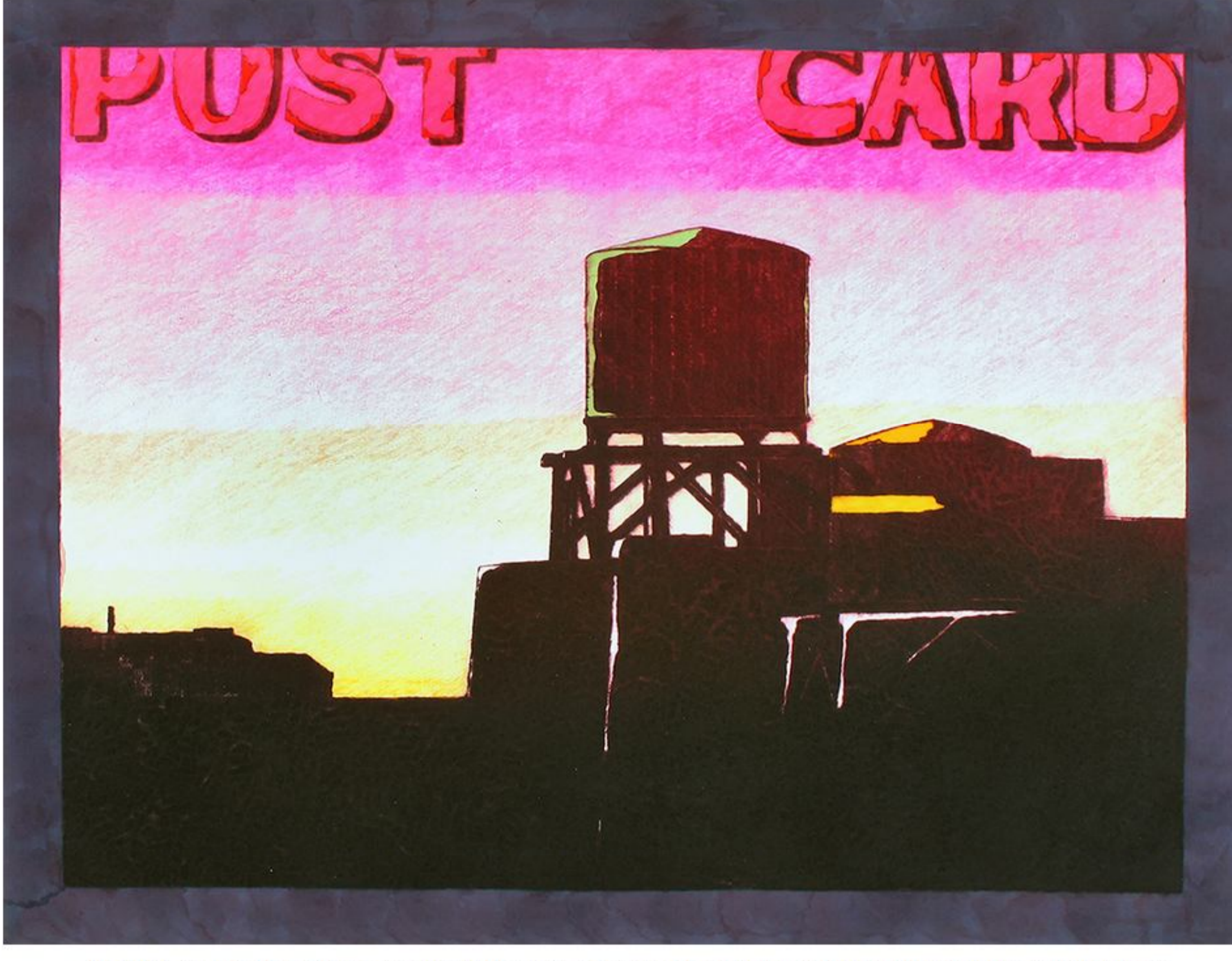


“Jan Sawka: The Place of Memory (The Memory of Place)” opens Feb. 8 at The Dorsky Museum

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Jan Sawka, “Post-Card #32,” (from the series “Post-Cards”), 1987–89, collection Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, gift of the Dorsky Gallery Curatorial Programs

The Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at SUNY New Paltz announces “Jan Sawka: The Place of Memory (The Memory of Place),” a new exhibition featuring expansive paintings and intricate prints from the Polish-born contemporary artist.

The exhibition will be on view from Feb. 8 – July 12 in The Dorsky’s Morgan Anderson Gallery and Howard Greenberg Family Gallery. It is guest curated by filmmaker and educator Hanna Maria Sawka, MFA, and by Frank Boyer, DA, adjunct professor of art education at SUNY New Paltz.

A public opening reception will be held on Saturday, Feb. 8, from 5–7 p.m.

About the Exhibition

Jan Sawka (1946-2012) was a renowned artist whose work is in the collections of more than 60 museums worldwide. Exiled from his native Poland during the Cold War, Sawka lived and worked in the Mid-Hudson Valley from 1985 until his death, conceiving of and producing many of his most notable works in his High Falls studio.

“Jan Sawka: The Place of Memory (The Memory of Place)” illuminates two central aspects of his practice: his fascination with human consciousness, particularly with memory, and his interest in place, and the places through which a human life passes.

Sawka’s working method and artworks were truly visionary, in the sense that he always worked from mental images, open to his own thoughts, emotions, mental associations and memory. His art expresses a deep empathy and a sense of loss that only exile can bring, leavened by an expansive sense of the beauty that art and nature make available to human beings.

This exhibition showcases a sweeping, 12-panel polyptych, “Ashokan 1-4,” depicting a vista of the Ashokan Reservoir framed by the Catskill Mountains, which was beloved by Sawka because it reminded him of his homeland. Also included is a folio of drypoint prints titled “Post-Cards,” which takes viewers on a journey through 36 places of significance as they appeared in the artist’s mind’s eye. For the first time, a manuscript by Jan Sawka recently discovered in the Library of Congress archives will illuminate this artwork from his singular point of view.

“Jan Sawka: The Place of Memory (The Memory of Place)” features works from private collections and from The Dorsky Museum’s permanent collection. This exhibition comes 31 years after a mid-career retrospective of Sawka’s work was exhibited at SUNY New Paltz’s College Art Gallery in 1989, curated by The Dorsky’s founding director, Neil Trager.



Jan Sawka, “Asbury Notebook,” 1981, courtesy Jan and Michael Solow

About The Dorsky Museum

Through its collections, exhibitions and public programs, the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art supports and enriches the academic programs at the College and serves as a center for Hudson Valley arts and culture. With more than 9,000 square feet of exhibition space distributed over six galleries, The Dorsky Museum is one of the largest museums in the SUNY system. Since its official dedication in 2001, The Dorsky has presented more than 100 exhibitions, including commissions, collection-based projects, and in-depth studies of contemporary artists including Robert Morris, Alice Neel, Judy Pfaff, Carolee Schneemann and Ushio Shinohara.

Museum Hours: Wednesday–Sunday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Closed Mondays, Tuesdays, holidays and intersessions. For more information about The Dorsky Museum and its programs, visit <http://www.newpaltz.edu/museum> or call (845) 257-3844.

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1 Hawk Drive
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