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Naturally Unnatural

KYLE HARRIS NOVEMBER 27, 2014

Experimental filmmaker Vincent Grenier's work resists the idea of pristine, untarnished nature — something that, in any case, is difficult to find.

"Nature has been almost totally mediated by human interventions," Grenier notes. "All the forests in the Northeast, for example, are young forests, as the area was completely deforested at the turn of the century. Roads and bridges have been built everywhere, not to mention the effect of agriculture, in some places mining, and the presence of buildings. It is increasingly impossible not to hear cars and trucks in a landscape, or even in a forest, because of the density of roads."

While he rarely features people in his landscape movies, Grenier often suggests traces of humans lurking on the edges of the frame or rumbling in the soundtrack's background. His use of superimposition, color alteration and dissolves asserts mankind's presence, too.

"Color Study" shows a cluster of trees on a hillside; "Watercolor" looks at a river and a bridge; "Les Chaises" studies two chairs; and "Tabula Rasa" depicts the inside of a high school. Grenier's subjects are so banal that most filmmakers would reduce them to props or locations in stories with a larger narrative. But Grenier invites the audience to look at these simple objects and spaces in hundreds of provocative ways, creating their own narrative.

Grenier will host a free program of his works at 7 p.m. tonight at Counterpath, 613 22nd Street. Writer and artist Amy Letter will also give a presentation. For more information, go to counterpathpress.org.
Sun., Nov. 30, 7 p.m., 2014

<https://www.westword.com/arts/naturally-unnatural-6018210>