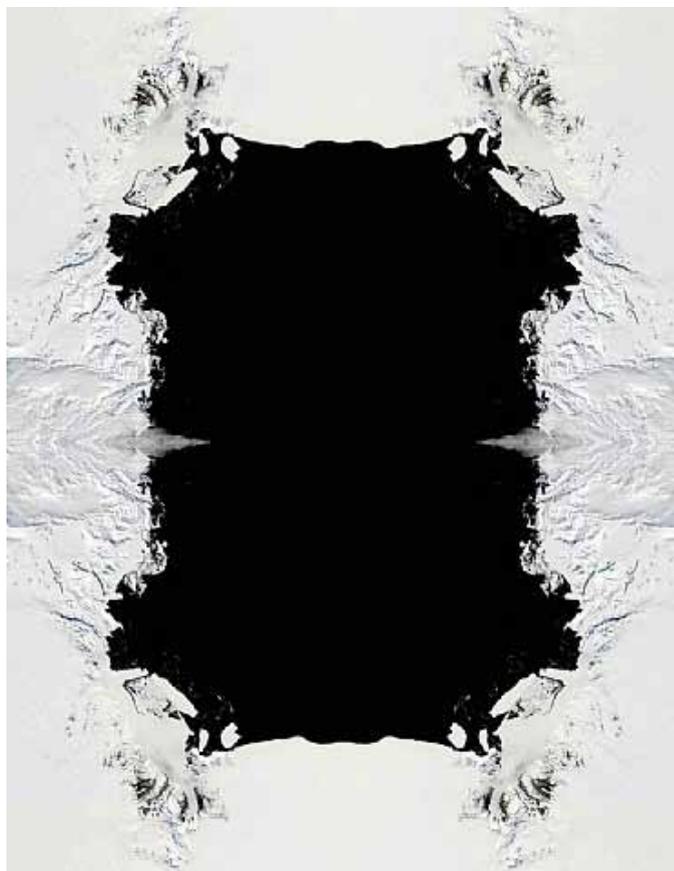


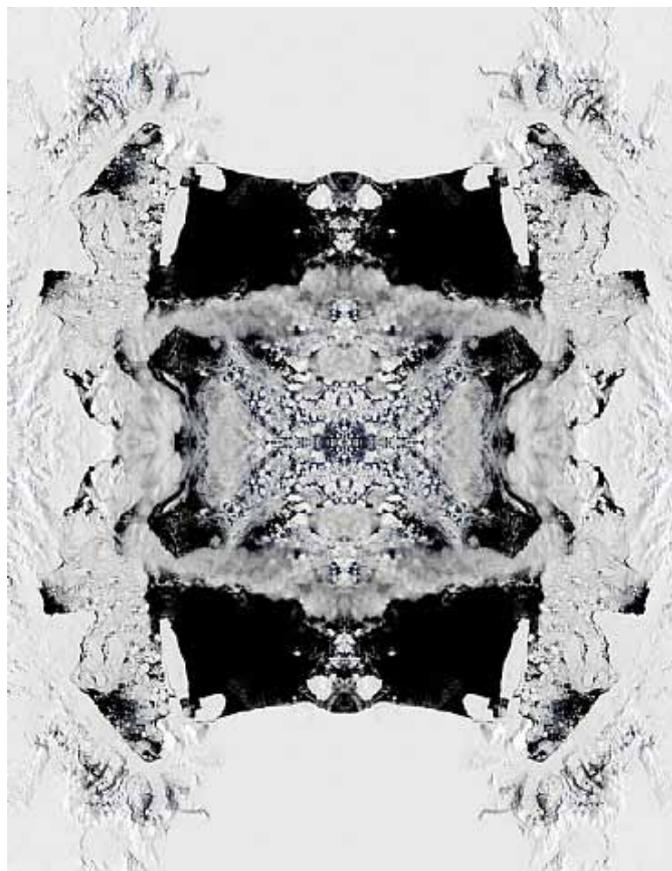
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"Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle: Happiness is a State of Inertia" at
Max Protetch Gallery

By: Simmy Swinder



Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, Iceberg B15 (12/15/05 21:55 GMT), 2010
Archival giclee print
Available in 26 x 20 inches and 40 x 52 inches
©Max Protetch Gallery



Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, Iceberg B15 (12/18/03 05:20 GMT), 2010
Archival giclee print
Available in 26 x 20 inches and 40 x 52 inches
©Max Protetch Gallery

Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle uses aerial shots of Antarctic icebergs, taken by NASA between 2001 and 2005, to create crisp and striking photographs that do more than please the eye; they raise metaphysical questions about the future of such environs. Manglano-Ovalle's solo exhibition at Max Protetch Gallery is composed of six giclee prints of icebergs, an aluminum glass sculpture with live Blind Mexican Cave fish, and three other works unrelated to the exhibition at large.

The six black and white photographs are evenly dispersed around the gallery walls, gradating clockwise from lighter to darker. The images of icy corners formed by fine lines are austere. As I moved through the room, I noticed each photograph was similar in composition but different in detail. Each one had icebergs forming a frame with a lake in the center, in which floated smaller island-like icebergs that resembled the shape of a human skull. The final photograph in the show, indicative of curatorial foresight, was composed of the same icebergs that formed the frame but the middle was empty a black abyss where I saw my own reflection. I bet this culmination was deliberate. Manglano-Ovalle's concern with climate ruination and environmental systems is apparent not only in his work, but also in how his work is arranged. The symbolism created by placing a succession of melted icecaps resembling skulls and ending with a photo in which the viewer can see her or his reflection places the viewer in direct relation with the apocalyptic narrative.



Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, Bauen, 2010
Aluminum, glass, water and astyanax fasciatus mexicanus
27 ½ x 54 ½ x 54 ½ inches
©Max Protetch Gallery

The photographs are conceptually engaging and made me wonder how they related to *Bauen*, a sculpture based on the Mies van der Rohe 50x50 House. In *Bauen*, tiny fish swim in an artificially regulated climate, suggestive of a similarly forced habitat humans might have to create and adapt to if environmental conditions continue to deteriorate. The house is also the inspiration for Manglano-Ovalle's *Gravity is a Force to be Reckoned With*, a scaled down version of the model currently on view at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art. There, the artist turns the small-scale home upside-down; the floor is the ceiling with models of van der Rohe-designed furniture affixed on the ceiling, once again questioning traditional models of living habitats and whether current systems are at risk.

“Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle : Happiness is a State of Inertia” runs through April 3rd
511 West 22nd Street
Take the C or E train to 23rd Street and/or to the M23bus to 23rd Street and 11th Avenue
Gallery Hours: Tue-Sat, 10-6
Gallery Website: www.maxprotetch.com