

POSTMASTERS

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HOLLY ZAUSNER *Unsettled Matter*

Postmasters is pleased to present a new film and a group of photographs by Holly Zausner. This will be her second exhibition with the gallery.

In the opening scene of *Unsettled Matter*, Holly Zausner's 10 1/2 minute cinematically projected HD video, the artist is suspended in a harness, like a sculpture, above one of her collages, which incorporates hundreds of photographs of Mies van der Rohe's sculpture garden in Berlin's Neue Nationalgalerie. Suddenly, Zausner falls from midair, destroying the artwork and losing consciousness – maybe even dying.

Suspended between reality and dreamscape, Zausner is then seen wandering through an utterly deserted New York City, a city defined by its teeming millions. Zausner employs the Hollywood trope of making a metropolis look abandoned, no cars, no people - just the artist, filmed in real time, nothing digitally altered. Her presence in the landscape magnifies the inconceivable surrounding emptiness. Like Fassbinder's *World on a Wire*, his seminal science fiction film, Zausner explores the interplay between illusion and identity.

We follow Zausner as she explores the newly defined city by visiting key sites of New York, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Grand Central Station, lower Broadway, Film Forum, Chinatown, Washington Square Park, The Strand Book Store, Old Towne Bar and Bergdorf Goodman's. Zausner's movement through these spaces begins to reveal itself as a meditation and commentary on contemporary alienation. Best example of this, one that furthers the sense of distance and disconnection, is Zausner visiting an empty theatre at Film Forum, which is screening Antonioni's *L'Avventura*, the iconic film about isolation. This is the only instance where another human being appears in *Unsettled Matter*.

Invoking the traditionally male character of film noir, Zausner walks confidently through the streets of her abandoned city, simultaneously reversing the standard gender roles of such work and re-defining the female character.

Viewed on the loop, *Unsettled Matter* challenges the sequential cannon. The emptiness of the city becomes more and more ominous - only to return to the studio, with the artist suspended and falling again, traversing the vacant city yet again. The viewer is left wondering - disaster, metaphor, journey, or a dream?

Holly Zausner lives in Berlin and New York. She has been the recipient of the DAAD in Berlin and the NY Foundation fellowships. She has shown her work internationally at Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Bode-Museum, Berlin; KW, Berlin; Barbier Mueller Museum, Barcelona; Herbert Johnson Museum, Ithaca, NY; Wuettemberger Kunstverein, Stuttgart; University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN.