

THE MOJAVE PROJECT @ LACE

Curated by Kim Stringfellow

September 15 – November 18, 2018

www.mojaveproject.org

LIST OF WORKS

Front Room:

MOJAVE SIGN (2017)

Aluminum, LED lighting, plywood with various objects and materials including discarded vintage miner's debris collected from Beatty, NV and raw ulexite and tincal from the Rio Tinto Borax Mine, Boron, CA. Image of BrightSource's Ivanpah solar panels photographed by Gilles Mingasson.

Main Room starting from northeast wall:

TIME MAGAZINE MAP OF THE MOJAVE DESERT (1955)

This vintage Time Magazine illustrated map of the Mojave Desert originally published July 25, 1955.

Photographs on the east wall:

KING CLONE CREOSOTE, Lucerne Valley, CA (2014)

In a few unspoiled areas of the Mojave Desert the ubiquitous creosote (*Larrea tridentate*) has persisted continuously for thousands of years in its clonal form. The most famous specimen known within these rare clonal colonies is King Clone, a 22- by 8-meter creosote ring located in Lucerne Valley, California that is estimated by botanists to be around 11,700 years old. The organism was first identified and carbon-dated by Dr. Frank Vasek of University of California, Riverside during the 1970s. Vasek's discovery illuminated profound evidence on what we consider life itself: Rather than limiting mortality of an organism to the lifespan of a single plant, these clonal species suggest vast, existential possibilities of lineage that encompasses all biology—plant, animal or human—on this planet.

PAULINE ESTEVES, TIMBISHA SHOSHONE ELDER AND ACTIVIST, Timbisha, CA (2015)

Death Valley's original name is Tüpipüh, what the region's original inhabitants, the Timbisha Shoshone, call their ancestral homeland. When Death Valley became a national monument on February 11, 1933 it was done so under the presumption that this "uninhabited" wilderness had no permanent residents—a determination that conveniently discounted the Timbisha who have resided here from time immemorial. Timbisha activists including Pauline Esteves, now 93, challenged the federal government's authority that had denied them recognition as a sovereign nation until 1983. In 2000, Timbisha were awarded their permanent land base within the boundaries of the national park.

BATHERS AT TECOPA NATURAL HOT SPRINGS, Tecopa, CA (2016)

The hamlet of Tecopa, known to desert travelers for its exceptional mineral hot springs, lies in an otherworldly realm of mud encrusted badlands along CA State Route 127 at the eastern side of Death Valley National Park. Tecopa features several spartan spas where one can take the waters. Over the years Tecopa's natural mineral springs and commercial spas have become popular with vacationing Korean Americans who are known for their strong social bathing culture.

THUNDERSTORM, OCTOBER 18, 2015, Death Valley National Park, CA (2015)

Over a two-week period during October 2015, a series of severe, record-breaking "unusual storms" pummeled Death Valley National Park unleashing flash floods throughout the area. The storm's aftermath destroyed parts of Scotty's Castle along with several campgrounds, roads and other scenic areas. This photograph was taken near Stovepipe Wells looking south on October 18, 2015—considered to be the worst storm event of the two-week period.

CLIMBER ON INTERSECTION ROCK, Joshua Tree National Park, CA (2017)

Joshua Tree National Park has a long, rich climbing history that has fostered a diverse community of permanent residents within the Morongo Valley. Alexis Sonnenfeld, a 23-year resident of Joshua Tree is shown free climbing West Chimney, Intersection Rock, a popular landmark area for climbers and tourists alike at the crossroads of Quail Springs Road and the Hidden Valley Campground.

ARTIST MONTY BRANNIGAN, Darwin, CA (2016)

Self-taught Darwin artist Monty Brannigan at his home shown with his portraits of Charlton Heston, Robert Redford and Tom Selleck. Darwin is tiny community just west of Death Valley with 35 full-time residents—many are artists. During its heyday in the 1870s, Darwin was known as a hardscrabble silver boomtown boasting 3,500 residents, 60 mines, 5 smelters, 7 saloons and not a single church. The mine itself has remained active until recent years. Monty passed in fall 2016.

