

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

31 Mercer Street, New York, New York 10013
212 226-3232 fax 212 941-1536 www.feldmangallery.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 30, 1992

KOMAR & MELAMID SEARSTYLE™ WITH PSALMS

February 22 – March 28

Komar & Melamid will exhibit recent *SEARSTYLE* creations and illustrations for the Book of Psalms.

SEARSTYLE™

The relentless quest for beauty has driven Komar & Melamid to strange and unusual places: totalitarian Russia, the industrial dumps of New Jersey and, most recently to Sears Department Store.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt was asked what American book he would place in the hands of every Russian should the opportunity arise, he cited the Sears' catalogue. The artists believe that Sears helped shape this nation, that the Kenmore brand has reigned in the 20th Century, and, in fact, the continuous and reassuring sound of the Kenmore refrigerator has been a constant companion to generations of Americans.

Paging through the Sears' catalogue, one is submerged into a mysterious and spiritual world of wood grain and brick face. One can see that life in the United States is off-white, almond, brown, and Searsy!

Komar & Melamid transport this mood into the gallery through *SEARSTYLE* creations both strange and familiar. In a recent film by Peter Wollen aired on Channel 4 in Great Britain, the artists said "there are only three stylistic possibilities for artists of our time – modernism, kitsch, or Sears." Having worked in the first two styles for years, Komar & Melamid explore the third and final one.

In a time of economic recession and poverty of spirit, the *SEARSTYLE* movement is the result of the separate but convergent efforts of many individuals. An exhibition of *SEARSTYLE* furniture by Constantin Boym will be on view at the Fullscale Gallery (242 West 27th St., New York, NY) from February 20 to March 22. *SEARSTYLE* fashions by John Minacarelli for Ken Moore will be informally modeled during the exhibition.

ILLUSTATIONS FOR THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Komar & Melamid's Illustrations for the Book of Psalms stem from an ancient Biblical tradition that only animals and landscapes, not humans, be depicted in artworks.

One part of this project consists of a large landscape painting populated by the animals mentioned in the Psalms. The illustrations of Biblical texts are interwoven with references to the artists' Soviet childhood memories.

The second part of the Psalms project is a "book" made up of several dozen diptychs featuring the text of a single psalm and a corresponding illustration. Each illustration is the specific photographic fragment of the landscape painting containing the animal scene appropriate to the text. The diptychs will be displayed in *SEARSTYLE* frames.

The artists are interested in publishing the Book of Psalms with these illustrations.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- A symposium devoted to the implications of *SEARSTYLE* for contemporary American culture will take place at Parsons School of Design during the first week of March. Please call for details.
- *Full Cycle*, a videotape on Komar & Melamid by Peter Wollen, will be screened at The Kitchen (512 W. 19th St.) on February 15 in a program of new video. The program begins at 8 p.m. and costs \$8.

There will be an opening reception for the artists on Saturday, February 22 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Mondays by appointment. Contact Susan Yung for more information or photographs.