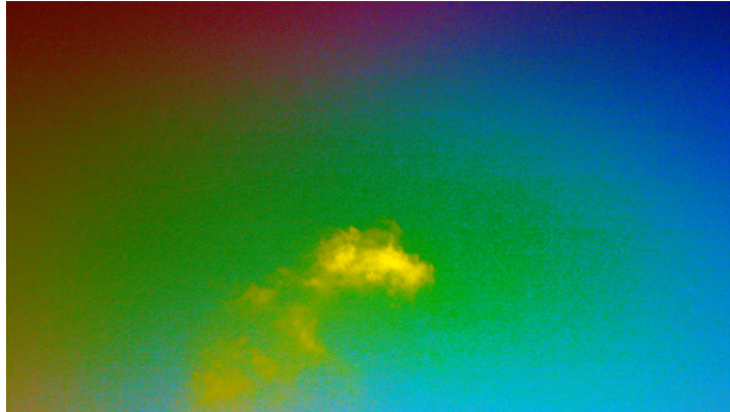


TIF SIGFRIDS

Los Angeles Times

Review: Marten Elder at Tif Sigfrids Gallery



Marten Elder, "pr32," 2015, pigment print (Tif Sigfrids Gallery)

MARCH 27, 2015, 12:30 PM

One of Marten Elder's six large-format pigment prints at Tif Sigfrids shows the prickly pads of a Nopal cactus against an urban stucco wall, bathed in riveting hues. They range from scarlet and deep purple to lime green and palest blue. It's not like any plant you've ever seen. Call it urban cactus – a thorny conflation of culture and nature.

That might also be one way to describe Elder's absorbing photographs.

The seemingly artificial color palette is actually natural, recorded through technological advancements. Elder uses a camera that records light in the electromagnetic spectrum beyond what the human eye can see. It's there, just beyond the visible spectrum. We might not perceive the crimson and lime when we look at a front yard cactus, but the camera does.

Elder sometimes digitally merges more than one photograph to create large, flat, two-dimensional pictorial surfaces that are sharply focused, top to bottom, like a painting. When space collapses in his picture of a clover-studded lawn, you're tempted to look for traces of a lunar lander. We must be in outer space.

Perhaps the most compelling image shows a wispy cloud floating in the sky – a lemon yellow cloud trailing green atmosphere through a speckled blue, violet and orange expanse. In Elder's color-field photographs, Alfred Stieglitz's famous series of cloud pictures from the 1920s and early 1930s has found a new, thoroughly unexpected equivalent.

Tif Sigfrids Gallery, 1507 Wilcox Ave., Hollywood, (323) 907-9200, through April 25.
Closed Sun. and Mon. www.tifsigfrids.com

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