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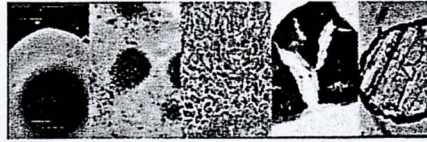
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*Susan Hockaday. North Aspy -4, 1997.
Photograph, 30 x 40 in.*

11/24/02 - 01/19/03

Abstract Photography

Abstract Photography: Richard Caldicott, Susan Hockaday, Kocot and Hatton, Diane Levell, Hilary Lorenz, David Slovic, Peter Tilgner, Brent Wahl, Randy West Since its invention in the nineteenth century, photography has served both art and science. Because of the camera's ability to quickly and efficiently capture images of people, places, and things, photographs have been accorded documentary status. At the same time, however, artists have experimented with cameras and photographic processes in order to create personalized images that subvert the documentary nature of photography. This tendency has increased in recent years as photography, painting, sculpture, installation, and video have merged in current artistic practice. The distinctions between abstraction and realistic work have also been tested as views into the cosmos and through high-powered microscopes have extended our notions of reality to include cellular structure, vast space, and refracting images of light. Since at least the 1950s, photographers have used the camera to create imaginary realities, surreal juxtapositions, and abstractions that may or may not be based in nature. The ten artists in this exhibition who live in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, exploit the camera in a variety of ways in order to make abstract images. Richard Caldicott, Diane Levell, Hilary Lorenz, and Randy West search out abstractions in nature and everyday life. Levell takes photographs of rock formations, sand, and ice, and uses the



Hillary Lorenz. *Cellular Study 1*, 1999. C-print, 21.5 x 69 in.

nineteenth-century methods of cyanotype and gum bichromate to print her 35 millimeter film. Lorenze incorporates twenty-first century science to create her abstractions, using a high-powered microscope to focus on cellular structures that she photographs and combines with found scientific images in large and small-scale constructions. Caldicott and West both photograph common objects of everyday use; Caldicott's subject is the ubiquitous Tupperware container, while West's series of photographs from the Pretty Series are close-ups of fabrics organized in an installation that the artist describes as "an orchestration of compliments and comparisons." In contrast, Susan Hockaday, the artistic team of Kocot and Hatton, and Brent Wahl arrive at their photographic abstractions through a variety of more or less labor intensive processes. Wahl constructs temporary models that become the focus of elaborate photo shoots complete with mirrors and lights, in effect, photographing an illusion. Hockaday incorporates nature into her procedure by submerging drawings in flowing water and photographing the process as bits of sand, rocks, and detritus accumulate on top of the drawing and sunlight plays over the surface of the water. Kocot and Hatton use photography as an element in their conceptual activities. The photographic works in this exhibition are from their 70 Miles Per Hour Series in which one of the pair drives the New Jersey Turnpike while the other takes photographs of the landscape rushing past. The artists refer to the series (ongoing since 1997) as a "visual homage to Albert Einstein's thoughts on relative velocity and four vectors." Yet another route to abstraction lies in the process of collage. David Slovic uses multiples of a single photograph to create layered compositions while Peter Tilgner combines disparate photographic images, transfers the photo-montage into a digital file, and prints a single copy. While his method is photographic, the final result is a digital print.

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