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PLACES AND THINGS--HOLD THE PEOPLE

Pushing people out of the picture, many photographers have been creating emotionally charged tableaux that substitute buildings, rocks, clouds and rubble for human actors. As you can see in "Staging Reality: Photographic Selections From the West Family (SEI) Collection," much of this eerily depopulated, conceptually based photography is beautiful in a kind of sad, romantic way. Works like Christopher Draeger's Catastrophe #2 or Orit Raff's Untitled (Freezer) have longing at their core. And while it's a far cry from Casper David Friedrich's German romanticism, many of the photographs in this exhibit also convey longing for a perfect world--albeit in a postmodern, self-mocking way. With increasing numbers of artists working the symbolic landscape, this exhibit offers a great chance to see the variety of strategies--from "set up" models to computer-mediated collages and real-world panoramas--in use today.

Through Sept. 30. Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, 320 S. Broad St. 215.717.6480. www.uarts.edu