

# Splendor in the Pass

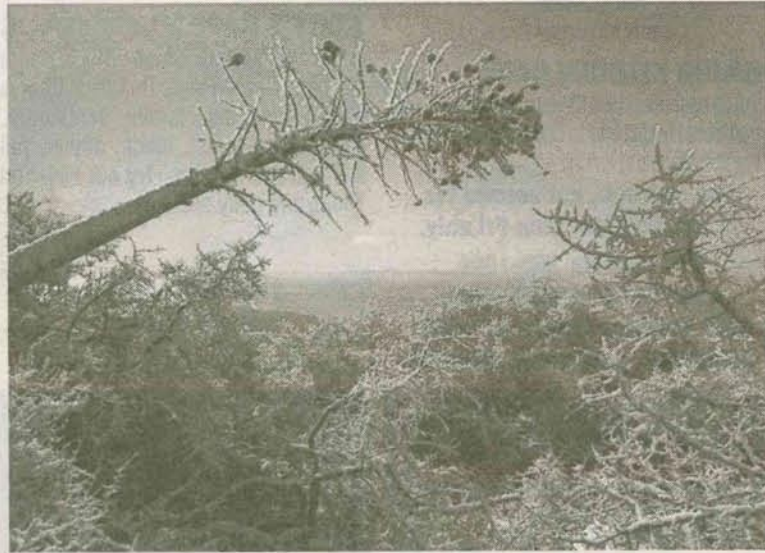
A SMALL BUT INTRIGUING SHOW AT CASA DE LA GUERRA, 'SECRETS OF THE GAVIOTA,' CELEBRATES THE BEAUTY OF THE GAVIOTA AREA VIA SHAW LEONARD'S PHOTOGRAPHS

By Josef Woodard,  
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## 'Secrets of the Gaviota'

**When:** through November 3  
**Where:** Casa de la Guerra Historic House Museum, 15 E. De la Guerra St.  
**Hours:** noon-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday  
**Information:** 965-0093



'Ice storm in the Mountains'

Casa de la Guerra has, among other things, become a proving ground and gathering place for art-gear-ed preservationist efforts in town, and a more pleasing and historic venue is hard to imagine. In the recent past here, we have savored the sights of art and photography celebrating the cherishable – and preservation-worthy – wonders of Naples, the beach terrain just north of Goleta, in a show with a clear objective of both expanding awareness of the place and strengthening the cause of "saving Naples."

At present, the focus shifts northward to the splendor of Gaviota, one of the west coast's more dramatic passes and coast-meets-mountain spot, which we take for granted at our own peril. Known commonly as the ligament of highway 101, where the road turns inland, away from the more rugged coastline area of Hollister ranch, Gaviota is one of those natural wonders deserving love and conservancy, the underlying message of the current show, "Secrets of the Gaviota."

Tucked into a small, back gal-

lery of the Casa de La Guerra, this modest-but-appealing exhibition of small black-and-white photographs by Shaw Leonard might seem the stuff of a casual, "sneeze you missed it" show. But there is a larger story involved, and part of that story has to do with opening eyes to the place and the subtle images thereof.

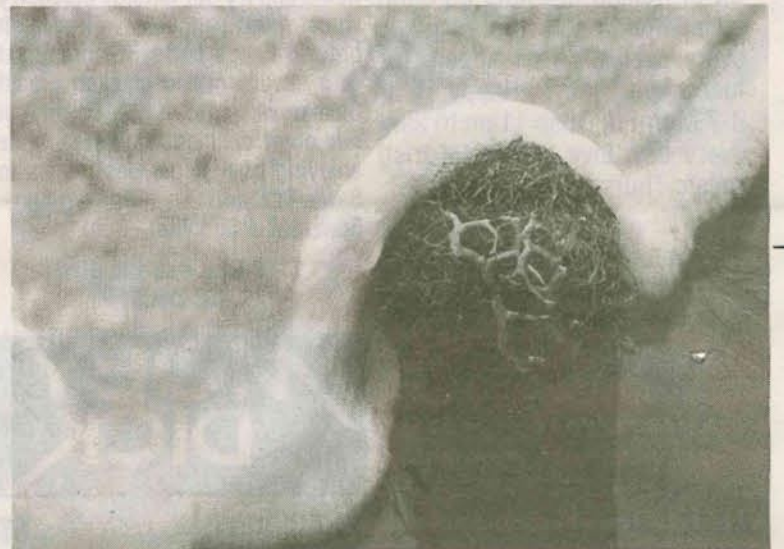
As a sort of friendly imagistic introduction to the show, an unabashedly affectionate, neatly rhyming poem adorns the wall and, for its sentimental nature, conveys the spirit of the place. In the first stanza, we read "There's a place that you must see/Where the rugged mountains meet the rugged sea/A coast so wild it just can't rest/from sea to summit from east to west/ A place so open a place so free/ mountain lions and dolphins/just go to be." True enough.

Mr. Leonard's portrait of the place is highly selective, and elegantly stylized within the milieu of the black and white format, but manages to put across a glowing appreciation of the "sea to summit" turf that makes up this beloved and odd place known as Gaviota. Near the gallery door, a general vista im-



Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation photos

'Burn Zone'



'Kelp Ball at Jalama'

age peers down from a high summit perch, at a fog-enshrouded sea below, an image very much in contrast to a surfside view, a macro-close-up shot of a taut, kelp ball swaddled in white-sea foam.

One of the more mysterious images was shot from inside a cave, gazing out to sea, in which the dark shadows surrounding the glinting bright center section of the composition forms the shape of an invert-

ed arrowhead. Other mountain-based shots take in the panoramic sweep of the distant shore, part of the compacted ecosystem, which includes a high summit, spindly, burnt trees and ancient plant life.

In its humble, but sure way, the exhibition piques our curiosity about the secret life of a nearby coastal oasis we've driven by countless times, and may now be driven to stop, hike and appreciate.

