

# ANDREW RAFACZ

835 W Washington  
Chicago, IL 60607

info@andrewrafacz.com  
+ 312 404 9188

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact:

Andrew Rafacz

+ 312 404 9188

[info@andrewrafacz.com](mailto:info@andrewrafacz.com)

[www.andrewrafacz.com](http://www.andrewrafacz.com)

**ANDREW RAFACZ** is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of a new video and photograms by Greg Stimac.

Chicago, IL, May 12, 2012 – Andrew Rafacz continues the 2012 season with *The Long Stare*, a new projected video work and photograms by Greg Stimac in Gallery One. This is the artist's fourth exhibition with the gallery and continues through Saturday, July 23, 2012.

Since the beginning of his practice, Greg Stimac has been interested in American history and specifically, historical and cultural moments, whether past or present, that wholly and exclusively represent America. He is interested in what defines us as a country and a people. His work is that of a keen observer and documentarian.

For his new body of work, Stimac was granted access to the Golden Spike (or 'Last Spike'), the ceremonial spike driven by Leland Stanford to connect the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads on May 10, 1869 at Promontory Summit, Utah Territory. This act connected the East and the West and created the First Transcontinental Railroad. The Golden Spike was made of 17.6-karat (73%) copper-alloyed gold, and weighed 14.03 troy ounces (436 g). As the locomotives of the two railroads were drawn face-to-face, the spike was dropped into a pre-drilled hole in the laurel ceremonial last tie, and gently tapped into place with a silver ceremonial spike maul. It was engraved on all four sides with dates and the names of those railroad officers involved in the momentous occasion.

Currently housed in the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, Stimac gained unprecedented access to the spike and under careful supervision of the museum's officials, created a series of gold-toned silver gelatin photograms of the famous historical icon. The spike was placed onto silver gelatin paper, exposed to light and gold toned after development, producing a variety of silver hues, warm to cool. Traditional photograms usually function as a representation of the object. In a way, this is still the case here, but the absence of the object is also highlighted, spurring a notion of undoing and a feeling of incompleteness. The positive image that is left is a white spike, the negative of the real object, with an orbital gradation of light emanating away from it. The reflected light creates a burn along the left side of the image that makes portions of the original's inscription visible.

Stimac also presents a new video work, which shares its title with that of the exhibition. *The Long Stare*, simultaneously referencing our country's historical preoccupation with the West and our general and ongoing preoccupation for nostalgia and looking back, Stimac has collected a found image of the head of George Washington (sourced from the Lansdowne portrait of George Washington, 1796, by Gilbert Stuart). He has subsequently flipped the image and layered a clean file with a poorly compressed one, carefully manipulating the results in order to animate Washington's gaze. At times the first president appears to blink, squint, and even tear up. The final experience is simultaneously unsettling and humanizing. The viewer is aware that the image is taken from an historical portrait, but Stimac's technological application gives the stagnant but stately scene an undercurrent of uncertainty, reflection, and emotion.

**GREG STIMAC** (American, b. 1976) lives and works in San Francisco's Bay Area. He received his B.F.A. from Columbia College, Chicago in 2005 and is currently pursuing his M.F.A. at Stanford. Past exhibitions include *Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes*, which began at The Walker Museum of Art, Minneapolis and traveled to the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh and *USA Today*, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, an exhibition of works from their permanent collection. He was included in *Faraway Nearby* at the Nerman Museum and *FAMILIAR: Portraits of Proximity* at the Kansas City Jewish Museum of Contemporary Art, both in Overland Park, Kansas. Most recent group exhibitions include *Is This Thing On? / Screen Test* at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati and *Self Help Book Club*, Thomas Welton Stanford Art Gallery, Stanford, CA, both 2012. He had a solo exhibition at White Flag Projects in St.

Louis, Missouri, 2010. He is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, UBS, the Wieland Collection, Atlanta, GA and the Ruttenberg Collection, Chicago, IL, among others.