



*Oak Grove, 2007*

Archival pigment print  
24" x 31"

## ALIA MALLEY

West Coast photographer Alia Malley explores the poignancy of both natural and man-made landscapes that have been deprived of their functionality. Whether barren and discarded, or empty and serene, Malley's images are concerned with the ruins of modernity. Yet rather than focusing on the sublime industrial and architectural behemoths that have come to define the modern to postmodern eyes, Malley often focuses on the more everyday traces of prior pleasures and amusements.

Derelict recreational sites of decades past, including cinemas, amusement parks and motels are captured

bereft of customers and idlers, struggling against their obsolescence like a neon light blinking in and out of luminescence. Looking at Malley's photographs, one is reminded of now ancient cartographies, journeys traversed by mid-century vacationers and urbanites seeking adventure, solitude, the authenticity of the West. One would not be surprised to see Humbert Humbert and his darling Lolita cut through one of Malley's winding forest roads in their wood-paneled van, look furtively around and ponder stopping for the night.

Often photographing places connected to the utopian ideals and visionary

dreams of yesteryear—California, Havana—Malley evokes the forgotten promises of now outdated panaceas, their lures and secrets, the muted mysteries of their past lives. As Malley has written, "The sites in these photographs represent monuments of abandoned idealism. Selected from the series *How Soon is Now* and *These Days*, they illustrate the discernable arc of a modern, material experience: we build stuff, it serves a purpose, we withdraw from it. As opposed to the "before", it's the "after" that I'm interested in—the lost dreams, the deflated optimism. It's not about a resigned nihilism-- any Buddhist or quantum physicist will remind us that nothing is permanent, that everything is constantly evolving. On this level, these images are simply documents of geography, of what gets left behind through the natural course of events."

Alia Malley was born in La Jolla, California, and raised in Portland, Oregon. She has an MFA from UC Riverside and a BA in Critical Film Studies from USC. Her work has been featured in the Riverside Art Museum, SXSW Film Festival, the Hi-Lo Film Festival, the LA International Short Film Festival, the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*. She currently lives in Los Angeles. ([www.aliamalley.com](http://www.aliamalley.com))



*Norwalk, 2005*  
Archival pigment print  
31" x 24"



*Havana, 2004*  
Archival pigment print  
31" x 24"