

# ARTFORUM

## New York

### Critics' Picks

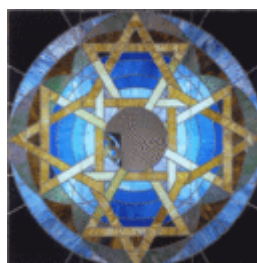
#### Vitaly Komar

RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS

31 Mercer Street

June 18–July 29

Vitaly Komar's first solo exhibition, after decades as half of the celebrated duo Komar and Melamid, elegantly proposes a spiritual truce between members of different faiths and beliefs. The holy day for Muslims is Friday, for Jews, Saturday, and for Christians, Sunday. Thus Komar calls for a more culturally inclusive (and temporally expansive) definition of "weekend," undermining traditions of work that have most people behind desks or on their feet for forty-plus hours per week. In support of his proposition for a three-day weekend, he shows stained glass, paintings, and several montages. Each of the montages center around two photographic portraits of triumvirates: Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill at the Yalta Conference; and the young artist with his mother and father. The latter left the family during Komar's youth due to religious differences. These "fragile unities" (Komar's term) are overlaid with mandalas, mostly composed of symbols and shapes indicative of a specific faith; here these indicators of spirituality read as embedded healers, replacing the trauma of family disruption, faith-based hostility, and state repression with quiet appeals for religious, political, and personal harmony. The artist is also offering to photograph those with an affinity for his utopian concept, and will mail the Polaroid to the sitter as a memento and reminder of the values of tolerance.



*Three-Day Weekend Small  
Stained Glass with Mirror,  
2004–2005.*

—Nick Stillman

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