

UAM CSULB NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lothar Schmitz: Survival Strategies

January 24 – April 13, 2008
Reception + Artist Talk January 24, 5 PM

Lothar Schmitz is an artist and a physicist. His installations combine intuitive aesthetic studies and rational scientific inquiry in order to investigate the rapidly changing relationship and interdependence between nature and culture.

The University Art Museum is pleased to present Lothar Schmitz: *Survival Strategies*, on view from January 24th through April 13th. The exhibition includes a variety of new site specific installations and features miniaturized three-dimensional synthetic and simulated landscapes that combine natural substances—minerals, salts, earth, moss, and sulfur with artificial materials such as synthetic plants and trees, acrylic domes, and Astroturf. These controlled environments include a large salt flat in *Permeation* (2008), to be constructed in the center court gallery, and a multi-channel video installation *Biomorph* (2008) which investigates the biological processes of plant cells, using time-lapsed imagery. According to Schmitz:



“The installations reflect ecological concerns and comment on the loss of the metaphysical quality in our relationship to nature. They also critique the notion of nature as an idealized sanctuary.”

Schmitz draws on romanticized clichés of idyllic natural settings, the templates of corporate landscaping, and the ever-present references to nature in interior design, to suggest futuristic “engineered” environments.

Lothar Schmitz, an artist and physicist, was born in Germany and relocated to California in 1984. Schmitz received his Masters of Science in 1979 and his PhD in 1984 in Physics from Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany. He lives and works in Los Angeles and is a Senior Researcher at the Plasma Science and Technology Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles. His work has been exhibited at Andrew Shire Gallery, Los Angeles; Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix; University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara; and Barnsdall Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles; as well as internationally. He was awarded the C.O.L.A. (City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department) Individual artist grant in 2003 and the California Art Council New Media Individual Artist Grant in 2001. His work has been reviewed in *Artweek*, *Sculpture* magazine, and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Schmitz will give an artist's talk in the museum on January 24 at 5 o'clock PM, followed by a reception. This event is free and open to the public. An exhibition brochure is available with essay by UAM Curator of Exhibitions Alice Hutchison.

Also on view in the Wesley G. Hampton Gallery: PROJECT LAB

Tamper: Gestural Interface for Cinematic Design

An installation featuring an interactive system for reaching into and re-sculpting live film, using gesture technology by John Underkoffler and Oblong Industries, Inc.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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SPECIAL EVENTS:

- January 24 5 PM – Artist talk by Lothar Schmitz
6-8 PM – Public Reception for artists
- February 5 12:15-1 PM – UAM@noon, gallery talk with artist John Underkoffler
- February 28 7 PM – Art + Philanthropy Panel with Bonhams & Butterfields, Los Angeles

PRESS images are available via UAM's ftp site, please contact Public Relations Director Sarah G. Vinci for access and additional information, 562-985-4299, svinci@csulb.edu

Image credit: Lothar Schmitz, Versuchsgelaende, (detail) 2005, Artificial turf, trees, and moss, acrylic glass, 7' x 6' x 1.5', courtesy of the artist.