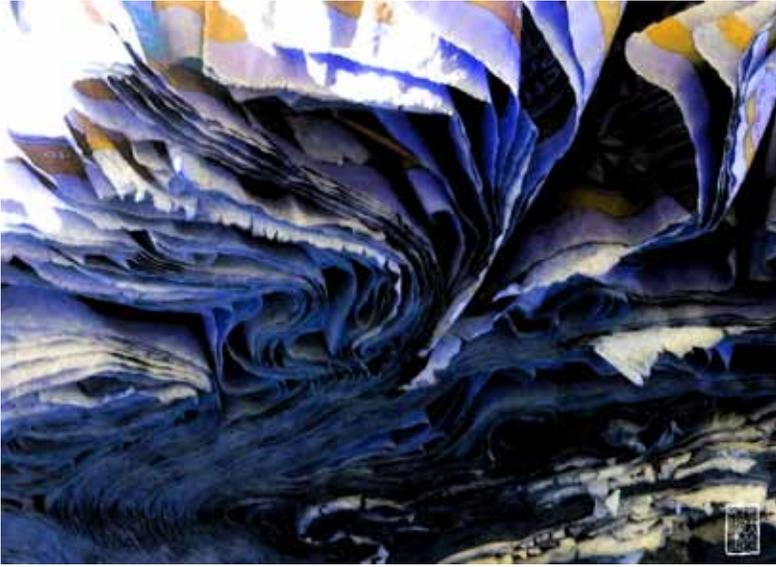


Abandoned

Dec. 14, 2012 - April 17, 2013

Connections Café



Telephone Book II by Christina Barnes

This exhibition examines the idea of abandonment and how objects or spaces are rejected and left behind by the people who used them. Prior to the exhibition, the artists had not met each other, yet both artists portray the hidden beauty and life that can be found in society's discarded remnants. Christina Barnes's digitally manipulated photos of trash found in an empty field along her daily dog-walking path is meant to teach people to take a second glance when they come across trash on the road. Matthew Picon's works are a pairings of images and sculptures of abandoned spaces that are part of a larger series of works entitled, *transPLANT*, which explores the purposes and uses of these sites and nature's struggle to reclaim them.

The Artists

Christina Barnes is a self-taught artist who has been making art her entire life. She has lived in the valley for the past 15 years and is originally from Southern California. For 11 years, she and her husband owned a business brokerage company; however, she decided it was not for her and left to work full-time in her studio. Today she paints, sculpts and designs jewelry and textiles and sells her art on her online store, Melted Butterfly Arts. www.meltedbutterflyarts.com

"I try to make trash pretty or at least something that might elicit a second glance. We always will have trash on the roads; it is a fact of life. I take my camera with me when I walk my dog in the mornings, and I have passed the same upturned disgusting sofa in the same empty field for six years. Future trash is a certainty. Something that was important to someone once is cast along the side of the road without a second thought. I decided to look at the discarded items differently: more as shapes, textures, forms sculpted by the elements, giving birth to the inner beauty of road trash."

Matthew Picon was born in Whittier, Calif. He studied photography for nine years in Santa Barbara, Norwalk and Fullerton, Calif., and is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Intermedia at Arizona State University. Today he works primarily on art installations throughout the valley, incorporating printmaking, found objects, multimedia and photographs. www.mattpicon.com

"I wanted to explore the relevance and purposes of abandoned sites and how these particular spaces are appropriated or utilized. Through planting desert tolerant plants within an abandoned environment, I am discussing the connections between the misuse and false designation placed on natural sites and the struggles nature pursues in reclaiming that same space. The site-specific installation was juxtaposed with materials being gathered from that site and replanted in pots, as symbolic gestures of rejuvenation and ironic hope of continuing to build to satisfy our needs."