

ARTFORUM

Anthony Goicolea

HAUNCH OF VENISON

6 Haunch of Venison Yard

September 5–October 4

The Cuban-American artist Anthony Goicolea is best known for photographs in which prepubescent boys, all played by him, act out creepy scenarios. When these images work, they are seriously unsettling. When they don't, they tend to seem narcissistic and obvious. "Related," by contrast, focuses more on Goicolea's family history than his own reflection. But he's still at the heart of every picture.

Central to the exhibition is a collection of old portraits of Cuban relatives. Rather than using the original images, Goicolea has drawn copies that resemble negatives and then photographed them to flip them back into the positive. It's a clever trick that moves one of his gothic staples—the double—away from horror-film stereotypes and toward subtler questions about the distance between himself and his subjects. On the ground floor, black-and-white photographs depict the portraits stuck to telephone poles and walls, like missing-person posters. Upstairs, drawings of family members as children and teenagers are exhibited alongside their positive twins. In another room, two display cases contain skeletal drawings of Goicolea's grandmothers. They are dissected, boxed up and pinned down, turned into both things of worship and museum specimens. Photographs of sites in Havana surround the cases. Goicolea seizes control of these, too, rearranging buildings and adding graffiti to already ruined walls.

Although the artist is nowhere to be seen, everything in "Related" comes back to him. He uses genealogy, archaeology, and horror to explore his Cuban heritage and construct a mature, staged self-portrait. For now, at least, it seems that Goicolea's all grown up.

— Anthony Byrt



Anthony Goicolea, *Family Grid Positive*, 2008, ink and acrylic on canvas, 59 7/8 x 33 7/8".