

**PRESSBOOK**

Zach HARRIS

*The New York Times*

*January 2009*

## Art in Review

**ZACH HARRIS**

**‘Requiem Reversals’**

*Max Protetch*

*511 West 22nd Street, Chelsea*

*Through Feb. 21*

You could mistake Zach Harris’s fascinating, small, elaborately framed paintings for the works of a forgotten early-20th-century Symbolist. In fact, Mr. Harris earned his master of fine arts degree at Hunter College in 2006.

Made with small brushes, a feathery touch and darkly rich colors, the paintings conjure land-, sea- and sky-scapes that seem the products of mystical visions. Some describe vast mountain ranges, others ethereal cities. There is a tendency toward lush patterning. “Auditory Odyssey” pictures a multicolored ocean textured like a braided rug. In “High, Low and Inbetween” the all-over abstraction resembles shrubbery in a Persian miniature.

The painted frames are marked by geometric patterns, intricate wood construction and, in some cases, illusionistic elements that enhance the play of light and color. In “Heart Shaped Box” a paperback-size painting of cosmically radiant mountains is contained by wide concentric borders patterned with serpentine black-and-white stripes. It creates an optically riveting dialogue between the tangible immediacy of the frame and the faraway, imaginary realm of the painting. There is an eclectic sophistication in Mr. Harris’s work, but it is balanced by loving craftsmanship and soulful visual poetry. **KEN JOHNSON**