

Video Vanguard

Local artists explore “the medium of the moment”

By Felecia Feaster

The Stylist: Oliver Smith

An artist who has taken various creative detours into experimental music, graphic design, painting and printmaking, Oliver Smith has recently fixed on video art in a succession of haunting works that often explore the alienation of the modern landscape, rendering the familiar suddenly sci-fi horrific. As with fascia's projects, the disorienting, discordant, alienating effects of the music imbues the work with an eerie disquiet. Though he frequently shoots fresh footage, one of Smith's most powerful recent works, “Scenes from a Scene,” is an appropriationist piece that manipulating clips from five films (Nanook of the North, David and Lisa, 1984, Pandora's Box and Persona) slowing them down to a deathly crawl that makes their settings and characters feel like electronic ghosts from some faraway world.