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Galleries: A pair of exhibitions that transcend their themes

By Edith Newhall
For The Inquirer

John Moore's affection for the aging industrial American landscape (last revealed here in a survey of paintings at Penn's Arthur Ross Gallery in 2009), and for the drawings of Seurat (last shown at MoMA in 2009), has led him back to charcoal on paper, a medium/material he hadn't touched since his grad-school days. But you would never know it; Moore's remembrance of things past is a logical and transformative segue for his work.

In black-and-white, more velvety than austere, Moore's compositions of decrepit factories intersected by sculptural leafless trees strike a different note from his paintings of similarly, intentionally unspectacular views in color and paint. They're more somber and more of a piece, of course, but also more suggestive of the era when these factories thrived.

Besides Seurat, I thought of Depression-era lithographs, Sheeler photographs, but mainly of Moore's own earlier painted composites of views from different perspectives, and how a switch of medium might have the same slightly disorienting effect.



"Fence" (2009), charcoal on paper by John Moore, at Locks Gallery on Washington Square.

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