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Period G, Mr. Hoy
December 4, 2001*

Allan Hayes: Experimentation with Light

Upon first impression, the exhibit room, located in a newly converted warehouse, appears bare, cold, and low-key. But once I stepped inside and saw the lavishly and meticulously prepared photos, all prior notions about the exhibit ceased. Bedecking the Matt Weston (grandson of Edward) designed interior walls are some 20 huge, full color prints. The digital images, scanned from color-saturated films, are a treat to any eye. With subject matter ranging from turtles to lava, Hayes covers a broad spectrum of colors and moods, ranging from serene turquoise and pink to austere charcoal.

One series of pictures in particular caught my eye. A photo of mono lake was digitally manipulated so that all shades except for one particular aspect of each photo were a bright shade of red or pink. Hayes then highlighted one part of the photo, such as the shadow of the shrubs, the golden tips of the shrubs, or the tufa mounds, and colored them separately from the bright red masking. I thought this was a very interesting way to catch the attention of the viewer using a darker color in front of a light color rather than the more orthodox system of using a light object contrasting a dark background to catch the viewer's eye.

Another photo that I found very interesting was of a bright green fern in the middle of a barren lava field, titled "Crater Fern". Although the fern itself is dead centered, strong lines on the plant led your eye outward to the intricate curling stalks, and the vibrant spring green contrasts

strikingly with the dark, sooty lava, drawing your attention to the lines of the fern. Tiny green fern stalks grow in the background. I believe the message of the photo is one of hope; that life can resume from a disaster, and that not all is lost in

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what may seem like a horrible nadir of one's existence. Hayes also shows an exceptional ability to bring order to the chaotic through his photos. One example that stood out was entitled "Stones in my Passway," which pictured bright-orange and brown rocks under flowing water. The water captured light from the sun and organized it into wavy, mathematical columns, flowing around and over the rocks. The composition of the lines was intricate; the eye could wander from line to line and explore the bright stones. What drew my eye to the photo was that despite the rocks being strewn at random in the stream, and the fact that water can be the

most capricious of subjects considering its ability to flow anywhere, the perfect lines illuminated by the water give the eye a resting place from the erratic placement and color of the rock.

Personally, I loved the exhibit. I thought Hayes' work showed mastery in creating mood and purpose with color. A print showing a slow turtle, covered in algae, swimming through the green waters of a dilapidated pond once owned by King Kamehameha gave a sense of calm and tranquility in the aftermath of what was once great. The clouds illuminated by the sunlight

reflected off the water combined with the relaxing green kept a sense of calm, despite the bright colors. I liked Hayes ability to bring beauty to the simplest of things; bare rock. He uses warm light to illuminate particularly colorful sections of lava, showing patterns within the lava that would have gone unnoticed to a passerby.

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Hayes shows a remarkable sense of seeing through the lens, seeing “photographically,” everywhere he goes. This allows him to create patterns and shapes from seemingly random, formless subjects. Although color

photography has yet to be accepted as a mainstream type of art, (haven't we all heard that one before!), Mr. Hayes work brings form to the formless, thus creating emotion from where once there was nil, and that is the most widely accepted definition of art we have so far; as long as the art changes someone's emotion, then it shall be called art. Mr. Hayes' work is certainly worthy of being called fine art.

Pieces of the Planet

The beauty of the things themselves