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Late Show has two shows: Projections from Stanton Fernald and abstractions from Caleb Taylor

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The Late Show gallery's relaxed and unpretentious atmosphere helps bridge the gap between the widely differing aesthetics of Stanton Fernald and Caleb Taylor. Fernald makes large projections of natural forms; Taylor is an abstract painter.

Fernald's "Section of Tea Leaf" is an 8-foot-long installation incorporating seven projectors and a laser to magnify a camellia leaf onto a wall. With the leaf enlarged to 20 times its original size, its natural beauty appears in exquisite detail. There is no need to hunch over a lab table or strain the eye.

Viewers can touch each projector or put a hand in front of a lens to change the perspective, adding an interactive dimension to the work.

Fernald says the plant's structure is "remarkably architectural." The patterns are so concise and symmetrical, they resemble an architectural blueprint.

Fernald handcrafts his projectors. A medical textbook designer and illustrator at University of Kansas Medical Center, he also has a longtime love of optics. Combining that love with an industrial-design background, he merges art and science.

The entire apparatus is suspended from the ceiling by brass bars and electrical cord. Optical glass, aluminum, copper, steel, wood, plastic, as well as pieces from World War II bomber guns, also find their way into the mix. The projectors' antiquarian charm makes the electronics within even more appealing.

A project of this magnitude takes Fernald several months of "breaking a machine down to its most basic elements," then mastering an engineering challenge. If the projectors themselves appear rustic, the imagery they display is unequivocally high-tech as well as alluring.

Caleb Taylor's color-field paintings and drawings pay respect to abstract expressionist painters Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell.

The artist, who was named a 2010 Charlotte Street Foundation award winner, received a bachelor of fine arts in 2004 from Northwest Missouri State University in his hometown of Maryville. Taylor is now based in Kansas City.

Taylor's "Inner Structures" series features fields of color paired with or pierced by animated clusters of painterly activity and mark-making.

In "Contained II" (2010), a large gray shape moves with an appearance of great force, as a fiery recall of colored pencil lines trails behind it. In "Cluster Covered White" (2010) and "White Window IV" (2010), the artist created a composition of gestures and shapes before applying a thick layer of oil paint around them.

The appeal of these works is the sensation of enormous energy surging through the solid blankets of color. The paintings are like crystallized moments in time.

the shows

Individual shows by Stanton Fernald and Caleb Taylor continue at the Late Show, 1600 Cherry, through May 1. Hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday- Saturday and by appointment. For more information, call 816-474-1300.