

# POSTMASTERS

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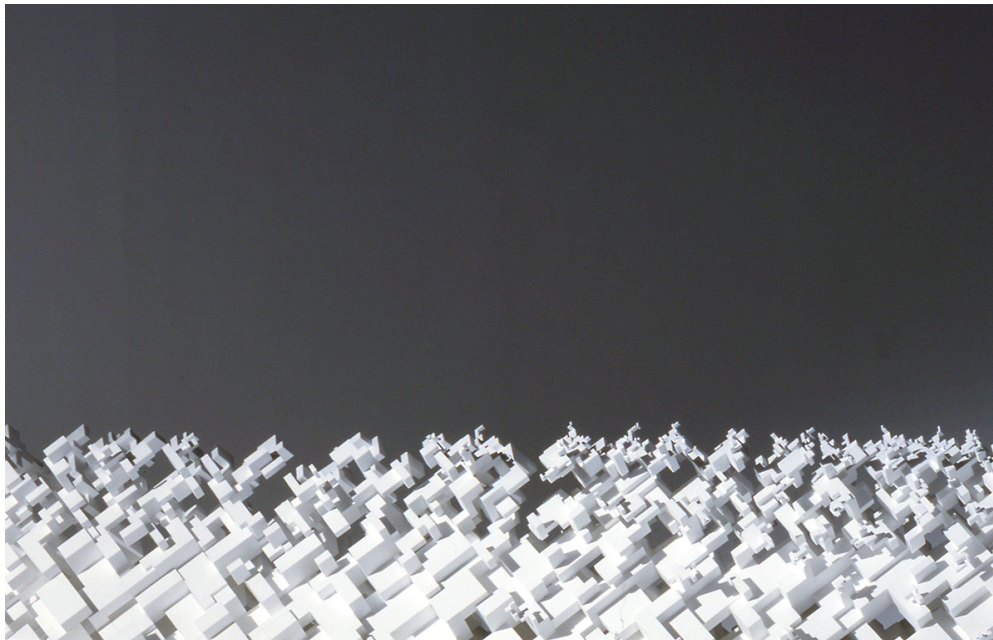
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for immediate release:

**April 25 – June 7, 2014**

## **JOHN POWERS *+time***



For the month of May, sculptor John Powers will use Postmasters Gallery as a studio, and combine his strategies of temporary public work and permanent studio work. Beginning with raw material, an entire show will develop daily. Working simultaneously in polystyrene, steel, plywood, paper and phenolic resin blocks, Powers will stack, construct and collage a series of individual works. Powers will construct wall pieces, floor pieces, reliefs, towers and carpets.

Rather than site-specific, each will be conceived, each day, as part of the whole. Each day will be a new show, that will vanish under the next days' work. Returning visitors to the gallery will be able to track the show's progress, as will those on social media, who can follow changes via the artist's twitter, Instagram, and tumblr accounts - for the Month of May, each will be dedicated to updating different aspects of the show. Only for the last week of the show (June 1-7), after the closing reception (May 31), will the work stop, allowing the show to lay fallow.

For the past two decades, Powers has split his work between permanent-built studio work, and temporary freestanding installations, all built from identically shaped blocks. Made of plywood, polystyrene, steel, resin composites, PVC, paper and other materials; and ranging in size from tiny slivers to furniture-scale, all of the blocks Powers uses are cut to the same proportion: 1 x 2 x 3.

In the studio he has glued, drilled, welded and cast blocks to make intricate objects intended to last; to be passed from hand to hand; to move place to place. Working in public, he has stacked them to make ephemeral accumulations, intended for the audience that happens to be at that one spot at that particular time. Rather than describing these works as site-specific, Powers thinks of them as specific to a moment in

time.

At the end of April, Powers will have entirely moved out of the studio he has maintained in Industry City for the past ten years. Forced out of the facility by a tripling in rent, the change has meant he has had to sort through a great deal of old work. Handiwork of a younger artist, as different from him now as a foreigner from another country.

For Powers the choice to work with a single shape for the past 19 years, was to unite the country of the past, with that of the future; to make explicit that each thing he makes, are slivers in time.

Almost 50 years ago, the artist Robert Smithson observed that "the process behind the making of a storage facility may be viewed in stages, thus constituting a whole 'series' of works of art from the ground up."

Smithson's concept of "discrete stage abstractions" resonates with Powers because so much of the work he does is buried beneath the additive process of making his art. Powers thinks of his own work in a similar vein, except where the 60s earth artist pointed to the possibility of aestheticizing large scale industrial processes—like dam construction—where the final outcome predetermines everything that comes before it, Powers is more interested in the discrete stages of more idiosyncratic development.

"Land surveying and preliminary building if isolated into discrete stages may be viewed as an array of art works that vanish as they develop." Smithson coolly observed. Likewise, for Powers, sculpture develops as an array, but not as an array of predetermined tasks—like the processes Smithson was enamored with. For Powers, sculpture begins—not with the image of a final object—but with an initial condition. Moving outwards, in a series of small improvisation, each one, a possible end point; each an opening on to another improvisation.

For *+time*, Powers will bring that ethic to the gallery. Each day will be a complete show, a discrete stage, but each day will also be an opening onto the next day's work; an initial condition. *+time* will be the first exhibition of John Powers at Postmasters.

Postmasters Gallery  
located at 54 Franklin Street in Tribeca  
Tuesday through Saturday 11 – 6  
with Thursday hours extended to 8pm  
Please contact Magdalena Sawon or  
Paulina Bebecka with questions  
and image requests  
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**www.postmastersart.com**