

*Misanthrope-NY* brings together works that stem from conversations on photography between the show's organizer, Robert Kulisek, and David Lieske. The show is an extension of *Misanthrope-CA*, a musical project by Kulisek and Lieske whose experimental black metal album *America* takes its cues from the sounds of early Norwegian black metal.

Black metal – an extreme sub-genre of heavy metal music – is at once brutal, lonely, and violent. Its accompanying imagery codes this mentality with an aesthetic that fuses death-related imagery with early 19th century Romanticism. Where contemplative wanderers and monks stood in Caspar David Friedrich's sublime landscapes, severe and misanthropic figures in theatrical corpse paint populate the snowy, grey Nordic scenery of black metal's home.

As the perhaps unwitting heir to the anti-Classicism of the Romantics, black metal's visual tropes valorize the extreme and the authentic. A claim against the world, it simultaneously offers itself up for inhabitation – anyone can own a look.

The dark city embraces a void and countless sky. Streets of isolation wind down to the ice cold river in oppressive silence. Negative emanations call through dark fog. Descending into utter despair, wandering the wilderness of eternal mystery. The failure of human nature, failure of mother nature. Desolate winter, as twilight falls where cold and darkness meet – a building covered in thorns. Thinking back on a year of Decembers. Below the gloomy moon's silhouette, actions are carried out in the trails that lead to perdition. Webs made of sinister plots, lobotomized, tortured thoughts. Subconscious now revealed has nowhere to hide.

Destructive shadows made in a graven image of the self. Earth's last picture: hate in the eye of the beholder.

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