

## JOHN STATHATOS

Remaining within the conceptual sphere of his previous work in *Three Heraklitan Elements* (1991), *The Gardens of the Hesperides* (1993), *okea: atonements* (1996), the *Book of Lost Cities* (1998) and *Stones* (2006), John Stathatos continues to reflect on the contemporary shaping of the concept of landscape, which he invariably contrasts with the ancient Greek ideal of the natural environment. In his new series *Airs, Waters, Places*—a reference, he explains, to Hippocrates' theory linking the nature of illnesses and their treatment with the environment in which they appear—he confronts us with images drawn from the detritus of the modern consumer society. The rubbish dumps, legal and illegal, that defile the urban fringe and provincial landscape unchecked are photographed in the light of dawn or the warm hues of late afternoon—which is to say, in accordance with the classical principles of landscape photography—to reveal another, suppressed aspect of the Sublime in capitalism's newest manifestations. Apart from its obvious ecological statement, this dystopian view of the landscape expresses a more all-embracing sense of pessimistic disillusionment with modern life which is hinted at in the series' punning Greek title.

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