

# "PLACE IN TIME"

November 2 - December 14, 2008 at  
[Scripps College, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery](#), Claremont

by Roberta Carasso



Idelle Weber, "Nappy Valley,"  
1995, oil on linen, 45 x 45".



Karen Kitchell, "Seasonal Overture:  
Dead Grass: Early Spring," 2006-08,  
oil on panel, 12 x 12".



Rita Robillard, "Orbits III," 2007,  
mixed media on paper, screen  
printing and drawing, 16 x 22".



Monica Furmanski, "Cryptofloro-  
graphy 1," 2007, archival ink  
on paper, 20 x 20".

In "*Place in Time: Contemporary Landscape*," curated by Scripps' own Mary Davis MacNaughton, eight women artists, from different parts of the U.S., look at nature through time and place. Their art--painting, photography, printmaking and digital--is fostered by their individual memories and personal relationships to their landscape.

Landscapes bring to mind the idea of horizon line. Idelle Weber uses this division, creating haunting scenes of a magical, but real East Coast vacation place. The images began as a sizeable series of small monotypes later transferred to canvas. In doing so she maintains the same intimate print-like sensibility, only on a larger scale. Karen Kitchell creates a hybrid vision where the horizon line is abandoned, allowing multiple viewpoints and unrealized distances to take over images of the Western landscape. Many square portraits of intimately observed plants, when mounted together, become a complex grid, so that the small becomes immense. Laurie Brown's photographs are concerned with culture and nurture, evidence of rural places where suburbia meets development. Understated in each image is the heartbreaking speed with which the landscape can be permanently altered.

Even when it is not immediately evident in their work, many in this show reference the great landscape artists from Thomas Cole to Robert Smithson. A good example lies in the way Nancy Friese updates *plein air* to a grand scale where the viewer walks into a landscape made with a contemporary color sensibility and applied with free brushwork. The expansiveness of these bucolic scenes are resplendent with shapes and colors, embracing and holding the viewer in a gentle, abstract caress.

Monica Furmanski combines painting and digital art. These images are mindscapes, portraits that keep the memory of a place alive, a combination of painted abstraction and photography. The work is created in a manner similar to a collage, piecing disparate parts together while enlarging the space and the mystery of the image. Similarly, Rita Robillard creates mental mixed media landscapes. They are poetic cosmologies that hover above the traditional landscape to become enigmatic scenes of mystery and wonder, enhanced by bright color, screen print and drawing. Robillard is the only artist in the show who brings an outer space landscape and strange sea-borne objects into her pictures.

Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin honors the seasons with great delicacy and patience so as to capture the personality of the landscape. There is a stillness to the work of Rubin's small scale art. It exudes the eternality of nature, its monumentality, and how it can continually present us with the most inspiring visions no matter what time of year.

The range of art in the exhibition is impressive and beautiful. The artists breath new life into the traditional landscape from the closely observed to panoramic views of land, sea, and sky. Each artist brings an individual perception that is also deeply feminine--nurturing, sensitive, strong, and convincingly real.