VICTORVILLE, CA (2018)

Downtown Victorville photographed from the Mojave Narrows showing a stretch of historic U.S. Route 66. The Mojave Desert towns of Victorville, Barstow and Needles cling to nostalgia for America's most famous thoroughfare with murals, signage and in some cases, beautifully restored buildings celebrating the "Mother Road's" colorful past while many existing businesses along the main corridor suffer economic decline.

THE MCSTAY FAMILY BURIAL SITE, Victorville, CA (2016)

On November 13, 2013, partially unearthed human remains were discovered by a recreating dirtbike rider just off Quarry Road in an OHV recreation area just northeast of Victorville, CA. This grim discovery, a mere stone's throw from the heavily traveled Interstate-15, was the later confirmed to be the missing McStay family of four. The couple along with their two young sons had mysteriously vanished without of a trace on February 4, 2010 from their home in Fallbrook, California some 100 miles south of where the slain family had been hastily buried. This photograph was featured in a field dispatch that explores true crime occurring in public lands of the Mojave Desert

GIANT ROCK, Landers, CA (2014)

Giant Rock, an immense free-standing boulder of igneous quartz monzonite, formed some 65 to 136 million years ago in Landers, California that unexpectedly cleaved in two on February 21, 2000. Years before Giant Rock mysteriously split, this apartment-sized monolith achieved widespread notoriety. During the Great Depression, an eccentric prospector would tunnel underneath it to build his home. The boulder's next tenant would claim that a friendly extraterrestrial visitor had provided the design for the nearby domed time-travel machine known as the Integratron. For seventeen years this was the site of the Giant Rock Interplanetary Spacecraft Convention that reportedly attracted 1,200 to 11,000 attendees, depending on what year and the source cited.

RUINS OF RHYOLITE, NV (2018)

In 1904, prospectors Frank "Shorty" Harris and Ed Cross located a chunk of greenish, high-grade gold ore resembling a bullfrog. Their lucrative find would draw hoards of gold seekers and speculators to an area four miles east of Beatty, Nevada. Rhyolite, the crown jewel of the Bullfrog District, was established and platted in 1905. The town grew rapidly boasting three railroad lines, banks, saloons, schools, newspapers, electricity, running water and other 20st century conveniences. By 1906, the population had boomed to 6,000 or more but due to a regional economic downturn in 1907 and the closure of the Montgomery Shoshone Mine in 1910, the town had busted. By 1920, only 14 residents remained.

SHEEPHERDER, near Kramer Junction, CA (2016)

A Peruvian shepherd is shown texting while watering his flock along U.S. Route 395, about seven miles north of Kramer Junction, California. In the distance is the defunct Boron Air Station closed in 1975. This refitted military base housed about 47 minimum security federal prisoners until 2000, when it too was closed. The distinctive "golf ball" radar dome, originally managed by Edwards Air Force Base, is still in use by the FAA for aircraft flight tracking. (Source: CLUI). The image shows the conflation of diverse military, federal, and private industry making use of Mojave Desert public lands.

VIDEO FEATURES on south wall:

THE MOJAVE PROJECT (2015)

Runtime: 11:49.

Produced by KCET Artbound in 2015 this clip provides a project overview by Kim Stringfellow. Also featured: Gem-O-Rama in Trona, land speed racing at El Mirage and rockhounding with David Eyre of Desert Discoveries in Boron, CA.

DARWIN' DREAMING (2016)

Runtime: 7:07.

Darwin Dreamin' is a short film produced by Kim Stringfellow featuring artists and residents of Darwin, California, a tiny desert mining outpost at the gateway to Death Valley.

AMARGOSA OPERA HOUSE (2016)

Runtime: 4:56.

Amargosa Opera House is a short film produced by Kim Stringfellow featuring the voice Marta Becket recorded on November 28, 2015.

Photographs on the west wall:

ROCK NOVACK, Ballarat, CA (2015)

Ballarat is a late nineteenth century ghost town located in Panamint Valley just outside Death Valley National Park's boundaries. Founded as a supply depot for mines of the Panamint Range in 1896, the town busted, like many others in 1905. Infamous gold prospectors such as Shorty Harris and Seldom Seen Slim, frequented the town during its heyday which was said to host up to 500 itinerant residents and seven saloons. Today the town is largely deserted except for a couple of gentlemen, including Rock Novak, who run a storefront catering to off-road enthusiasts and tourists.

