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Marni Horwitz
DESIRE DESPAIR: Pictures From the Czech Republic

February 7 – March 4, 2006
Opening reception: Thursday, February 9, 6-8pm

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Marni Horwitz, February 7 – March 4, 2006, with a public reception for the artist Thursday, February 9, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. The solo exhibition *DESIRE DESPAIR: Pictures From the Czech Republic* is the main component of the artist's 2005-2006 Fellowship at A.I.R.

In this series, Marni Horwitz uses photography to investigate the melancholy she discovered in Czech culture while living there, off and on, from 1999 to 2005. Her images reveal a duality in Czech daily life, rooted simultaneously in the beauty of its ancient traditions and the contemporary residue of the Soviet regime. Horwitz articulates this layering of cultural heritages: "The culture appealed to me, it seemed rough and intellectual at the same time."

Horwitz's images, whether in color or in black and white, capture this gentle balance of the human element, romantic and spiritual, and the surrounding environment, grim and repressive. Horwitz's work also reveals the contradiction in being a participant observer. She is involved and connected to her subject matter, yet removed by the camera lens and her position as a foreigner. Her own sense of isolation resonates in her photographs. Horwitz explains: "Despite having many close friends and despite my enthusiasm about living in the Czech Republic, I still felt like an outsider. I would be silent for what seemed like days and my spirit became withdrawn. As I observed my friends and my lover, living in a seemingly normal way, speaking in fluent Czech, I began to view them as super figures, and exalted beings. I felt I was becoming smaller and smaller, fading away. During that period I took pictures to document the people, the culture, and the land I admired. I also wanted to document the feeling that I was disappearing."

Horwitz has a degree in Photography from Bennington, VT and studied at the School for Film and Photography in Prague, Czech Republic.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11am to 6pm. For further information, please contact 212. 255. 6651 or visit www.airnyc.org.