

JOURNEY THROUGH THE DESERT – THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Journey Through The Desert – The Road Less Traveled features work by nineteen American photographers – beginning with an expansive presentation on the archive of Stephen H. Willard (1894-1966) who captured the natural beauty of the desert in the early part of the 20th century. The show continues with contemporary images taken at the end of the century by various photographers including John Divola, Lee Friedlander, Karen Halverson, Wanda Hammerbeck, Mark Klett, Richard Misrach, Mark Ruwedel, and eleven others.

The artists in this exhibition deliberately push the visual boundaries of desert photography in surprisingly new directions. Our selection of works seeks to examine the individual photographer's distinct visions and unique journeys through the American deserts of the West.

Organized into three major themes, *Land/Sky*, *Abandoned/Forgotten Places*, and *Tracks in the Sand*, the installation loosely suggests a visual narrative that begins with the photographer's journey through the land, from panoramic views to distant and isolated places. The recurring theme of the photographer's vehicle reflects its importance in their exploration of the vast desert. For example, Willard has documented the challenges he faced prior to the development of paved roads, air conditioned vehicles, and convenience rest stops. The visual journey continues as artists reveal the often problematic relationship between human interactions with the natural landscape. Others focus the camera on the allure and beauty of the desert in contrast with the harsh reality of the extreme environment.

This exhibition is organized from the permanent collection of the Palm Springs Art Museum by Christine Giles, Curator, and Katherine Hough, Chief Curator. It is funded by Harold B. Matzner and the museum's Western Art Council and Photography Collection Council.

The Desert Sun is the exhibition media sponsor.