HOOVER DAM, Boulder City, NV (2018)

During the Great Depression, thousands of unemployed workers traveled to the far eastern Mojave Desert to find employment building Boulder Dam between 1931 and 1936. During the construction of this concrete arch-gravity monolith, designed to store irrigation water, produce electricity and control flooding, over 100 workers lost their lives. Renamed Hoover Dam in 1947, Lake Mead provides water for 18 million people in Arizona, Nevada and California in addition to irrigation water for over 1,000,000 acres of land.

Grid of 72 photographs on the west wall:

All photographs by Kim Stringfellow unless otherwise noted below. Images are listed left to right from top to bottom. Refer to the wall display to scan a QR code using your smart phone to listen to an audio story associated with a particular photograph. Complimentary ear buds are available in LACE's store.

Column 1

1. Spent ordnance recycling bins, Marine Corps Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC), Twentynine Palms, CA, 2015. 2. Sealed mine shaft, Darwin, CA, 2016 3. Marta Becket, Death Valley Junction, CA, 2016. 4. Interstate 40, Needles, CA, 2016.

Column 2

1. Sound bath at the Integratron, Landers, CA, 2018. 2. Jack Costella's Nebulous Theorem XI, SCTA Time Trials, El Mirage, CA, 2014. 3. Valley Fever awareness campaign, Mojave, CA, 2018. 4. Rio Tinto Borate Mine, Boron, CA, 2016.

Column 3

1. Jim Houtz (second from left) with dive team at Devils Hole circa early 1960s, Death Valley National Park, Ash Meadows, NV. Image courtesy of Jim Houtz. 2. Water tank, Adelanto, CA, 2018. 3. Fort Mojave elder Drusilla Burns with her granddaughter Ashley Hemmers at the 17th Ward Valley Reunion, Ward Valley, CA, 2015. 4. Mojave Test Pilot School, Mojave, CA, 2015.

Column 4

1. California State Prison, Los Angeles County, Lancaster, CA, 2017. 2. Andrew Fitzpatrick, Interpretive Ranger for the Providence Mountain State Recreation Area, photographed in Mitchell Caverns, CA, 2018. 3. Gold nugget display, First Class Miners, Joshua Tree, CA, 2015. 4. Miner's dugout, Shoshone, CA, 2015.

Column 5

1. Wild burros in Wildrose area, Death Valley National Park, CA, 2016. 2. "Trona or Bust," Gem-O-Rama, Trona, CA, 2104. 3. Tourists, Bad Water, Death Valley National Park, CA, 2016. 4. Jack Costella, legendary land speed racer and designer, El Mirage, CA, 2014.

Column 6

1. Keturah Corbin (Hondata/RodRiders) with her Acura RSX, SCTA Time Trials, El Mirage, CA, 2015. 2. Matt Levias Sr., Chemehuevi elder and scholar, Lake Havasu, CA, 2018. 3. Bonanza Springs Watchable Wildlife Area, CA, 2017. 4. E Clampus Vitus historical marker for the Integratron, Landers, CA, 2018.

Column 7

1. Wild bighorn sheep at Hemenway Park, Boulder City, CA, 2018. 2. ROC Launch, Lucerne Valley, CA, 2018. 3. A panel from by Lewis deSoto's 2016 "Carlota," a permanent, site specific art installation along the Oasis of Mara nature trail at the Twentynine Palms National Park Visitor Center, Twentynine Palms, CA, 2018. 4. Ruins of the early 20th century townsite of Rhyolite, NV, 2018.

Column 8

1. Gram Parsons memorial, Joshua Tree Inn, Joshua Tree, CA, 2016. 2. Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). Photographed by David Lamfrom, Director of the National Parks Conservation Association's California Desert and National Wildlife program. 3. Jim Wharff, First Class Miner's Middle Camp claim, Eagle Mountains, CA, 2016. 4. "Welcome to Mojave," Mojave, CA, 2018.

