

## **ARTIST'S STATEMENT (1984)**

**Jerry Kwan**

In 1980, people began to talk about George Orwell, who predicted in 1948 the 3<sup>rd</sup> World War would have broken out in the year of 1984. At the time when the situation of the Cold War between the two mighty nations rose to a breaking point, it seemed that Orwell's speculation was feasible. Hearing talks about Nuclear War in the media, people were getting anxious and began to rally against arms race. A large number of artists gathered in front of the Metropolitan Museum New York anti-Nuke.

The thought of mass destruction was overwhelming. Nuclear power not only could destroy the world, it would also leave its aftermath to contaminate the Mother Earth for hundreds of years.

Stepping into the year of 1984, however, nothing seemed going to happen since both side of the world power were self-controlled; negotiations were still going on, no sight of outrageous actions. But psychologically, there are fears on the part of the public. What if someone made a mistake, like punching a wrong button?

In the beginning of 1984, I wanted to work on the subject of Nuclear Crisis, paint a group of works about dilapidated cities, to depict the horror of Nuclear War. Since the works were based on imagination, the cities were unnamed. A city could be any city. It would be New York, Leningrad or Beijing. I wanted to send out a message saying when a war did happen there were no place in the world safe.

A group of 12 paintings had been done and they were all triptychs.

© Jerry Kwan 2004.