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Tom Denlinger

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06.03.08

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Tom Denlinger's thoughtful exhibition—of photographs and a video—challenges notions of the local landscape as bland or static. Denlinger brings to the subject a keen sense of three-dimensional space, the museum context, and representations of landscape in art history. To make *Around the Art Institute of Chicago: Seurat*, 2006, Denlinger re-created in diorama form a heap of garbage entwined in leaves and branches found near the museum, covered it in plastic, projected a slide of Seurat's iconic *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of the Grand Jatte* onto and through it, and photographed the conglomeration. Doing so illuminates the debris and layers a canonized vista on top of a humble patch of land. In the video *Apparition: Salavon*, 2008, Denlinger marks a visual concordance between Chicago-based artist Jason Salavon's video *The Top 25 Grossing Films of All Time*, 2001, recently on view at the Museum of Contemporary Art, with that building's gridded facade. He sets the morphing images to the third movement of Bartók's "Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta," which was also used in the film *The Shining* (1980), and adds an eerily moody undertone. Denlinger confronts complacent viewers with a new, fractured view of the contemporary landscape that not only updates art-historical precedents both canonical and recent but also reanimates our ossified relationship to museums themselves.