

An intriguing show at Walker Fine Art, *Triggered Momentum*, runs through March 19

By **Michael Paglia** Tuesday, Mar 8 2011

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March has been declared the Month of Photography in Denver, with many of the city's different galleries and other art venues mounting shows of photos or other photo-based works. One unusual offering is the duet at Walker Fine Art (300 West 11th Avenue, #A, 303-355-8955, www.walkerfineart.com) titled *Triggered Momentum*, which brings together local artists Sabin Aell and Sterling Crispin. Neither artist does photographs, per se; rather, they use photo-related techniques to create their respective works.

The inspiration for Aell's mixed-media pieces was accidental. Leaving her studio one day, she came across a frozen towel in the snow and was struck by its beauty. She took some of her own towels, wet them, twisted them, arranged them and allowed them to freeze. She then photographed the frozen towels and digitally printed them on transparent sheets. Afterward, Aell affixed the prints to paintings that she covered with simple shapes and linear abstractions. The resulting hybrids of paintings and photos have a decidedly neo-pop character to them, and they succeed in looking very elegant, despite having their origins in a single discarded towel. But Aell didn't stop there; she turned this suite of paintings into an installation by covering the gallery's walls with blown-up



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versions of the shapes, hanging the pieces over them.

The Aell installation surrounds the single Crispin work. Opposite the front door, and facing it, Crispin has created a tall screen with an interactive video component that's activated when viewers approach it. The video translates the approaching viewer into a faint outline on the screen's surface. To be honest, the gallery is so well lit -- not just by the expected track lights, but by the huge expanse of east-facing windows -- that it's hard to see the video imagery owing to the glare. Nonetheless, the idea behind the piece -- and that's what conceptualism is all about -- is really cool with its inevitable comparison to a mirror and the many associations that brings to mind.

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