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ADAM SHECTER



New Atlantis (video still); Photograph: Courtesy Eleven Rivington

Adam Shecter's two-channel video animation evokes a mythic story by means of short, non-narrative vignettes. A cinematic projection on the wall opens with distant city lights gleaming in a black landscape, as fireflies dance above a phosphorescent pond in the foreground. It abruptly cuts to pale pinkish-blue line drawings of a hotel interior with minimal movements: leaves falling off a garland; a charm bracelet quivering on a lonely vanity table, a corridor slowly filling up with water.

Later, a sign in flashing lights spells out NEW ATLANTIS, the name both of the high-rise hotel and of Shecter's installation, while a young man seen in profile looks pensive. As the sequence ends, the lights seem to become fireflies once more.

On a monitor on the floor, another animation shows out-of-focus images of pouring water, blades of grass and the same lights, intercut with blank monochromes. A subtle soundtrack helps construct the melancholic, retrospective atmosphere that suffuses the work, but can we please call a moratorium on chimes and electronic thrumming in video art?

While rising sea levels constitute an imminent global concern, the incoming waters in Shecter's work evoke a remembered psychological inundation, rather than the drowned continent of legend or our future. Yet the artist's animation style, reminiscent of Saturday-morning cartoons, leavens the moodiness with lyricism and a hint of whimsy. Like the snatch of wordless song that concludes the looped projection, Shecter's elliptical memory haunts our reverie.