

Kim Dickey

Deserted islands resemble empty stages, silent, undisturbed, awaiting human habitation. Like empty vessels, they offer to hold what we most need: space, water, hope. In the absence of that holding they appear wistful, ghostly, possibly abandoned.

Theatrical stages suspend our disbelief and manufacture illusion, with props that set the stage for human actions. Their untouched presence hints at our desire and longing for action.

In each of the *Oasis* installations, *Paradise Elsewhere* and *Mirage* (solo version), palm trees and basins surround a single chair, a table holds a single glass. They offer a place from which to wait out one's rescue, as hospitable refuges for the stories we have written and not yet performed.

I use photography to "frame" my installations and compliment the desire for "an elsewhere" that pervades much of the work. *Green Mine* and *Bomb* feature two sides of one object, offering a contradictory experience—the promise of instantaneous release by an explosive firework, that is seemingly at odds with the wet, lush haven they promote. My photographs explore the theme of "distance" between the real and the ideal, between presence and absence, as expressed in the forms of each installation.

Of Mere Being

The palm at the end of the mind,
Beyond the last thought, rises
In the bronze distance.

A gold-feathered bird
Sings in the palm, without human meaning,
Without human feeling, a foreign song.

You know then that it is not the reason
That makes us happy or unhappy.
The bird sings. Its feathers shine.

The palm stands on the edge of space.
The wind moves slowly in the branches.
The bird's fire-fangled feathers dangle down.

– Wallace Stevens