

JASON MIDDLEBROOK

Artforum

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ARTFORUM

PICKS

BEIJING

"New York, Interrupted"

PKM GALLERY

#46-C Cao Chang Di, Chaoyang Qu

December 20–February 20

In a deliberate move to establish itself as a global art venue, Seoul's PKM Gallery invited New Museum curator Dan Cameron to organize the inaugural exhibition at its new outpost in Beijing. "New York, Interrupted" offers Beijing audiences their first glimpse of recent works by seventeen of New York's most promising artists, including Cory Arcangel, Robert Boyd, Jason Middlebrook, and Wangechi Mutu, none of whom have ever shown in China before. Though the exhibition's title refers to the September 11 attacks, connective tissue is sparse, with only a generalized state of anxiety about living in post-9/11 America linking the works. Robert Boyd's *Xanadu*, 2006, an apocalyptic three-channel video projection that sets precisely edited footage of religious fanaticism and violence to a pulsing disco score, is the most compelling reflection on these conditions. Other works suffer from a lack of context. *HELLO (New York)*, Aleksandra Mir's well-known 2001 installation of found photographs arranged sequentially to connect their subjects in an endless daisy chain, would have made a stronger case if the artist had incorporated photos from local sources (as she has done in the past), rather than relying on images of celebrities who are often unrecognizable to audiences here.

Contemporary Chinese art is constantly exported to exhibitions and fairs around the world, but audiences in Beijing have had relatively few chances to see the work of younger artists from abroad. Despite any shortcomings, this show offers viewers a welcome introduction to the city's art scene and encourages the much-needed consideration of Beijing's art production within a broader critical framework.

—David Spalding



View of "New York, Interrupted," 2006.