

Drash Pit

Eye Openers



Casey Williams: Non-Linear Illustrations of Thought

Rebecca S. Cohen

Houston-based photographer Casey Williams records images that others blindly pass by—debris discovered on a West Texas ranch, a rusted hull in Houston’s Ship Channel, microwave towers and water tanks and the trash left behind by the homeless. The good, the bad and the ugly. He has long been drawn to the charged relationship between the natural world and the manmade objects that intrude at every turn.

With 40 years experience behind the camera and a significant technological advantage—his Hasselblad, modified for the digital age, easily trumps your Coolpix—the artist manipulates and enhances the viewer’s experience, sometimes by creating the illusion of depth and at others by flattening space. Through his lens Williams organizes quotidian scenes, engaging the viewer in a conversation about “how something that might be repellent in life becomes beautiful” as part of the formal structure of a photograph. The resulting discreet objects, photographic prints on paper, silk or metal sized from two to ten feet square, transcend their humble origins.

Lately Williams has been producing limited edition books, each one focused on a particular locale. He regards these as his “workbooks,” non-linear illustrations of his thought process, an attempt to “spill the beans” about the way he visits and revisits specific places over time, takes photo after photo and singles out the images that demand special attention. The artist’s works are now included in corporate and museum collections including the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, France and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and he is represented by Holly Johnson Gallery in Dallas.

“I think I’m in the learning process now,” says Williams. But he is, in fact, more teacher than student. Through the experience of his photographs the rest of us learn to see more clearly.

Rebecca S. Cohen has been a decades long supporter of the visual arts in Austin as a volunteer, a gallery owner, art consultant and arts writer. In 2004 the University of Texas Press published her book *Art Guide Texas*, a listing of the state’s museums, art centers, alternative spaces and nonprofit galleries.

