

Artist Statement for Puddle Scapes

For thirteen years, I have walked the streets of New York, attempting to depict the much-photographed city in new ways. In the process, several series have coalesced, including Puddle Scapes, photos of the city as momentarily captured in unstable reflections on street corners and sidewalk depressions. In this series I've tried to give fresh energy to a commonplace subject by striving for dynamic compositions that open up evocative alternative worlds. What attracts me to the subject is the chance to combine multiple layers and textures in painterly collages: cement cracks, rusty curb lining, the bold geometry of traffic markings, fleeting glimpses of rushing New Yorkers, and skyscrapers reflected as dreamy, soft-focus apparitions. Ultimately, my goal is to unveil and showcase the odd dreamscapes that surround us on every corner if we bother to look. In the process, these images remind us of the infinite variety of thoughts and pictures that may be flickering in the brains of passing pedestrians—and of the transitory nature of the city if global warming turns the smattering of puddles into a full-on undersea world. In "Blastoff", for instance, the apartment building with its green and white windows seems to burst forth like a futuristic spaceship from the curvilinear curb and crosswalk. Or it could be dropping fast into a hole in the pavement—in the alt world of puddles, things are never fully clear. "In His Lane" suggests a landscape that has been so shaken that its component pieces are no longer where they should be. "Deep Brooklyn" seems to present a portal through which to enter the alternative puddle world that I have documented in many more than just these five images.

— Pierre Hauser