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**Amalgam:** *Christopher Cook, Michael Mazur, Katy Stone, Letha Wilson*

March 1 through April 21, 2012

Opening reception: Thursday, March 1, 6-8 PM

Mary Ryan Gallery is pleased to present *Amalgam*, an exhibition of painting, photography, sculpture and installation by Christopher Cook, Michael Mazur, Katy Stone and Letha Wilson. Each of these artists takes inspiration from the natural world, and through their particular choice of medium, transforms the familiar into something sublime, surreal and often otherworldly. Whether celestial, cellular, earthbound, or imagined, the works included here provide a new view of the natural world, full of dualities, contradictions, and hybrids.

Christopher Cook is known for his use of liquid graphite (a mixture of graphite powder, oil, and resin) to create works that exist somewhere between painting and drawing. The works included in "Amalgam" appear as landscapes, but they reference the biological terrain of the human body. Both *Hook* and *Probing*, neither of which has been previously exhibited, emphasize notions of intrusion and human interference in the 'natural' course of events.



Katy Stone - *Little Universe (infinite loop)*, 2012

Whether representational or abstract, Michael Mazur's work was always rooted in nature. On view here is *Field*, a large-scale painting from 1996. This vibrant, multilayered abstraction, overflowing with color and the cascading forms is typical of Mazur's work from the late 1990s. Also on view is a selection of charcoal and ink wash drawings that served as the catalyst for Mazur's "Rocks and Water" series from the early 2000s.

Katy Stone's sculpture and installations draw on natural processes of transformation, regeneration, and decay. Using cut and painted Duralar (archival acetate), steel, or aluminum Stone creates organic compositions that seem to expand in pursuit of the infinite. Whether small-scale or monumental, Stone's work appears fragile, yet enduring. *Little Universe (Infinite Loop)*, a site-specific ten-foot installation, places individual painted Duralar starburst-like shapes around groupings of forms resembling tiny explosions. Making use of the shadows cast by the sculptural elements, the work has an ethereal glow, appearing at once both fantastical and familiar.

Letha Wilson's photo-sculptures make bold alterations to the American wilderness. They are studies in the relationship between architectural space and nature, and call into question the photograph's ability to accurately translate the natural world it depicts. Wilson uses the natural landscape as point of confrontation, approaching the genre with equal parts reverence and skepticism. In *Rock Face*, on view here, a constructed boulder is smashed against a photograph of Flaming Gorge Recreation Area, creating the illusion of the photograph buckling and crumpling against the gallery wall.

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