

# POSTMASTERS

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For immediate release:

**April 28 – June 2, 2007**

## **ANTHONY GOICOLEA "Almost Safe"**

Opening reception: Saturday April 28, 6-8 p-m

Postmasters Gallery is pleased to present "Almost Safe" – an exhibition of photographs, drawings and a 16mm film by Anthony Goicolea. Goicolea's exhibition is a gathering of "evidence" about a spiritually anemic and physically damaged world. Combining photographs of ruined landscapes, a wall-size drawing of tangled destruction, nineteenth century style portraiture, and a 16mm film, Goicolea elegantly portrays a future that simultaneously bears the repercussions of a capitalist present and the residue of a cold war, industrial past.

In these large-scale black and white photographs, the artist digitally composites elements culled from different locations and combines them into new topographies. Seemingly familiar elements such as telephone wires, power lines, and factories are juxtaposed in a way that torques reality and compresses space and time, creating subtly off-kilter and barely inhabitable worlds. The dense woodland environments of his earlier works are replaced with desolate urban and industrial wastelands that, like its few inhabitants, appear to be atrophying. The sky is a major character in many of the photographs. Thick-layered clouds dominate the composition or slide into the frame from above like an impending threat. This emphasis on the sky conjures Northern Europe's romantic and early nineteenth-century American landscape painters. Like those artists, Goicolea also de-emphasizes the human figure in favor of the landscape, alluding to an alienation or disconnection from their surroundings.

Goicolea, whose photographs are often energized by paradoxes, also alludes to the history of cinema, including Film noir, French new wave, and science fiction. The bombed out building in *Deconstruction* suggests the opening scene from Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*, the gondolas in *Sky Lift* are reminiscent of *The Third Man*, a film by Carol Reed with Orson Welles, and the skyline in *Smoke Stack* takes on a Dickensian quality. These familiar elements are catapulted into dreamlike scenes of decay that are displaced or dissolve into each other. The environments, however, undoubtedly come to us from the future, alluding to films that present palpable visions of post-industrial worlds, including *Blade Runner* and *The Children of Men*.

The second gallery is lined with ten pairs of photos and drawings of elderly men and women featured in profiles or in straightforward mug shots. Here, Goicolea explores the ideas of traditional portraiture, drawing and the photographic process. He takes us from the macro to the micro, from the habitat to the objects representing its inhabitants. The drawing component of these tightly cropped portraits resembles daguerreotypes and is executed in negative on layered mylar and glass. After drawing his own negatives, Goicolea then inverts them to create a positive photographic mirror of each drawing.

A film installation is presented in a constructed corridor at the back of the second gallery. At the end of the darkened hall, a 16 mm camera projects a night scene punctuated by pulsing flashlights. The lights

click in code as if a covert language were narrating the clandestine activities. At first the rhythm is slow and methodical, but it soon deteriorates into a luminous, chaotic chatter created by the darkened figures that patrol the area.

*Postmasters Gallery located at 459 west 19th street between 9 and 10 Avenues is open Tuesday through Saturday 11 – 6 pm  
Please contact Magdalena Sawon with questions and image requests  
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