

Nearsay
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GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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Best Exhibit of 2010: Anselm Kiefer at Gagosian



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2010 saved the best for last. Every so often, an artist, an exhibit, or a single artwork knocks me over and reminds me of the true power of art. And this just happened when I visited Anselm Kiefer's exhibition *Next Year in Jerusalem* at the Gagosian Gallery in Chelsea. Like a cabinet of curiosities, this show is literally filled floor to ceiling with fascinating, emotionally powerful, and jaw dropping objects. Part art show, part spectacle, and part performance, this exhibition is all powerful.

Twenty-five huge glass vitrines fill the space and lead the viewer around. Large scale paintings and glass-fronted, oversized shadow boxes line the walls. A free-standing metal closet, hung with photographs on canvas, stands in the center. And everywhere are people gazing, who through the glass vitrines become part of the exhibit.

Inside the displays are haunting works of art that stand like ruins forever to exist. The cracked and dried out floors of each vitrine ground the encased objects, which include burned books, scorched metal, downed planes, lead boats, dried plants, a wedding dress sliced with shattered glass, rocks, stained clothes, unfurled film strips, and so much more.

Kiefer was born in Germany toward the end of World War II and this exhibit, much like his previous work, is rife with images of destruction, chaos, and devastation. He harnesses the power of that time and manages to evoke intense emotion and reaction as a result. This exhibit knocked me over like a hurricane. This show will not be everybody's favorite, but visit *Next Year in Jerusalem* and I guarantee that you will feel something strong. And isn't that what art is all about? *Next Year in Jerusalem* runs through December 18, 2010.

The Gagosian Gallery is located at 555 West 24th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues.