

New faces on Newbury Street

No summertime blues at Howard Yezerski, Miller Block, or Judy Ann Goldman

BY CHRISTOPHER MILLIS

FIVE OF THE 12 PHOTOGRAPHERS on view in “Embodiment: Inference in Figurative Photography,” the exquisite show at Howard Yezerski Gallery, are veteran artists, some internationally acclaimed, whose work has gone largely (or entirely) unseen here.

If Mahr’s images are haunted by the past, Boston artist John Goodman’s photos are haunted by the present. Looking at his one contribution to “Embodiment” — two abstracted figures framed in black, silhouetted yet blurry — gives you no hint of the remarkable

project from which it is excerpted. *The Times Square Gym* is a gritty, passionate series of black-and-white photos of the middle-aged trainers and the young boxers they coach in a dilapidated space in what until recently had been this country’s pre-eminently seedy neighborhood. Published as a book in 1996, it represents that rarest of artistic achievements: a monumental homage to the lower working class. Its poignancy owes to its unflinching lack of sentimentality.

Knowing the context whence Goodman’s photo issues makes it easy to wish for more of his work in the show, particularly since the vast majority of his images are marked not by abstraction but by their fleeting figurativeness. (Even his posed stills have momentum.) I was grateful to be introduced to his enormous talent.

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