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“Accommodating Nature: The Photographs of Frank Gohlke” Fact Sheet

Exhibition

“Accommodating Nature: The Photographs of Frank Gohlke”
Dec. 5 – March 1, 2009

Location

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Eighth and F streets N.W.

Description

For more than 30 years, Frank Gohlke (b. 1942), a leading figure in American landscape photography, has explored the ways Americans build their lives in a natural world that rarely fits within a traditional pastoral ideal. This midcareer retrospective, which captures Gohlke’s long-standing fascination with nature’s proclivities for growth, destruction and unexpected change, features more than 80 photographs—both black-and-white and color prints—spanning the artist’s career from the early 1970s through 2004. Gohlke’s photographs reflect how people interact with an environment that can never fully be controlled. Whether photographing his hometown of Wichita Falls, Texas; the grain elevators that punctuate the vast spaces of the Midwest; the effect of the 1980 volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington state; or the neighborhoods of Queens, N.Y., Gohlke deftly captures the tension between humanity and the natural world, exploring how people adapt to the forces of nature both great and small, even within the confines of their own backyards. The exhibition was organized by John Rohrbach, senior curator of photographs at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas; Toby Jurovics, curator of photography at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, is the coordinating curator in Washington, D.C.

Publication

The catalog, published by the Center for American Places with the Amon Carter Museum, is written by Rohrbach with contributions by Gohlke and cultural historian Rebecca Solnit.

Credit

“Accommodating Nature: The Photographs of Frank Gohlke” is organized by the Amon Carter Museum and is made possible in part by generous support from the Perkins-Prothro Foundation, Exelon Power and the Vin and Caren Prothro Foundation. The Smithsonian American Art Museum wishes to express its thanks to Charles and Judith Moore and Mark Schwartz and Bettina Katz for their support of the exhibition’s presentation in Washington, D.C.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum is located above the Gallery Place/Chinatown Metrorail station. It is open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Museum information (recorded): (202) 633-7970. Web site: americanart.si.edu.

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