



MID-AMERICA'S VISUAL ARTS PUBLICATION

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## Scenes Real and Imagined: Judith G. Levy

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### **Judith G. Levy** *Panoramic Postcards*

11 a.m.-5 p.m. (Special event; art viewable 24 hours)

City Center Square, South Windows 12th St., just west of Main Kansas City, MO

Exhibit on display for about one year.

Artist's site: <http://www.judithglevy.com> Urban Culture Project site:

<http://www.charlottestreet.org>

Take attention-grabbing, detail-rich, thoughtful and thought-provoking art.

Add free stuff.

Didn't Monday just get a whole lot better?

To mark the opening of *Panoramic Postcards*, her solo installation at City Center Square, Judith G. Levy will be giving away small (and mailable) versions of her large-scale

creations from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. today (and during the same hours on Wednesday).

That's not the main reason to go, though. That distinction falls to the big cards, which are being shown in a cooperative effort between City Center Square and the Charlotte Street Foundation's Urban Culture Project.

I got to see some smaller reproductions earlier this month, in Levy's studio at the Hobbs Building ... and to say they inspire doubletakes would be an understatement.

Quadrupletakes is more like it.

*Hm. Big long vintage-style postcards. That's kind of ...*

*Wait. How did **that** get ...*

*Huh? Isn't that the ...*

*Hey! There's no place named ...*

You get the idea.

Levy has cannibalized, digitized and recombined the real to create the fanciful, using images from real vintage postcards to create places that both exist and don't, times and spaces both actual and imagined. And, in the process, she has opened the doors to all manner of dialogues about race, economy, history and culture in America ... who we were, who we are, where we've been and where we're going.

There is no "Hopeland, MO," the city depicted in today's featured work. The amusement park is real, though, and the wide boulevard on the right — and yes, that's Kansas City's Hotel Phillips (which you can see with a short walk east on 12th Street from City Center Square) front and center.

Visually, the piece is a lot of fun both in itself and as a sort of image-search puzzle. Taken to a deeper level, it raises questions about urban growth and entertainment for working-class populations, who couldn't (and still can't) afford the getaways available to the more affluent.

*Levy's work, she writes, is about history and remembrance. I make installations, video, two-dimensional work, and performance pieces that explore the explicit and elusive nature of private and public memory.*

It's a good thing Levy's show is up for a long run. Unless you've got an entire day at your disposal, it will be hard to take in everything (the shown as well as the implied) in one

viewing. And even though Levy is offering small-scale takeaway versions, these panoramas need to be seen full-size to be fully appreciated.

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