

# THE NEW YORKER

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DIKE BLAIR

### PHOTOGRAPHY

OUR rounds of current shows left us thinking about two exhibitions in particular. They look very different from each other, but each has a lot to do with technology and art—with the common denominator being freedom, rather than the usual apocalyptic take on technological control. Both exhibitions are oddly beautiful. Peter Campus's black-and-white digital photographs (Cooper, 149 Wooster Street; through November 2) are sophisticated computer-enhanced products, sculptural images that balance nature and artifice, the found and the sought, objects and their backgrounds; these elements come together in both old- and new-looking pictures. Campus's images remind us of the tradition of romantic nature photography like that practiced by Ansel Adams, but they also have something Japanese about them. They seem both suspended between cultures and floating in time.

Dike Blair's color photo-works, which also involve a computer process, are presented in a soothing installation at the Ealan Wingate gallery (578 Broadway; through November 2). Most of the pieces have as their foundation details of photographs that Blair took at Florida's EPCOT Center. He has blown up the images and covered them in glass, adding paint, paper, and etching, as well as such elements as an oil-painted alarm clock. In a letter to his gallery, Blair used the question "What is it?" to describe the work. Such mystery is a big part of what he has done with photography, fractals, abstract painting, Disney, and much else. The works are installed in a room that has been painted, carpeted, darkened, Muzaked, and decorated with plants and suburban benches. But the result isn't kitschy; the installation provides the gallery, during its final days, with its own brand of spiritualism.