



Eric LoPresti: Test Sites
September 8th – November 17th, 2008
Artist Talk and Reception :
Saturday September 13th 2pm

New York Public Library, Columbus Branch
742 10th Avenue (between 50th & 51st Streets)
New York, NY 10019-7019

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Like the Spice is pleased to announce that the Columbus Branch of the New York Public Library will exhibit *Test Sites*, a series of large-format digital prints by Eric LoPresti. *Test Sites* depicts the fractured desert landscapes of nuclear test sites where international contests of nuclear detente are played out. Each piece is a diptych, with a left panel presenting satellite imagery of a site in the US, former USSR, or China and a right panel composed of stacked bars of grey-tinted color gradients. Dominated by the muted hues of desert landscapes, *Test Sites* presents a post-Cold War reflection on the nature of conflict and global catastrophic trauma.

As with LoPresti's previous body of paintings, exhibited at *Like the Spice Gallery* in May of this year, *Test Sites* pits representational and abstract sides against each other in a diptych format. The contrasting visual modes speak metaphorically to the dualistic competition of superpower relations, but stop short of imposing a specific judgment on the meaning of that competition.

The composition of the abstract sides alludes to the graphic layout of national flags, but their muted colors could imply political neutrality, emotional numbness, or ambiguity. In contrast, the representational sides are highly specific, including contemporary images of some of the most devastated landscapes in the world: the Nevada Proving Ground (US), Semipalatinsk (former USSR, now Kazakhstan), and Lop Nur (China). The series concludes with *Hanford*, which is not a testing ground but is a storage site for spent reactors from the US nuclear submarine fleet. Located about 10 miles from LoPresti's hometown in Southeastern Washington State, Hanford implies that the repercussions of these dramatic weapons tests are felt throughout the landscape.

Born in 1971, Eric LoPresti received his BA in Cognitive Science from the University of Rochester in 1993, and his MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2002. His work has been exhibited internationally, including solo shows at Jan Larson Fine Art and Miami University. He is the recipient of the Louis J. Kuriansky Foundation Award and the 2005 Miami Young Painters - William and Dorothy Yeck Purchase Award. His first solo show at Like the Spice Gallery, *Force Against Force*, was exhibited in spring of 2008.