

Soo Kim

Julie Saul

Soo Kim's work sits at the boundary between photography and collage. She takes and prints photographs, and then cuts them into intricate patterns, which she sometimes layers one over another.



Soo Kim, *Lavish*, 2009, hand-cut C-print, 30" x 30". Julie Saul.

She frames the resulting images in such a way that they hover between sheets of Plexiglas, and must therefore be literally looked through rather than looked at.

This show, "The Corners of the Sea," included photographs that Kim manipulated to striking effect. *Untitled*

(*Gold woods*), 2008, is a blurry image of a tree in which the branches have been cut out, painted gold, and lifted up from the surface of the print. The contrast between the peaceful tone of the background and the jagged metallic strands that seem to reach out generates a sense of unease.

In two sets of portraits—one of a young man, the other of a young woman—patterns taken from comics are cut from the prints. In the three shots of the woman (all 2009), these patterns add a second level of narrative content. *Driftless* shows her turned toward the viewer, apparently submerged beneath a cutout of water. In *Lavish*, the woman seems to gaze dreamily into a wind-swept sky, and in *Fall*, she looks as if she is peacefully sleeping while floating on a wave.

Even more complex here was a series of highly detailed multilayered cityscapes featuring rows of buildings, conveying the impression that we are looking into windows and through doorways behind which other worlds might be hidden.

Kim's work exhibits a high degree of skill and control. The artist subtly handles a technique that is often used to far blunter, more obvious effect. Her pieces seem to whisper to us, and they are all the stronger for it.

—Steve Barnes