was written in 1995, the artist had no way of creating the challenging installation until ten years later. Using nominal language, Jaar’s narrative recounts a little of the photographer’s life, his entry into photojournalism as a profession and his untimely suicide three months after this photograph won him the Pulitzer Prize.

Viewers are prepared for the starkness of the interior narrative as they approach the installation. One end wall is covered entirely in white fluorescent bulbs. The light is (purposely) blinding. Turning the corner, one enters the small theatrical space and is seated on a small bench. A presentation—somewhat like a slide show—begins, each slide telling a select fact about Kevin Carter’s life. Occasionally, his name is repeated, like a lamentation. At the height of Mr. Jaar’s narrative, the photograph is shown, enlarged to the full size of the screen. We are faced with a horrific image of the reality of famine. However, instead of allowing us to dwell on the image, the artist takes us by surprise as set of large strobe lights flashes in the darkness. Like lightning, the flash comes quickly, a sudden shock that re-inscribes the horror of the photograph. Once again, we are blinded. Even visitors prepared for this part of the installation are startled, perhaps because of the brightness of the flash or the sound of the oversized strobes.

Turning the viewer into the recipient of the photographer’s flash, the artist subverts the entire layout of his work, which, initially, places the viewer squarely in the same position as the photographer. When we see Carter’s photograph, we occupy his space, his perspective. When the strobe lights flash, we, have, instead, become the subject of a photograph, turning into the observed. This is part of the entire point of the installation, which engages photojournalism, its inherent contradictions and the audience for whom it exists. In a recent interview published in The Brooklyn Rail, the artist noted that he sees the role of the photojournalist as “the conscience of our humanity.” For Jaar, they represent the remains of our collective humanity. Implicating us in the work is part of his responsibility as an artist. This was also the point of Carter’s photograph.

Also on view is Jaar’s Searching for Africa in LIFE from 1996. This work consists of five large C-prints featuring the covers of LIFE magazine that were published between 1936 and 1966. Throughout these years, according to the artist, there were only five or six covers dedicated to the African continent, most of these featuring animals. That is, of over 1500 covers, only three percent were dedicated to Africa. For Jaar, this is a particularly egregious fact, given LIFE’s broad reach in American culture and its deep influence on public interpretations of global culture.

Part of a larger group of works addressing African issues, these two on view at Galerie Lelong reveal Alfredo Jaar’s continued interest in addressing both the representation of Africa in the media and the difficulties presented by photojournalism. Through the media, Africa becomes easy to misunderstand as single entity with innumerable problems. For the Western viewer, the African continent is summed up in its entirety by the body of the little girl in the photograph, her ribs visible. Similarly, Africa is summed up by five or six LIFE magazine covers in which elephants, giraffes and hippos occupy the bush.

This reductive presentation of the continent and the lack of intervention into its problems lie at the heart of Jaar’s works, which carefully consider the delicate lines between shock value and human value, between exploitation and expression, between the visible and the implied.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado

Elizabeth Jobim and Tony Bechara
Lehman College Art Gallery

An exhibition by two artists in the double exhibiting space section at the Lehman College Art Gallery introduces the spectators to a duet of individualities that connect without merging with each other. Grand Canyon is the title of the exhibit by Tony Bechara that is presented on the left wall of the exhibiting space. This vibrating interplay among white, gray, and black generates an evocative resonance, because the author does not wish to represent scenes. This large-scale triptych, rendered by Bechara with the dynamic multiplicity of touches and tones that characterize him, create a zone of abstinence, of quiet conversations, profound and tranquil, that continually resonate against the variety of colors used in the works on the opposite wall. Geometry and color are part of Bechara’s work; they are the skin of a conceptual aesthetic body.

Tony Bechara expands the use of the grid, expresses the richness created with contrasts, the exploration and the surprising effect of an organicity of matter, which is also an attribute of the installation of three smaller shaped canvases entitled Geometry and Color that hang on the facing wall. There, these three paintings—respectively shaped as a rectangle, a triangle, and a circle—compliment the three square frames of the opposite wall. Formalism and geometry are the components of this artist’s pictorial development. The vibrations of the primary and secondary juxtaposed colors increase a kinetic sensation in the spectator who observes Bechara’s paintings, although it is important to stress that he nourishes from a conceptual approach to the analysis and use of color. This was also evident in other exhibitions and was observed in the Minima Visibilia, Tony Bechara Grey Paintings exhibit at the Museum of Art of Puerto Rico, which took place nearly concurrently with this exhibit. The New York City Department of

Tony Bechara and Elizabeth Jobim. View of the exhibit, detail.
Cultural Affairs and the J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation supported the exhibition.

