

Rusty Scruby and Dan Mitchell Allison

By Mike Daniel



Rusty Scruby, *Lisa 1965*, reconstructed inkjet print

What: Reconfigured photographs by Rusty Scruby and polymer photogravures by Dan Mitchell Allison at Craighead-Green Gallery.

Rusty Scruby: This Deep Ellum artist studied music composition in the 1980s at Texas A&M University and the University of North Texas but turned to visual arts and took drawing and anatomy courses in the early 90's. Thanks to an idea borne from his musical training, he's finally gaining local notice for his visual creations.

"Music is abstract, but it has the ability to communicate specific ideas," he says. "Abstraction is not something separate from realism but is actually what gives realism its power."

To demonstrate the concept visually, Mr. Scruby takes several inkjet prints of a snapshot and cuts them into small squares. He then grafts tabs onto each piece and builds a new image by interlocking the squares. He offsets the photographic bits based on mathematical and musical formulas to create an abstracted, prismatic final picture. Works created in this fashion appear woven and often feature convex or concave humps to simulate three-dimensional waves.

The 12 pieces on display at Craighead-Green use only seven different photos, all with cloudless blue skies and evident central subjects for simplicity. Many, such as *Stop* and *Main Street*, are focused on street signs but vary in size and image complexity. *Water Tower I* emphasizes the lattice-like support structure of a red and white water tank, while *Water Tower II* focuses on the gargantuan tank itself.

Three takes on an old photo of the artist's mother and sister include the experimental *Lisa 1965*. It's a deviation from his usual technique in that each of the squares is a small copy of the full photo. Little Lisa, however has been digitally removed, enlarged and superimposed onto some of the tiles, then abstracted by the artist's weaving technique.