





ERIC WEEKS

OBSERVATIONS
FROM BENEATH MY BED

NIKOLAI FINE ART | NEW YORK CITY





QUIETLY, AS A SILENT MAN

Men can be found in all the familiar places. They may be so connected to these places that their absence is hardly noticed, as the location becomes testimony to their visitation. The architecture that surrounds, encapsulates and describes masculinity is absent in this group of pictures by Eric Weeks.

Observations From Beneath My Bed is the title of this show, but also of a central work by Weeks. I will describe it, because it is fittingly absent from this collection of works, although for me, its specter is ever-present.

A man is underneath a bed and the underside of the mattress is almost pressed against his face. Corners of a red bedspread hang over the edge, creating a stage curtain that formally beckons the viewer in. The man, who is the artist, wears a pair of oddly old-fashioned spectacles, which only increase the potential strength and focus of

his contemplation. Here is a familiar place, if not so familiar a position. We know it from Michael Powell's *Peeping Tom*, because in a way, the masculine gaze has been relegated to outward voyeurism, rather than self-introspection.

Removing this picture, while retaining its title, is to question both the language and the gaze associated with gender.

The key to the small dramas created and depicted in this show is the psychology behind the idea of *Observations*. Two cicadas are mating, so fused that only the closest inspection reveals



two forms rather than one. Water rushes in a deep leather whirl as sensual as the swirl of soapy lather that floats in a bowl between the legs of a faceless girl. Her legs are apart in order to balance a bowl, and the artist has blocked sexual perusal with a ritual more associated with guilt or compulsive activity. A guy with a cigarette and the



appearance of not much else sits alone as does a woman with a hint of a salty tear in her eye. Eric Weeks' work comes at longing from an unexpected angle. Something of Sylvia Plath is smoothed over by Minor White.

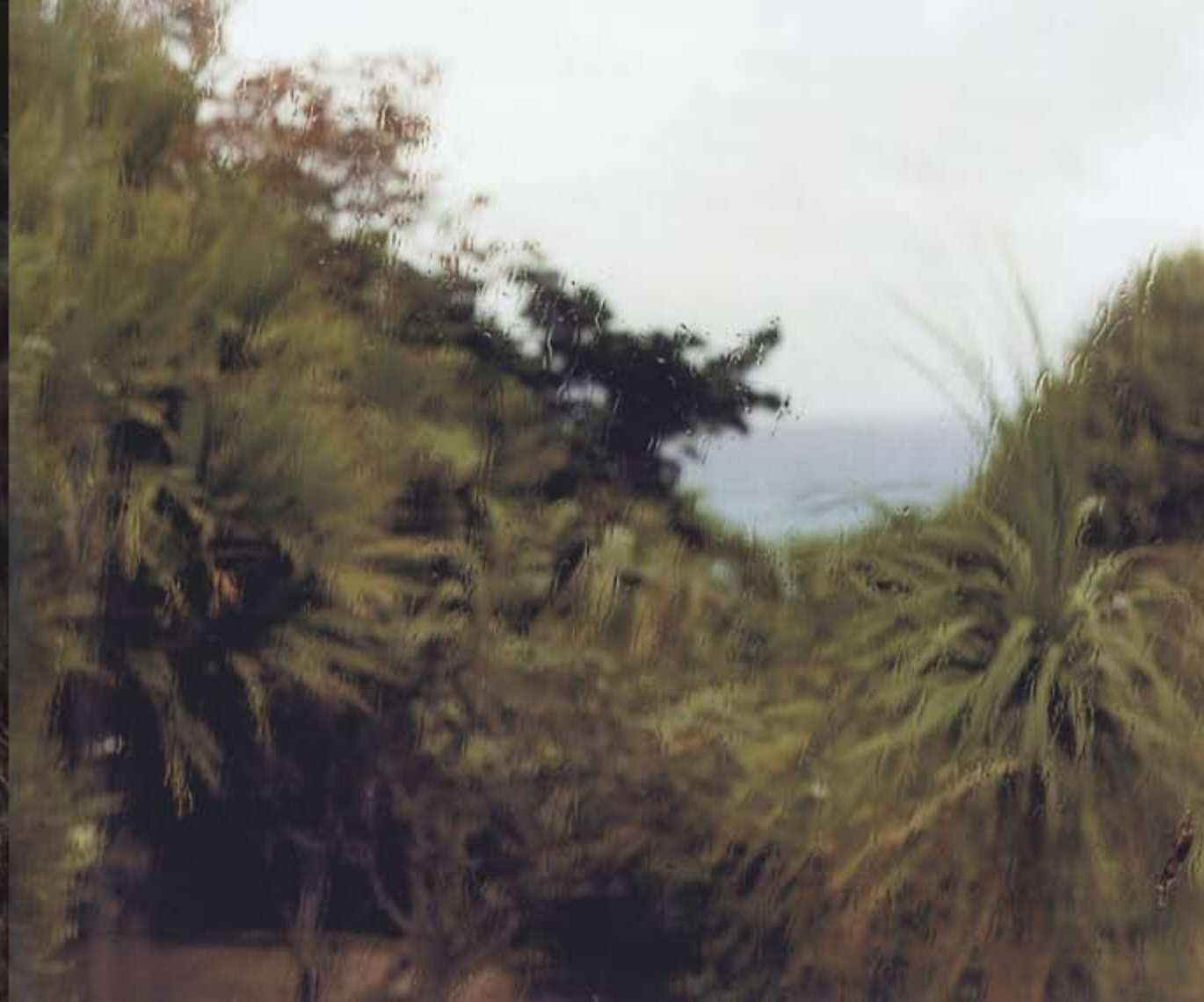
Weeks seems to support the notion that men have difficulties speaking of emotions and acknowledges that in very quiet, heartbreaking ways. Thus, a spider web stretching between a concrete surface towards a gathering of lush blue-green leaves suggests imminent rupture, but, perhaps the web itself is patching the space it crawls across. His codes are feminine, soft leaves, drips of water, a tear, but his technical language could be said to be masculine, the scrutiny of the 4x5 camera focusing in, all the while maintaining a safe distance from real contact. Where many men tend to build monuments to the power they associate with themselves, or scenarios that seem to conquer their subjects, Weeks seems more interested in the possibility that men can talk about missing as deeply as they can talk about conquests and grandiose reconstructions of the world.

COLLIER SCHORR, FALL 2002

"Bitoul", 1996 28 x 34 inches
"Tears", 1998 34 x 28 inches
"Mating Cicadas", 1996 28 x 34 inches
"Suspect", 1996 28 x 34 inches
"Observations from Beneath My Bed", 1996
28 x 34 inches
"Weave", 2002 28 x 34 inches
"Brood", 1996 20 x 24 inches
"Rush", 2002 40 x 47 inches
"Thursday Afternoon", 1997 40 x 47 inches

All images are chromogenic prints
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— *Collier Schorr*