Bechara builds bridges among the diverse authors who have created paintings of light and color. He is not confined to the well-known Latin-American kinetic current, or to the guidelines set by British artist Bridget Riley, nor to the compositional pattern of the grid and its alterations. On referring to composition, one must remember the subtle references to rocky surfaces to which both artists resort. Bechara does this evoking the Grand Canyon — that nevertheless does not discard the possibility of an urban reading. Elizabeth Jobim references the mineral element through the display cabinet that shows aspects of her artistic process. Located at the side and separated from the rest of the site-specific pictorial installation, the display cabinet presents the spectator with mock-ups/mini-paintings by Jobim, as well as drawings, sketches, and rocks. This excellent grouping of elements is both motivating and didactic, two indispensable aspects to consider in a place dedicated to teaching; something that Susan Hoeltzel, the gallery director, always bears in mind as she curates the exhibit along with Claudia Caliman.

Having already introduced both artists, it is time to point out that because of the layout of the exhibition space, the gaze cannot help but contemplate the works of both artists at the same time. The grey, dynamic, and checkered tunnel and the enclosed reverberations give way to the release of light generated by Elizabeth Jobim’s paintings. This artist celebrates the great pictorial gesture with tones of blue. Her large abstract embrace is also readable as something urban that is, nonetheless, not representational or descriptive. **Endless Lines** is the title of a work with which Jobim draws the spectator closer to her experiencing of lines, something achieved through movement that also does not seek to interpret or represent. Her painting accentuates the width and length of the movement executed. Matter flows in the color blue set over white. The paintings become an installation with the enveloping participation of the gallery space. This Brazilian artist who lives in Rio de Janeiro studied the space to create this site-specific installation. The points of contact between the paintings as they touch laterally offer a sensuous rhythm that inhabits the use of cold colors. This is perceived inside-out and vice versa. The planes, the straight, significant but non-representational lines, indicate movement. In a context of flat inks and uncommon fractional forms, large-scale canvases interact with others in a discourse aided by their lateral proximity. They are like masterful gems, faceted ancient stones. Jobim takes us through spaces that envelop us but that also are beyond our reach. Like a magnet, the intense light in **Endless Lines** draws the spectator to the Gallery’s interior. The installation occupies an intensely illuminated space. The duo of colors used by Jobim establishes a formal contrast that is nearly like the tracing of an architectonic plan. Both exhibits are infused with a contemporaneous rituality. Both create a passage, like a path toward a dispossessed altar that is not religious, but rather visual and inhabited by stones from ancient cities. Jobim and Bechara master the controlled and vibrant gesture as if these were part of a special dance from which light emanates in a life-affirming fashion.

Graciela Kartofel

**Ernesto Pujol**

**Galeria Ramis Barquet**

Before October 2008, amid all the hype of the art market, it was rare to find an artist willing to tackle the turmoil of wars in the Middle East and the implications of religion. However, Ernesto Pujol, who was once a monk and is well known for his site-specific, public performances, recently created a body of work that addresses these provocative issues in a poetic way.

For his gallery show titled Inheriting Salt, Pujol exhibited a series of photographs: two of them focus on the Judean Desert in Israel and another two on Utah’s Salt Flats in the United States. At first glance the two wastelands appear to have little in common. The terrain of the Judean Desert looks rugged, rocky, and craggy while the salt flats appear smooth and off-white. In the latter you can gaze far into the distance to the extent that you see the curvature of the earth in the horizon. However, Pujol’s photographs are grappling with more than just the landscape. Each of these sublime deserts represents a site of religious pilgrimage, a place of solitude for the would-be prophet, and, more specifically for the artist, the depiction of a man dying while waiting for his good samaritan. In the process of creating the work, Pujol said that the project began as a meditation on compassion between men, but over time became more about the solitude of a person’s existential journey, feeling lost and wanting to be found, as well as the wars in the Middle East and the dying American soldier.

The significance of religion is emphasized in the show with the arrangement of a cruciform in the gallery and a fifth photograph called Pilgrim Line (Holy Sepulchre) (2008). The reference to salt refers to the artist’s childhood by the sea but also reflects upon an earlier time when the mineral was a substantial commodity in the Middle East.