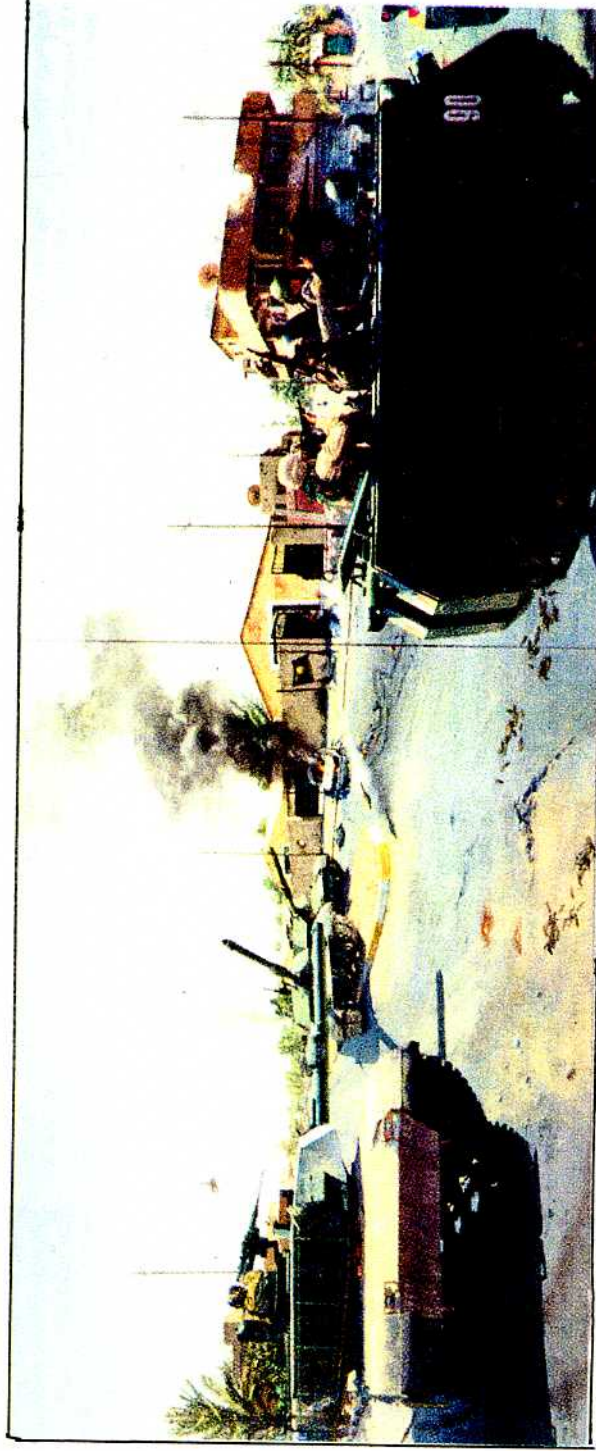


THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2006

WEEKEND Arts FINE ARTS LEISURE

The New York Times

STEVE MUMFORD It turns out that more than 100 American service members died last month in Iraq, making October the deadliest month for United States forces there since January 2005. The 46-year-old New York artist Steve Mumford knows about the dangers the troops face: he went to Iraq four times, spending a total of 11 months there from April 2003 to October 2004. Half of that time he was embedded — as a press-credentialed combat illustrator — with United States military units in Baghdad and the Sunni Triangle. He recorded his experiences there in drawings, which now form the basis of his exhibition of paintings at Postmasters Gallery. Some record the lives of Iraqis; others distill the horror of war. Mr. Mumford's paintings function differently from news photographs and television images — they are not so mediated, which is one reason, perhaps, that they are so arresting. Some of his paintings combine drawings or photographs of events he witnessed and those that happened nearby. "The Battle of Baquba" (2006), right, a 15-foot-long cinematic painting, shows a 270-degree panorama of a convoy of United



Postmasters Gallery, New York

States tanks and armed vehicles caught in an insurgent ambush in the city of Baquba. It is a gripping if ultimately shocking paint-

ing, with violence and death lurking in almost every corner. Somewhere in there, an American soldier is dying. (Through Dec. 2,

Postmasters Gallery, 459 West 19th Street, Chelsea, 212-727-3323, postmastersart.com.) BENJAMIN GENOCCHIO