

Art News (USA)
17th September 2007

Reviews: New York

from color photographs he took in his native Israel. They consist of sometimes hundreds of shots and capture subjects like Arab men playing cards in a coffee shop or Orthodox Jews meeting at a campground for an annual pilgrimage.

Pitzuziya (2002) is a seemingly impossible marriage of vantage points. The photograph shows both the view into a cluttered convenience store and the view

looking out toward a dark streetscape. It is a startling but convincing illusion of continuous space, although Frydender undermines this effect in subtle, Cézannesque misalignments, as in the nut bin and the floor tiles. In other images, he underscores the fabrication by including the same figure in different spots, a choice that also signals his reliance on elapsed time.

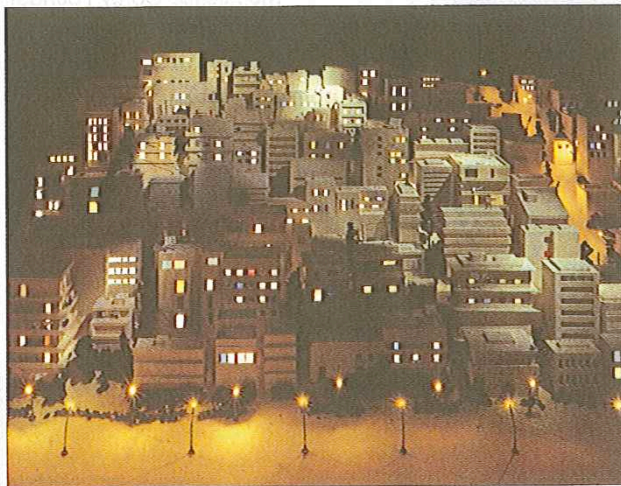
Frydender, who was born in Tel Aviv in 1954 and worked as a photojournalist before being drawn to the creative possibilities of digital technology, shows off his compositional command in *Estates* (2005), his warped bird's-eye image of a brilliant blue pool that repeats images of structures rather than people. Not much separates the luxury of the rectilinear pool from the densely packed above-ground tombs just over the wall and the taller houses beyond. All seem in danger of sliding out of the corner of the frame and into the sea. —*Hilarie M. Sheets*

James Casebere

Sean Kelly

The title of this show, "The Levant," refers to the area bordering the eastern end of the Mediterranean, which includes Syria, Lebanon, Greece, Turkey, and Egypt. That region was the source for eight of the photographs on view here, while two images had their origins in southern Spain. Casebere examined both secular and sacred architecture for these

large and extra-large digital chromogenic prints mounted on Plexiglas. He researched Islamic structures on-site and



James Casebere, *Tripoli*, 2007, digital chromogenic print mounted on Plexiglas, 72" x 90".
Sean Kelly.

then built models of his interpretations of Ottoman, Moorish, and domestic spaces before photographing them. It is a process of faithfully depicting illusion that Casebere helped to pioneer in the 1980s.

His constructions have become more elaborate and elegant, with more details, as is evident in the two *Mosque (after Sinan)* images from 2006 and 2007, which pay homage to the great 16th-century Ottoman architect Sinan with their large, low-hung wheels of lights and tiers of arches. *Tripoli* (2007), a night scene of apartment houses with streetlights and satellite dishes, and *Samarra* (2007), a rubble-strewn interior that recalls the Golden Mosque (one of Shiite Islam's most sacred sites, bombed and virtually destroyed in the last year), give the artist's recent work a much more contemporary sheen than usual. Yet other works remain stripped down to essential forms that suggest archetypal, rather than real, places. These are muted in color but often dramatically lit and devoid of people.

While Casebere's photographs can be poignant meditations on time and its ravages and reclamations, they can also be isolating and emblematic, veering dangerously close to orientalizing clichés.

—*Lilly Wei*

Annelies Strba

Jason McCoy

The Swiss photographer and filmmaker Annelies Strba has been portraying her relatives for more than 25 years, elevating the concept of the family photograph to a career in itself. In this exhibition of ink-jet images printed on canvas, Strba captures four generations of her relations, mostly girls and women, in moody, poetic, and sensuous works that recall scenes from French director Eric Rohmer's film *Le Genou de Claire* (Claire's Knee, 1970), which takes place in just such an enchanted Switzerland.

The setting is Strba's family home in Melide, a place of lush gardens, stately trees, and precipitous mountains. It's a locale in which she and her subjects are notably at ease.

A dense green forest is the backdrop in *NYIMA 307* (2006), which shows a little girl in an old-fashioned green dress leaning against a moss-covered tree trunk. Her eyes are closed, and her ear is pressed against the tree as if she can hear its secrets. In *NYIMA 320* (2006), another



Annelies Strba, *NYIMA 149*, 2004, inkjet print on canvas, 49 1/4" x 73 1/2".
Jason McCoy.

girl, this one older and wearing a long white dress, sprawls voluptuously on the ground.

The figures look like characters from romantic novels, giving themselves over fully to the natural world and to their own uninhibited natures. The gentle