



Joy Garnett
"Plume 2 (Strange Weather series)"
2005
Oil on canvas
26 x 46 inches

Christopher Reiger

Hungry Hyaena: Art Conservation Ecology Philosophy [blog]
<http://hungryhyaena.blogspot.com/2006/07/gallery-report-07192006.html>

Monday, July 24, 2006

Gallery Report, 07/19/2006 [excerpt]

The press release for "Prevailing Climate," the summer group show at **Sara Meltzer Gallery**, tells visitors that the show "examines the tragedy, fear and distrust that connect our history, politics, consumerism and mass media." For the most part, curators **Rachel Gugelberger** and Jeffrey **Walkowiak** succeed...

The rest of "Prevailing Climate" is relatively strong. Works by **Joan Linder**, **Joy Garnett**, **Jason Middlebrook** and **Anna von Mertens**, standout. Attractive - indeed, almost decorative - the two oil paintings included by Garnett are deceptive. Her subject matter, garnered from online news media, is associated with warfare, be it images of prisoners, war machines, military officers or **torn landscapes**. The two pieces included in "Prevailing Climate" belong to this last group. Calling to mind work by the Romantic painters, Turner and Friedrich, Garnett's burning, red-and-orange vistas are as disturbing as they are beautiful. In this sense, they are sublime, in the traditional sense, inspiring awe and a little fear. Looking at the work, particularly the smaller of the two, "Plume 2 (Strange Weather Series)," I find myself wondering what effect the super abundance of such images in our media has on our moral response. Have we, as a society, learned to cope by abstracting these violent, troubling scenes, ignoring the documented wrongs by treating them as we do a friend's postcard from abroad?