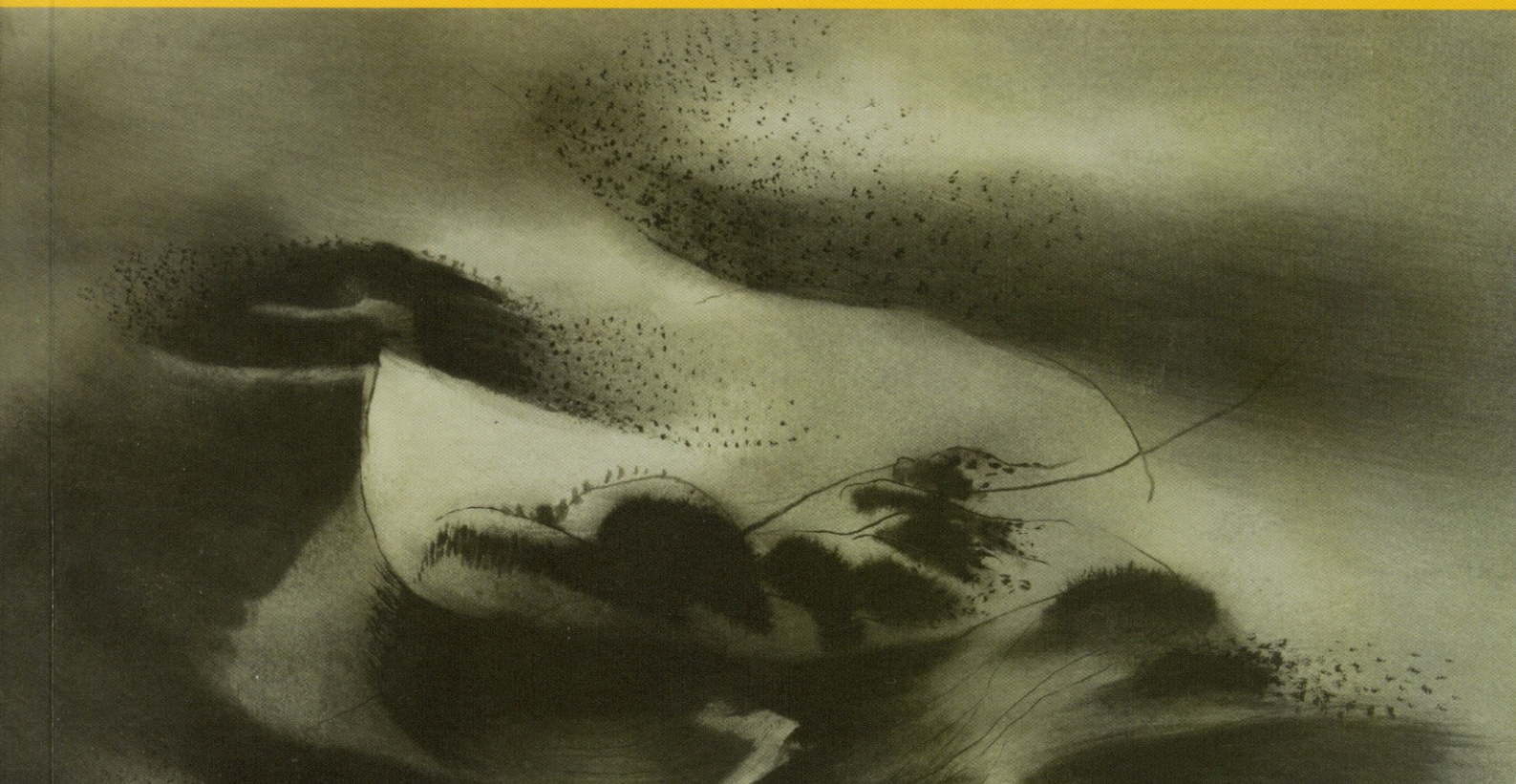
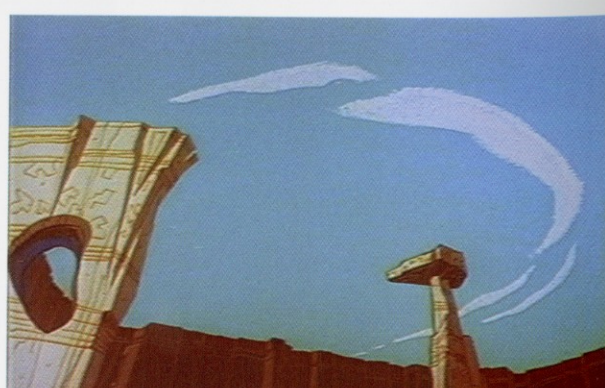
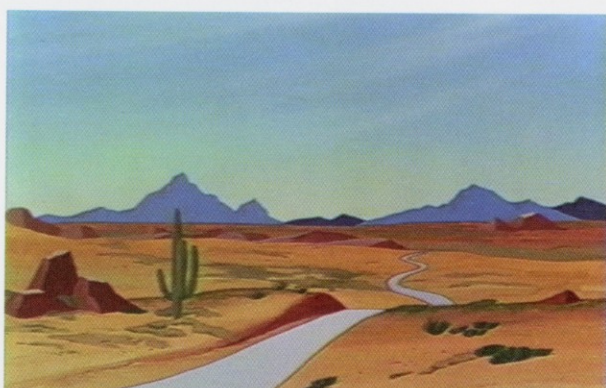
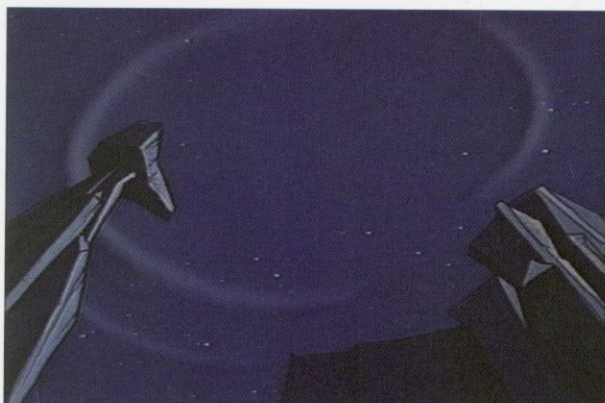




CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE INTO ABSTRACTION



Unlike the first time around, when the heyday of conceptualism lasted far less than a decade, so-called neo-conceptual practices have not shown any signs of diminishing, and their impact on digital and photographic work has been profound. In **Shirley Shor's** installation *Landslide* (2004), an interactive digital game projected onto a sandbox recasts territorial conflicts as equivalent to children learning how to share a sandbox. **Diana Thater's** three-channel video work *Wicked Witch* (1996) reimagines the poppy field scene in the film *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) from the flowers' perspective, with giddy off-center camera angles and soft-focus imagery all but seducing the viewer to lie down and take a nap. In **Mungo Thomson's** video homage to the pioneering animator Chuck Jones, a sequence of *Road Runner* cartoons is edited to leave out both main characters, so that the viewer experiences the unexpected beauty of the Southwest as the main event instead of merely a fleeting backdrop. The photographs of **Amir Zaki**, which emerge from his long-term commitment to surfing, envision such vernacular structures as lifeguard huts in terms of an imaginary lost modernism, with the cantilevered corners of weather-beaten shacks framed as if they were the work of an architect like Richard Neutra.





AMIR ZAKI (b. 1974) was born in Beaumont, California, and received his MFA from UCLA in 1999. Now based in Huntington Beach, Zaki often creates hybridized photographs that carefully use the vocabulary of the documentary style, so that the viewer's belief in its veracity remains intact, at least initially. He constructs scenes that are somewhat off-register, often taking as his subject the architectural landscape of Southern California. Although Zaki is fascinated and inspired by its architectural and cultural entropy, his intention is not to record, replicate, or simply document a pre-existing postmodern pastiche. His work begins with the familiar, looking at objects, structures and locations that are often pedestrian and banal, and through discrete use of Photoshop, producing images of structures that aspire to be added to the list of the most eclectic examples of built landscape in Southern California.

MUNGO THOMSON (b. 1969) was born in Woodland, California, and lives in Los Angeles and Berlin. He attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in 1994, and received an MFA from the UCLA in 2000. Thomson's works ponder notions of mysticism and the big questions in life with an underlying deadpan wit, and his art is often characterized by the settling up of conventional expectations, which are reversed by a kind of conceptual slight of hand. *The*

SHIRLEY SHOR (b. 1971) is part of a generation of new-media artists who are redefining how computers can be utilized as vehicles for artistic production. Combining custom software, video projection, and a sculptural element, *Landslide* is a new media installation that addresses geography, contested borders, and political power. For Israeli-born Shor, the work is a metaphor for territorial conflicts in the Middle East and beyond. *Landslide* consists of a square grid of blinking color cells generated by code. Beginning each sequence with a palette of sixteen colors and thousands of color cells, the map gradually transforms as cells "conquer" neighboring areas. When only two colors dominate the grid, the program stops, pauses, and restarts. *Landslide* operates on an infinite loop in which each cycle produces a different map and a different visual experience.