

ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICKS

robbinschilds

ART IN GENERAL

79 Walker Street

September 22–December 15



robbinschilds, *I came here on my own.*, 2012. HD video, color.

In robbinschilds's latest exhibition, featuring the video *I came here on my own.*, 2012, a freestanding wall-size screen bisects a darkened gallery, making mirrored halves of the space, each with floorboards running out like lines to end in simple benches against the walls on either side. Visitors step into a structural echo of the world found on the screen, inhabiting one half of a split frame, the other of which is invisible to us, and yet we know it is there.

The work plays unendingly with singularity and with the existential presumption of being alone. It subverts both the terms of its title and the seemingly solitary figures we follow in the frames by being always double: reflecting a twoness that refuses resolution and radically questions any facile distinction between same and different, self and other, figure and land. Two frames, separated only by a thin black line, hold often-mirrored images of inventively fashioned single agents traversing patterns across tactile topographies that range from scorched cliffs to snowy woods, true to robbinschilds's exquisite imagemaking sensibility. Playing with both legend and epic as much as Land art and lone-man narratives, the work follows the figures through the far reaches of a queered world where even the earth is feminized: yawning open a leglike V of lake or mountain, snaking yonic forms around the mirror's dividing line. An oneiric anthem composed by A.V. Linton swells and thins with haunts of elfin chants and hints of Andean bells.

Nearing the end of the loop, the individual in each frame walks across a sea of grass that ends in a lace of black sand to kneel and bury a necklace, wedding both to another search, a future journey. In a masterful edit, the frames then fade to white, only to surprise us moments later when the white pause in the loop seamlessly becomes the white of snow, crunching beneath the weight of the figures as they are thrown back into their frames to begin the journey, the being alone together, again.

-- Litia Perta