

# art ltd.

## George Legrady: "Stardust" at Edward Cella Art+Architecture

By Kim Beil  
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"Stardust," George Legrady's latest series of multi-media work, explores data culled from NASA's Spitzer Telescope. The eight prints on view at Edward Cella Art+Architecture, in a show of the same name, are inspired by forms that Legrady developed for a concurrent exhibition entitled "OBSERVE" at Art Center's Williamson Gallery and co-sponsored by the Spitzer Science Center. In keeping with Legrady's career-long interest in data visualization, the 2008 *Stardust* series transforms the coordinates of deep space bodies studied by NASA scientists into glowing maps of the cosmos. Legrady's images look back upon the position of the telescope, making evident the spatial relations not only between celestial objects seen by the telescope, but also highlighting the viewer's own location at the center of the field of observation.



The Diasec-mounted chromogenic print *Stardust IV* emphasizes the subjective position of the artist. With its off-center framing, beacons of light shoot out of the picture plane opening up a sparsely populated area of glossy black above the position of the telescope. Deviating from Legrady's previous work, especially his ongoing series "Algorithmic Visualizations," *Stardust IV* represents a considered choice on the part of the artist to obscure the data in favor of aesthetic principles. At 30 by 40 inches, *Stardust I* is the largest print in the series, but it also underscores the limits of the information provided by the telescope. From a distance of several feet, the light green and gold points appear full and luminous. On closer inspection, however, the points of light break apart like bands of halogen bulbs on a traffic light. As in *Stardust IV*, this image underscores Legrady's very deliberate choices in the display of information. These subtle revelations of the hand of the artist are also suggestive of the power that NASA scientists wield in determining the results of the telescope's inventory of the sky. Despite the blind faith that is often placed in scientific exploration, a telescope is not a truly objective observer. Like the artist's framing of the image, science, too, shapes its inquiry and the result is inevitably inflected by these decisions, whether aesthetic or scientific.

"Stardust IV," 2008 **George Legrady** Chromogenic print mounted with diasec  
30" x 40" Edition of 5 Photo: courtesy of Edward Cella Art + Architecture