

Tim Simmons: Transition of Light

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Photography and time enjoy a peculiar relationship: while accurate measure of time may be critical for a successful photographic exposure, no matter how long or short it may be, the resulting image – unlike in the moving image – only ever appears to represent a fleeting moment and never the actual duration of the exposure. For most photography this merits little consideration, yet when it comes to capturing the ever-changing and evolving external environment, this phenomenon begins to bear some relevance.

In these two very different triptychs, we are treated to a glimpse of Tim Simmons' aesthetic and conceptual concerns. Simmons' work places the viewer on the edge of reality, by forcing the viewer to question or simply wonder at the scene before him. Simmons' intervenes with the landscape and the pattern of nature by carefully introducing artificial lighting, thus creating his own photographic illusions which sometimes complement the ambient light, but more often deliberately subvert and disturb any sense of visual or organic harmony.

Simmons creates a typically uncanny response to a benign set of boulders on a beach in the *Rock* triptych. We end up with the sensation of being able to witness from a safe distance an almost unearthly presence moving through the scene. Light – which should instinctively be a symbol of security – becomes something altogether more alien.

Simmons' introduction of light is more discrete in the *Cave* triptych, where he subtly adds to the naturally iridescent tableau. From this vantage point, the viewer is almost mediating upon these primordial elements – the ocean, the cave and the fire – as the daylight, and finally the campfire sputters out under a canopy of stars.

Simmons' technique of representing our landscape is untypical in his techno-centric methods and apparent irreverence of nature's cycles. Yet it is with the aid of these mechanical apparatus that we can overcome the ever-changing external world, appreciating it literally *in a different light*, and revel in it for a mere moment.