

Sharon Harper

"Moon Studies and Star Scratches," through Feb. 16, Print Center, 1614 Latimer St., 215-735-6090, printcenter.org.

by Lori Hill

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Looking at the photography of Sharon Harper, your suspicions that Mother Nature is no amateur artist are forever confirmed. The title of her current show at the Print Center, "Moon Studies and Star Scratches," suggests celestial bodies are literally etching their way across the night sky, leaving their luminous, if fleeting, mark in the darkness.

Harper stationed her large-format camera in spots all over the world and waited. And waited. And waited while she took long exposures on a single sheet of film. Instead of a giant white orb or a thousand points of light, the moon and stars in motion appear as hazy streaks and long white lines that sparkle against the pitch-black background. The effect is romantic and magical, perhaps because she uses a natural and powerful light source:

the moon itself. This has been a longtime course of study for the artist, who participated in an academic conference called "Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena." Previously she's photographed Germany from speeding trains and made aerial images of clouds. Her experimentation and interest in the science behind her photographs makes her work all the more attractive. Also on view at the Print Center are Vera Viditz-Ward's photos of urban life in Senegal ("Dakar Portraits") and Laura Wagner's twists on '50s-era domestic propaganda ("That's Women's Work").



Moon Studies and Star Scratches, No. 9
 June 4 - 30, 2005 Clearmont, Wyoming 15, 30, 20, 8, 5, 1, 5, 2, 1 min. exposures;
 15, 8, 10, 14 second exposures

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