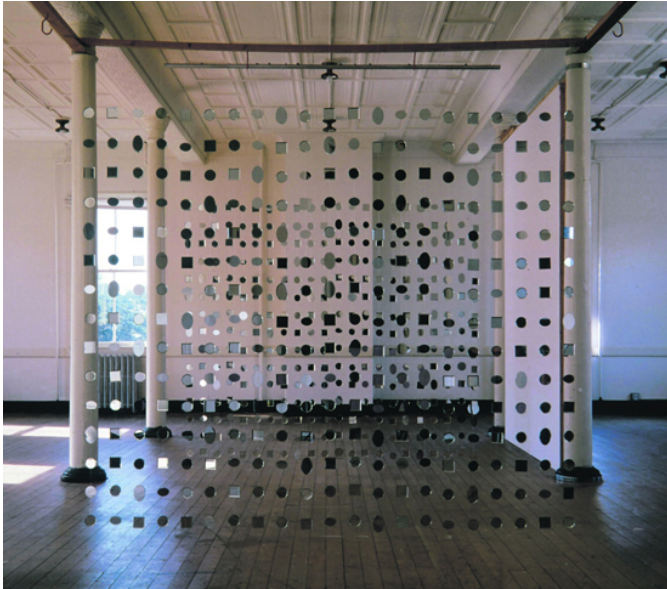


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## The Art of Perception New SMC exhibits offer viewers a unique look at the world around them



Kathryn Van Dyke, "Knowing Me, Knowing You 4" 2010 installation with mirror and microfilament. Photo courtesy of the artist and Stephen Wirtz Gallery, San Francisco

encroachment of "civilization" on the natural world.

Afterglow features work from Thomas Akawie, Helen Lundeberg, Henry Wessel, Michelle Blade, Gina Borg, Claude Collins-Stracensky, Michael Damm, Kathryn Van Dyke, Chris Fraser, Evan Holloway, Ruth Laskey, Laurie Reid, Jonathan Runcio and Dean Smith, whose work keeps the spirit of light and space art alive.

Additionally opened on Aug. 4 was Surfaces, an exhibit of the transformative photography of Lee Saloutos. A perfect complement to the light and space work of Afterglow, Surfaces is a rich photo collection examining the way nature and time act upon human debris - rust patterns on an old shed, bullet holes in a car door - all magnificently transformed by weathering, expertly captured by Saloutos around Nevada and the Great Basin.

"My initial attraction to the debris one finds in high desert was all about the nature of decay," said Saloutos. "The buildings and machinery and vehicles that our commercial, military, and industrial processes leave behind will eventually all sink into the sage. The intense light acts in ways that are not disturbed very much by precipitation, so fantastic patterns of oxidation and discolorations develop."

Like the artists in Afterglow, Saloutos concerns himself with the experience of seeing. "I try to convey the intensity of the light, the very dry air, and the open horizon by (showing) these colors and patterns as clearly as possible ... deliberately obscuring as much as I can about the exact nature and identity of the surface I am working with," he said. "I don't want to see the horizon in any literal sense, but I want the viewer to feel it."

Afterglow will be open through Sept. 29, and Surfaces will run through Sept. 22 Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Continuing through Sept. 29 is Points of View, featuring two of the East Bay's most vibrant contemporary landscape painters, Mary Lou Correia and Paul Kratter. Admission is \$5 for adults, children K-12 free. For information, call (925) 631-3379 or visit [www.stmarys-ca.edu/saint-marys-college-museum-of-art](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/saint-marys-college-museum-of-art).

Afterglow: Rethinking California Light and Space Art opened Aug. 4 in the Saint Mary's College Museum of Art. The exhibition was originated by the Wiegand Gallery at the University of Notre Dame de Namur in Belmont, Calif., and explores the way in which the viewer perceives his or her environment.

"The artists are unified by an interest in California light and space art of the '60s," said exhibition curator Melissa Feldman. "They're playing with perception in various forms - glass, video, and photography." The artists are engaged in an attempt to challenge the way the audience sees through tactics of spacial manipulation, transparency and limits of visibility.

"I wanted to draw attention to the relation between the works, for example the Henry Wessel photo 'Los Angeles,' and the Claude Collins-Stracensky piece next to it ... the way they're photographed is somewhat magical ... the viewer is able to see those spaces in a different way ... distorted, stretched out."

The works additionally center around the tension between the natural and commercial world - a black and white image of Mars up close, lined as though seen through a high powered telescope, or a vast desert-cape photographed from inside a diner - drawing attention to the

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