

City Lights

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New Acquisitions of Works by D.C.–Based Artists

By Louis Jacobson

TO DEC. 31

To go along with its new office building, the Keck Center, the National Academies has recently acquired some new works by Washington-based artists. For the rest of this year, at least part of this collection will be on display in the building's lobby. Jason Falchook's photograph *Unfurl/Repose* is one of the young artist's signature narrow-plane-of-focus landscapes; Jim Sanborn's *Blue Mesa* offers an enigmatic nighttime sweep that features a mountainous form made exclusively of the repeating word "Lux." Painter Kay Jackson's *Industry Cloud* depicts a drab, smoky factoryscape, but at least it is easier to understand than Billy Colbert's puzzling *Their First Taste of the Strange Fruit*, a large-scale mixed-media-on-photograph piece that layers children's faces with fish-egg-like green bubbles and mostly unintelligible handwriting. **The finest works come from photographer Juliane Min and painter Isabel Manalo.** Min's image (pictured) of a partially constructed building, made at night and lit by a matrix of incandescent lightbulbs, contains a perfectly repetitive grid that does honor to the mid-20th-century ideals of modernist architecture. **Manalo, in *Clearing*, paints a convincing woodsy image using a modest number of strokes for trunks and branches. The rest of the work is pure white—an evocative negative space that ends up dominating the whole.** The exhibition is on view from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday, to Friday, Dec. 31, at the National Academies' Keck Center, 500 5th St. NW. Free. (202) 334-2436. (Louis Jacobson)