

THE NEW YORKER

MARK ARMIJO MCKNIGHT



Installation view of Mark Armijo McKnight: *Decreation*. Photograph by Ron Amstutz

There are only five black-and-white photographs, two hefty, incised limestone blocks, and a video in Mark Armijo McKnight's museum début, but their effect is far from minimalist. If the work comes with a lot of conceptual baggage, you don't have to bone up on Simone Weil to appreciate the artist's meditation on time, death, the body, and the beauty of a desolate landscape. A female nude opens her legs wide in a field of tiny daisies, an earthy take on Courbet's "Origin of the World" that suggests fertility and rebirth, balancing an image of the skeleton of a mountain goat nearby. In the wall-filling video, synchronized metronomes tick away on the ledges of the New Mexico badlands, as relentless as the wind on the soundtrack, as reassuring as your heartbeat.

- Vince Aletti