

## On Thin Ice

Diane Burko's photographs of the effects of climate change force us to think

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The Locks Gallery is nestled in a quiet corner of Washington Square. The decor, or lack thereof in the minimalistic, spacious space furthermore contributes to its tranquil atmosphere. Diane Burko's photographs of the earth and its natural phenomena dominate the white walls they adorn.

Diane Burko: Photographs features the artist's work with national parks, including Yellowstone and Glacier. With her lens, Burko captures the imminent danger of melting glaciers to our climate. The result is a slew of haunting, if somewhat repetitive photographs.

Motifs in Burko's work include, as to be expected, earth tones, rocky mountain tops, and rippling lakes. Striking when observed individually, as a set the images too often seem to blend together into monotony. Despite this troubling effect, the photographs nonetheless compel the viewer to consider the environmental impact of global warming.

Burko's home in Bucks County, Pennsylvania has been flooded four times. Photographs of the rising waterways near her house remind one of the issue's immediacy. Many of her pieces appear in a numbered, progressive series. In the Water Below series, she begins with a photo of a solid white glacier alongside a lake. It's followed by photos that track its rapid regression to a pool of navy water.

The combination of close-up and distant shots create an interest that is nearly abstract. Some of the pictures transport the viewer to the depths of eroding lakesides and the crevasses of vanishing glaciers, while others take an aerial point-of-view and encompass a grand scope.

Burko's work does not immediately strike one as exciting or thrilling. Instead, her photos are purposeful, inspirational, and effective. They force one to consider the state of the environment, and challenge you to discern your personal role in dealing with the problem at hand. On view through Aug. 19, 2011.



*Water Below 3*, 2011, archival inkjet print on Canson Edition Etching Rag, 20 x 20 inches