

CRISTIN TIERNEY

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David Opdyke *Waiting for the Future*

March 14 – April 26, 2025

Opening Reception: Friday, March 14, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

219 Bowery, Floor 2
New York, NY, 10002

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present *Waiting for the Future*, a solo exhibition of new works by **David Opdyke**. This is the artist's first solo show at the gallery and his first solo exhibition in New York since his 2022 presentation at the Climate Museum. The exhibition opens Friday, March 14th and will be on view through April 26th, 2025. The artist will be present at the opening reception on March 14th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

Characterized by its meticulous attention to detail and use of found objects, David Opdyke's practice interrogates globalization, consumerism, and humanity's fraught relationship with the

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environment. Since 2016, he has used hand-modified landscape postcards, transforming nostalgic imagery into pointed commentaries on climate change and its impact on the American landscape and politics. Through these carefully altered compositions, Opdyke merges the past and the future, presenting both urgent and inevitable visions of environmental upheaval.

Sourcing hundreds of vintage souvenir postcards from eBay, Opdyke constructs large-scale landscapes showing evolving environmental disasters. The compositions are fractured yet cohesive topographies—amalgamations of mountains, rivers, cities, and infrastructure, all subtly or catastrophically altered by climate change. In *Waiting for the Future*, his latest works render a landscape in flux, where wildfires blaze, floods encroach upon urban centers, and ecological imbalances unexpectedly take shape. Once symbols of idealized American progress, these postcards now stand as cautionary tales, revealing the fragility of the environment we have constructed.



Overlook (2025) exemplifies Opdyke’s recent work. A grid of antique aerial-view postcards presents familiar landscapes—idyllic coastlines, sprawling cities, and lush parks. Yet, on closer inspection, unsettling anomalies emerge: rising waters encroach upon once-thriving metropolises, giant tentacles tear bridges apart, skyscrapers protrude from the ocean like relics of lost civilizations, and fires rage unchecked at the edges. There is also techno-utopianism: a giant dome encloses a city; airplanes trail banners saying, “Technology Will Save Us” and “The Dome: Secure Your Spot;” and a rocket labeled “Mars 2” blasts off as a crowd assembles below in formation, spelling out the message “Take Us Too.” Nature reclaims what humanity has abandoned in some areas, while industrial infrastructure clings desperately to existence in others. This interplay between destruction and adaptation underscores Opdyke’s recurring themes—environmental complacency, the illusion of permanence, and the consequences of inaction.

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Opdyke's exploration of these themes also extends into animation. In 2024, WNET Public Media commissioned him to produce a 30-minute animated film, also titled *Waiting for the Future*, which will premiere on Tuesday, April 8th, 2025, at 8:00 PM (EDT). The film weaves together early 20th-century postcards with contemporary anxieties. Drawing inspiration from filmmaker Terry Gilliam's cut-paper animations and writer Samuel Beckett's existential inquiries, the film illustrates the contemporary American Anthropocene and a tension between nostalgia and impending crisis. "Taking a cold look at the 'good old days' is necessary but unsettling," Opdyke states. "It challenges our faith in progress and forces us to consider whether we face our future with collective action or cynical resignation."

Waiting for the Future offers a stark meditation on environmental collapse and societal inertia. While its premise is fatalistic, the exhibition's dystopian landscapes carry an implicit hope that recognition might inspire change. Through his intricate reconstructions of history and fate, Opdyke compels us to confront what we stand to lose—and what we might still preserve.

David Opdyke's (b. 1969, Schenectady, NY) work explores globalization, consumerism, and civilization's abusive relationship with the environment. In 2022, he collaborated with the Climate Museum in its first pop-up exhibition in Soho. In 2020, Phaidon published a book based on his large-scale postcard project, *This Land*, including essays by Lawrence Weschler and Maya Wiley. Opdyke's work has been exhibited at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Wright Museum, Weatherspoon Art Museum, Museum of Arts and Design, Krannert Art Museum, and North Dakota Museum of Art, among others. His work is held in public collections internationally, including the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Deutsche Bank Collection, Louisiana State University Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art in New York, Wake Forest University Art Museum, Washington Convention Center Authority, Pardon Collection, and more. The artist lives and works in Queens, NY.

Founded in 2010, **Cristin Tierney Gallery** is a contemporary art gallery located on The Bowery with a deep commitment to the presentation, development, and support of a roster of both established and emerging artists. Its program emphasizes artists engaged with critical theory and art history, with an emphasis on conceptual, video, and performance art. Education and audience engagement is central to our mission. Cristin Tierney Gallery is a member of the ADAA (Art Dealers Association of America).

Images (from top)

David Opdyke, *Overlook*, 2025. 42 hand-modified postcards. 32 x 40 inches (81.28 x 101.6 cm).
Detail of David Opdyke, *Overlook*, 2025. 42 hand-modified postcards. 32 x 40 inches (81.28 x 101.6 cm).

Inquiries

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