

DIANE ROSENSTEIN GALLERY

Amir Zaki: Nothing To Say

February 24 – March 30, 2024

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 24th, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Diane Rosenstein is pleased to present *Nothing To Say*, a solo exhibition of new photographs by Egyptian American artist Amir Zaki (USA, b. 1974). For the past twenty-five years, Zaki has developed a photographic language which seeks to elevate the formal qualities of California's architecture and landscape. For his second solo exhibition with Diane Rosenstein Gallery, he will present nineteen color photographs with two distinct subjects – roadside signs and winter trees in Central and Southern California.

"In a staring contest, a photograph always wins."

Zaki is drawn to a direct, non-verbal experience of visual art. In *Nothing To Say*, the artist alters his photographs by digitally redacting text and graphics from these outdoor signs, thus revealing their inherent volume, shape and color. Photographed against a vibrant sky, and titled as archetypes, like 'The Guru,' 'The Collector,' or 'The Monk,' the signs take on a heroic quality and a nuanced personality.

The exhibition will also feature a suite of eight photographs of winter trees, offered as symbolic portraits of Zaki's extended family. They serve, like many of Zaki's exhibitions as a visual and conceptual counterweight to the adjacent sign series. Zaki has photographed trees for over a decade, and with each body of work, explores something unique. In *Nothing To Say*, Zaki challenges concepts around scale and place. The trees are depicted with trunk, branch, and leaf, but never shown rooted in the ground or in relation to other trees or elements of the landscape. Similarly, the signs are severed from place, and we see neither the pavement below nor the buildings that surround them.

Installed as a dialogue, these works demonstrate Zaki's career-long curiosity about the way that photography can narrow the divide between the natural and the built landscape through its inevitable flattening out of space, as well as render relative scale ambiguous. The true scale is contained within the print itself.

A limited edition catalogue, *Nothing To Say*, was published by Diane Rosenstein Gallery on the occasion of this exhibition.

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Amir Zaki (USA, b. 1974) makes photographs of California landscapes and architecture, and he re-envisioned the world before him, creating a tension between the functional and the dysfunctional. "My own work has focused mainly on both the built and natural landscape of California. I am among a generation of photographers who truly embraced digital technology as a way to make photographs that could not be made using only traditional means."

Born and raised in Beaumont, California, Zaki received his BA from UC Riverside (1996) and MFA from UCLA (1999). He has received solo exhibitions with Diane Rosenstein Gallery; and from the MAK Center for Art and Architecture, ACME, and Edward Cella Gallery, all in Los Angeles, and James Harris Gallery in Dallas and Seattle. Amir Zaki's photographs were included in *The New City: Sub/urbia in Recent Photography* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY (2006); *Golden Hour: California Photography from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art*, Vincent Price Art Museum (2022), *Something About A Tree* (curated by Linda Yablonsky), Flag Art Foundation, NY (2013); and the *2006 California Biennial*, Orange County Museum of Art, in Newport Beach, CA. His work is in the permanent collection of The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; The Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Orange County Museum of Art, and the Henry Art Gallery at University of Washington in Seattle; among others. He is a full professor of art at UC Riverside. Amir Zaki lives and works in Huntington Beach.

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For press inquiries, or for more information about the artist and works in this exhibition, please contact info@dianeroseinstein.com.