

Art in Review

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GENERATION 1.5

[Queens Museum of Art](#)

Through Dec. 2, 2007

“Generation 1.5” refers to people who emigrate during their adolescent years, whose identity, unlike those of adult immigrants or children born in their parents’ adopted country, is shaped by both their old and new cultures.

Cross-cultural identity is addressed by some of the works in “Generation 1.5.” Elsewhere the show floats into general meditations on globalization and cultural dislocation.

One of the best expressions of the “Generation 1.5” sensibility is Lee Mingwei’s “Quartet Project,” a sound and video installation. Monitors turned toward the walls in a dark room play a performance of Antonin Dvorak’s “American Quartet”. Each time you approach a monitor, the sound and image cease — although they continue on other monitors in the room. The inability to simultaneously experience both aural and visual aspects of the performance is an apt metaphor for an individual ricocheting between cultures.

Hybridization is approached in Seher Shah’s drawings, which combine lotus patterns, Mecca cubes and Western architectural motifs. The successful contemporary artist as globalized citizen is made concrete in Rirkrit Tiravanija’s painstakingly recreated passport filled with stamps from nearly every continent and Emily Jacir’s Webcam stills taken during a residency in Linz, Austria.

Becoming an American artist is explored in Ellen Harvey’s miniaturized copies of every work in the Whitney Museum of American Art’s publication “American Visionaries.” Pablo Helguera’s installations of journals, drawings and memorabilia, Shirin Neshat’s video about censorship and Nari Ward’s installation with wheelchairs on stilts are some of the most dramatic and physically imposing works, but they feel the least connected to meditations on “Generation 1.5.”

The show is emblematic of the Queens Museum’s program, which is increasingly devoted to reflecting the borough’s extensive diversity. But a risk in this approach is that it may turn the immigrant experience into a platitude. At times, despite the sexy, cyber-sociology title, “Generation 1.5” moves toward this.

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