

ARTNews December 2005
Isca Greenfield-Sanders
John Berggruen

This series of ten large-scale "Beach Detail Paintings" (2005) by New York artist Isca Greenfield-Sanders offered a breath of fresh air. The artist based these works on snapshots of family vacations from the 1950s and '60s, taken from slides that she purchased at a yard sale. She scanned the slides, pared them down to a few select details, enlarged the images, and then printed each section on a sheet of rice paper. She then assembled the pages and used oils and watercolor to give the images her own vibrant color, rich texture, and crisp translucence. The artist painted several of the same images in both pink and blue color schemes. "Yellow Butt Beach" is a study of light at low tide. In the pink version, coral hues are reflected in calm surf as a figure in yellow swim trunks crouches beneath a vast sky at the lower margins of the painting. The blue version is even more intense, lemon yellow vividly contrasting with shades of azure and turquoise. Greenfield-Sanders has a background in mathematics as well as art, and she gives her works a geometric structure, by arranging the printed pages so that they form faint grids beneath the paint. This rationalism counteracts the nostalgia that the subject matter might otherwise evoke. In her merging of technological process and sumptuous color and texture, she manages to find a balance between narrative impulse and formal beauty.
-Deborah Phillips.