EMPTY VESSEL
AMIR ZAKI
Empty Vessel—Amir Zaki expands on Amir Zaki’s dedication to photographing built and natural landscapes. The exhibition presents selections from two new bodies of photographic images that create a tension between the fragility of broken ceramic vessels and the solidity of quintessential California concrete skateparks. Hung in proximity to one another, sometimes juxtaposed, the images generate a complex conversation around the notion of “emptiness.”

The skateparks are empty and the ceramics are broken. Zaki thus depicts both types of “vessels” as sculptural rather than functional, hence, the title: Empty Vessel.
Nearly all previous exhibitions on skate subculture focus on the graphics, lifestyle, or the skateboarders themselves. *Empty Vessel—Amir Zaki* is unique: the first major exhibition to feature the unusual architecture of skateparks. From a fine arts perspective, Zaki's work follows the lineage of the 1970s New Topographics photographers. Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, Joe Deal and others shifted landscape photography's focus to the “man-altered landscape” and extended their explorations into the suburban and exurban settings of Southern California.

*Empty Vessel* provides a platform for contemplating duality and the more ambiguous third space that exists between linked elements which cannot exist without each other: form and emptiness; function and aesthetics; holding and letting go; containing and emptying.
“As someone who grew up skateboarding, I experience and understand these skateparks in an intense, sometimes painful, physical manner.”
—Amir Zaki

ARTIST BIO

Amir Zaki (b. 1974, Beaumont CA) is an artist living in Southern California, and Professor of Photography and Digital Technology at UCR. He received his MFA from UCLA in 1999 and has since been regularly exhibiting his work nationally and internationally. Solo shows include presentations at Edward Cella Gallery, MAK Center, ACME, Los Angeles and Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York, among others. Zaki is represented in major museum collections such as the Orange County Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, and is featured in the 2006 Phaidon Press anthology Vitamin Ph: New Perspectives in Photography.

Concrete Vessel 53. 2018. Archival pigment print. 60×75 inches. Courtesy of the artist.
The exhibition is accompanied by Zaki’s first internationally distributed monograph, *California Concrete: A Landscape of Skateparks*, published by Merrell Publishers, with essays by the artist, famed skateboarder Tony Hawk, and Los Angeles-based architect Peter Zellner.

**EXHIBITION MATERIALS**

**Exhibition checklist**  

**Exhibition brochure**  

**Marketing, education and other interpretative materials**: Provided digitally upon booking

**Video**: Short documentary by Aaron Khaw, 2019.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMthldDNcWw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMthldDNcWw)

PRESS


“Using digital manipulation, nonhuman scale or horizonless perspectives, Zaki makes his built environments appear subtly irrational, made to be seen not experienced. He presents us with buildings that exist for themselves, not for us.”

—Emily Conklin, The Architect’s Newspaper


EXHIBITION SPECIFICATIONS

NUMBER OF WORKS
29 framed photographs
1 table with limited edition box
1 video (optional)

SPACE REQUIREMENTS
Approximately 225 linear feet (flexible)
Secured, climate controlled area

PARTICIPATION FEE
$7,500

SHIPPING & INSURANCE
Exhibitors are responsible for fine arts shipping costs and wall-to-wall fine arts insurance

BOOKING PERIOD
12 weeks

TOUR PERIOD
Flexible

CONTACT
Rita Sobreiro Souther
UCR ARTS Exhibitions Manager
rita.souther@ucr.edu
3824 Main Street
Riverside, CA 92501
+951.827.4787
ucrarts.ucr.edu

Empty Vessel—Amir Zaki was originally organized by the Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion, Orange Coast College, and curated by Tyler Stallings, director at The Doyle.

The exhibition tour is organized by UCR ARTS.