

Tamara Rafkin
Artist Statement
“No Adults Allowed”

New York City’s playgrounds are hidden in the labyrinth of cement and glass, in the corners of parks and on the edges of the island. Refuges for many who are growing up in the glare of the city, the playgrounds are also an obvious sign of the society they are a part of: encircled by fences, gated, and with notices posted “ No Adults Allowed Unaccompanied by a Child” they aim to keep out those that might do children harm.

Originally begun as a visual inquiry into the concepts of a society’s fear of predators and the culture’s obsession with the safety of its children, shortly after I began the series New York City experienced 9/11 which changed the context of the work and its meaning for me.

The playgrounds became a visual metaphor for the loss of childlike innocence and of the duality between the beauty and the fear of what might lurk in the shadows. Most of the titles have double entendres from an adult’s point of view, while the images perspective are more a child’s. The images are also solitary experiences in the midst of a crowded city, mirroring a feeling of disconnection and loneliness that was abundant after the attacks on the city.