice, September 19, 1989, pp 92-3

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 2008-present Gallery Director, Long Beach City College, Art Gallery, Long Beach, CA
- 2006 Adjunct Faculty, California State University, Long Beach, CA

1995-2005 Founder/Director, POST, Los Angeles
2001-2005 Adjunct Faculty, American Intercontinental University, Los Angeles
2000 Visiting Faculty, "Graduate Seminar," University of California Santa Barbara, CA
1995-99 Adjunct Faculty, Woodbury University, Burbank, CA
1994-95 Director/Curator, Cerritos College Fine Arts Gallery, Norwalk, CA
1991-92 Co-Curator, California State University Dominguez Hills, Carson, CA
1988-95 Adjunct Faculty, California State University Dominguez Hills, Carson, CA
1987 Director/Curator, Claremont Graduate University Art Gallery, Claremont, CA

SELECTED HONORS AND AWARD

2005 California Foundation Grant, Los Angeles
2004 C.O.L.A. Grant, City of Los Angeles
2000 Alumni Hall of Fame Founding Member, Claremont Graduate University, CA
1997 Certificate of Honor for Contributing to the Arts, Woodbury University, Burbank, CA
1990 Certificate of Honor for Contributing to the Arts & Humanities, CSUDH, Carson, CA
1986-88 California Graduate Fellowship

LECTURES AND PANELS

2005 Noel Fellowship Juror, Milwaukee, WI
2003 Visiting Artist, San Francisco Art Institute, CA
2002 Visiting Artist, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, WI
Visiting Artist, University of Madison, WI
Visiting Artist, Painting's Edge: Advanced Painting Workshop, Idyllwild Art Foundation, CA
Visiting Artist, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA
Visiting Artist, Cal State University, Long Beach, CA
2000 Sculpture International, Panel Discussion organized by Kay Whitney, Houston, Texas
Visiting Artist, Claremont University, Claremont, CA
Visiting Artist, Brad Spense's Art Seminar, Santa Ana College, Santa Ana, CA
Visiting Artist, University of Southern California, Los Angeles
1999 Visiting Artist, California State University, Santa Barbara, CA
1998 CAA, Panel Discussion on Installation Art organized by Kim Yasuda, Los Angeles
New media, Panel Discussion, Design Week, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles
1997 Visiting Artist, Art Institute, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
1993 Visiting Artist, Art Center, Pasadena, CA
1988 Visiting Artist, El Camino College, Torrance, CA

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Berkeley Art museum, University of California, Berkeley
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Permanent Collection

EDUCATION

1988 MFA in Painting, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA
1986 BA in Studio Arts, California State University, Dominguez Hills, Carson, CA
1979 AA in Fine Arts, El Camino College, Torrance, CA

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