

# Alexander Gray Associates

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## ***Landscape as an Attitude***

Luis Camnitzer  
Lorraine O'Grady  
Dawit L. Petros  
Paul Ramírez Jonas  
Jack Whitten

June 23 – July 30, 2010



Luis Camnitzer, *Landscape as an Attitude*, 1979, vintage silver gelatin photograph, 8" x 10"

Alexander Gray Associates is pleased to announce a group exhibition, *Landscape as an Attitude*. Drawing its title from a seminal work by artist Luis Camnitzer, the exhibition explores the conceptual space between landscape and portraiture with works by five gallery artists: Luis Camnitzer, Lorraine O'Grady, Dawit L. Petros, Paul Ramírez Jonas, and Jack Whitten. Intersecting personal and political narratives, the collected works raise questions of discovery and diaspora, of nature and nurture.

**Luis Camnitzer's** iconic 1979 photograph, *Landscape as an Attitude*, is from a series of photographic works in which language and performance intersect. The artist's own face becomes a topography for toy figures defining a farm, a part of a village, a family residence. Camnitzer's work uses humor to allude to issues of homeland and migration, settlement and displacement.

In **Dawit L. Petros'** photographic diptychs, a figure appears and disappears in the wilderness. Petros' body seems hidden in the wooded landscapes of his photographs, morphing into the structures of the sites: fallen trees, ponds, waterfalls. In these works, subject and location are dissolved; sequence and transition are reshaped.

**Paul Ramírez Jonas** places his body in the landscape in his ongoing artwork *Fifty State Summits* (2002). In this work, the artist documents his arrival at the highest mountain peaks of the fifty United States, marking each summit with a self-portrait waving a flag declaring "Open." In this work, personal accomplishment comes face to face with broader political concerns: Is the landscape indeed open? Are these peaks accessible, have the sites been colonized? What has the artist accomplished by trekking to these high points of ground?

**Jack Whitten's** 1968 painting *Garden in Bessemer* reclaims memories of the artist's home in Alabama and the tumultuous political context of the rural South's history. In light of the Civil Rights Movement of its time, *Garden in Bessemer* combines abstraction with figuration and landscape, with ghosted images of a contested landscape occupied by ghosts and voices from the past.

In *The Clearing* (1991), from **Lorraine O'Grady's** photographic installation *Body/Ground*, a surrealistic garden becomes the background for an unsettling narrative exploring the Black female body and its relationship to Colonialism. In this diptych, figures are set in an idyllic garden landscape, referencing inter-racial and sexual dynamics that shaped the colonization of the Americas: Cortez and La Malinche; Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings.

For more information on the artists, please visit the gallery's website: [www.alexandergray.com](http://www.alexandergray.com)

Alexander Gray Associates is a contemporary art gallery based in New York. The gallery exhibits and promotes a diverse group of mid-career artists who emerged in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, whose spheres of influence cross generations, disciplines, and political perspectives. Gallery summer hours: Tuesday–Friday, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM.