

Mia Berg







Originally from Sweden, Mia Berg grew up in East Hampton, New York. She is informed by the artistic past and present of the Hamptons as well as her Scandinavian heritage. Berg's work utilizes self portraiture to explore her relationship with a person and how it is incorporated into the larger natural landscape that shares a place of great significance in her heart. She earned her BFA at the School of Visual Arts in New York.

Enacting a conversation with light, distance and gesture, Berg and her partner create a cinematic world that examines ideas of intimacy and symbiosis between human relationship and nature. Nature and love are an inseparable dyad- Berg's introduction of human love into her relationship with the natural environment (and the implied inevitable departure from it) tests the capacities of the heart to maintain ones innermost desires and needs in an ever changing context.

Your photographs include you, and your partner. Does this mean they are autobiographical? Why are you in them?

My work is autobiographical and represents my experience. I find myself and my partner to repeatedly be the subject of my work because the process of creating each image requires a very in-the-moment interaction with the environment and each other. The image records the experience as it plays out. It is not a complete work to me if I am only behind the lens observing and recording, I am also an active participant. The creation of the work allows for both thoughtful and unconscious introspection, allowing me to evaluate and internalize what is important to me.

If you're in them - who's behind the camera? How's this done?

The camera is set upon a tripod and the image is composed. Then after setting the interval timer to shoot a frame every several seconds, my partner and I organically and instinctively explore our space and whatever emotions and attentions reside there. Shooting film and being limited to 36 exposures per roll creates awareness that no moment can be suspended infinitely, and action vs inaction can be a pivotal part of the experience.

You view nature and love as an inseparable dyad. As more of nature becomes claimed by the human footprint - what does this do to love?

I have found that it makes the necessity to seek nature (which is an experience of love) more urgent, and sharing that experience with a romantic partner more intense. There is a large emphasis today on living in the cultural and creative facilitator of the city structure, which has left the human need for and attention to nature undervalued and neglected. It's easy to forget how important it is not only to preserve but to experience the elements we came from. Like the Romantic painters of the late 19th century responding to the Industrial Revolution and social and scientific rationalization, I hope people will again remember the richness and sublimity of communing with nature. The heartbreak of destroying so much of our natural world is inversely manifested in a need for human love and compassion- not just romantically but universally.

The relationships between humans and nature, nature and love, and humans and love, are a recurring theme in your work. What are some distinctions you can make with these?

I don't differentiate much between these themes, as they are all essentially interconnected. The steady constant in my work is my relationship with the natural environment, a relationship that is unchanging in its intensity but eternally explorable. All of these manifestations of love represent a greater human experience, both internally and externally, bonding us together with one another and with our natural world.