Column 9

1. Reyner Banham, Silurian Dry Lake, CA, 1981. Photographed by Tim Street-Porter. 2. "TV Rock" (ulexite) for sale at Desert Discoveries, Boron, CA, 2015. 3. Flight test patches, National Test Pilot School, Mojave, CA, 2015. 4. Dave Catching, Rancho de La Luna recording studio, Joshua Tree, CA, 2017.

Column 10

1. Oatman Hotel and Dollar Bill Bar, Oatman, AZ, 2018. 2. Former lodging at Zzyzx, CA, 2017. 3. Borax Visitor Center, Boron, CA, 2014. 4. Vendor cart at Afghan Village, Marine Corps Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC), Twentynine Palms, CA, 2015.

Column 11

1. Devils Hole pupfish (*Cyprinodon diabolis*), Devils Hole, Death Valley National Park, Ash Meadows, NV. Photographed by Olin Feuerbacher, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. 2. Hal Newell, Darwin, CA, 2015. 3. Mojave Boneyard with Tehachapi Wind Farm in distance, Mojave, CA, 2015. 4. Jackie Robinson Park, Sun Village, CA, 2018.

Column 12

1. Petroglyphs, Saline Valley, CA, 2016. 2. Steve Hartenstine, First Class Miner's Middle Camp claim, Eagle Mountains, CA, 2016. 3. Giant Rock, Landers, CA, 2014. 4. Barbara Durham, Timbisha Shoshone elder and activist, Timbisha, CA, 2015.

Column 13

1. UFO vendor display, Contact in the Desert, Joshua Tree, CA, 2016. 2. The Space Shuttle Columbia landing on Rodgers Dry lakebed at Edwards Air Force Base after completing its first orbital mission on April 14, 1981. Image courtesy of NASA. 3. David Eyre, owner of Desert Discoveries, Boron, CA, 2015. 4. Angel's Ladies Brothel, Beatty, NV, 2015.

Column 14

1. Harrah's, Laughlin, NV, 2018. 2. Magdalene Lawrence, Mayor of Sun Village, CA, 2018. 3. Crystal Pool, Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, NV 2015. 4. Ed Solski, Chief Flight Test Instructor, National Test Pilot School, Mojave, CA, 2015.

Column 15

1. ROC Launch, Lucerne Valley, CA, 2016. 2. Desert Drugs, Kingman, AZ, 2018. 3. "Operation Iraqi Freedom" by Don Gray (2004), Twentynine Palms, CA, 2018. 4. A patch of desert behind a suburban housing tract between 50th and 60th Street West and Avenue J in Lancaster, CA that has tested positive for coccidioidomycosis spores by Dr. Antje Lauer, an expert on the microbial aspects of valley fever, 2018.

Column 16

1. National Park Service (NPS) diver in Devils Hole, NV. Photographed by Brett Seymor (NPS) in April 2016. Image courtesy of NPS. Antelope Valley housing development, Palmdale, CA, 2017. 2. Kubo (Hells Belles Racing), SCTA Time Trials, El Mirage, CA, 2015. 3. Willie Boy interpretive display, Malki Museum, Morongo Reservation, Banning, CA, 2018. 4. Collecting pink halite at Gem-O-Rama, Searles Lake, Trona, CA, 2014.

Column 17

1. Patti and Jesse, Wagon Wheel, Needles, CA, 2016. 2. Antelope Valley housing subdivision, Palmdale, CA, 2017. 3. Amargosa Opera House, Death Valley Junction, CA, 2015. 4. Linda and Donovan Leitch, Joshua Tree, CA, 2015.

Column 18

1. BrightSource Energy's Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System. Photographed by Gilles Mingasson. 2. Zachary Reeder, Test Pilot at Scaled Composites, Mojave, CA, 2018. 3. Walter Cotten, Racetrack, Death Valley National Park, CA, 2007. Photographed by Paul Redmond. 4. Crystal Cave entrance, Kokoweef Mine, CA, 2016.

The two steel lighbox tables in center of room display a personal collection of books, mineral specimens, ephemera and various objects related to the Mojave Desert from the personal collection of Kim Stringfellow.