

CORKIN GALLERY



Barbara Astman, *Wonderland #25*, 2008

There are endless possibilities for narratives within found objects. Astman is a postcard collector; fascinated with them as syntheses between personal memories and constructed reality. In "On Photography," Susan Sontag speaks to the motives of collecting images from which stories flourish: "To collect photographs is to collect the world. Movie and television programs light up walls, flicker, and go out; but with still photographs the image is also an object, lightweight, cheap to produce, easy to carry about, accumulate, store". Postcards represent a quintessential moment where photography becomes object.

The idea of collecting is significant, as a collection is a form of record in one's life. As a child, postcards and encyclopedias made Astman realize there was a larger world outside of her neighborhood. She would stare at the postcard long enough to imagine herself being there, preferring the postcard version of reality. Astman is most interested in the postcards that represent a naive world void of worldly problems.

Using digital techniques to position the postcards within negative space, Astman captures the feeling of flipping through stacks; harnessing a tension between motion and stillness. The body of work is about the relationship between the real and the artificial, and how experience can occur through artificial representation of the real.