



"Child's Shoe"  
1993, by David Byrne

### Review

#### David Byrne

*Strange Rituals*  
through Nov. 2nd  
Cristineros Gallery  
395 West Broadway, between  
Spring and Broome streets,  
(212) 431-1862

What is it like to see the world through the eyes of a rock star? Through renaissance man Byrne's vision it's not a pretty sight: your gaze wanders the world, fastening on hotel room furniture, shop windows, an occasional figurine, illustration, or billboard.

The ex-Talking Head says his picture-taking is a mindless and irrational activity that later reveals itself to have purpose. "I look for the numinous in the mundane," he says. Thus this eclectic show, which presents works from six different series of photographs, and ultimately considers the way that spirituality can be found in coarse reality.

A work titled "Sleepless Nights" is a minimalist collage of photographs of hallway light fixtures. You could hardly come up with a more melancholy vision of the sources of illumination that guide the human journey.

Another group of works, titled "Sacred Objects," shows assorted curios—a placenta in a jar, a baby's shoe, a bowl of white feathers—isolated and spotlighted in ornate gold frames like icons, earthly objects imbued with an otherworldly poetry.

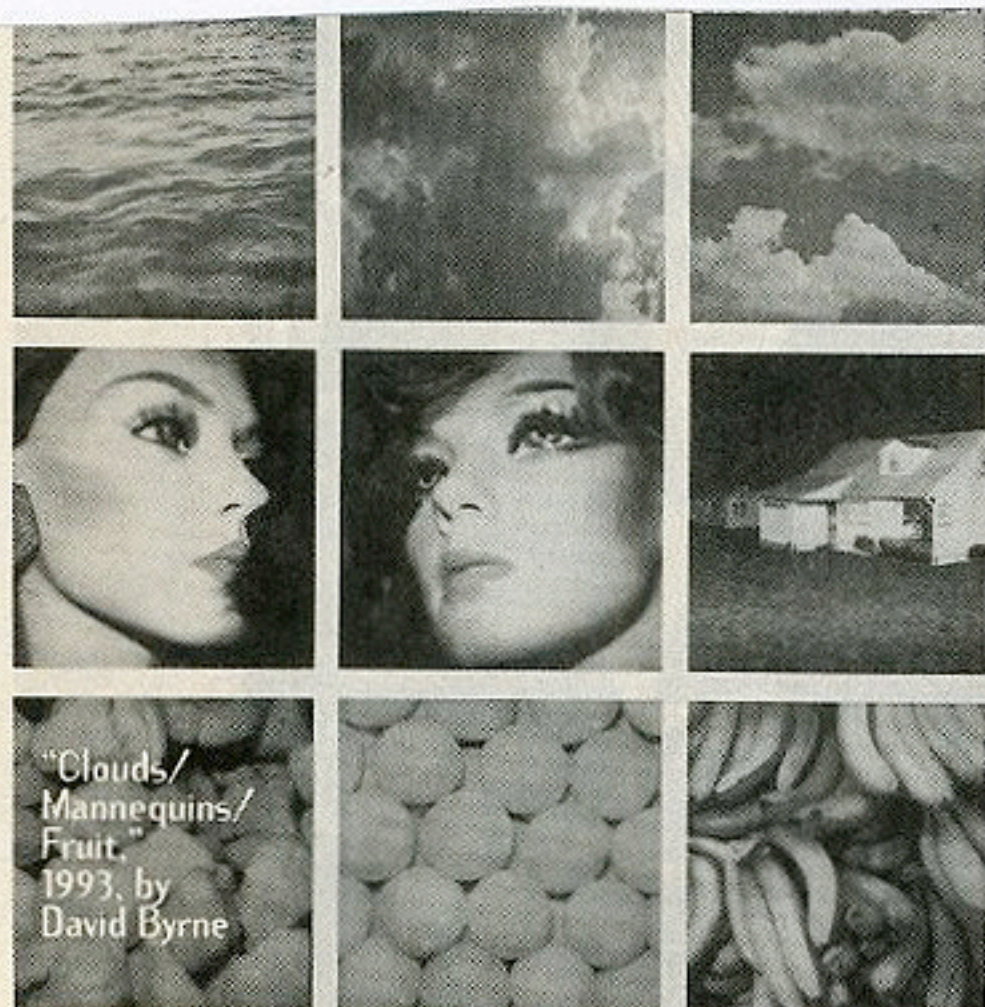
Perhaps most striking are a group of new photographs, glowing, computer-enhanced New Age nature scenes, overprinted with spiritual sayings and, floating in the middle of the picture like headshop stigmata, vignettted images of drug paraphernalia. It's a haunting evocation of enlightenment, true or false, through the wonders of chemistry.

My favorite suite, however, is a set of four photographs named "Chair Quaternion,"

taken at the Sunset Marquis Hotel in L.A.

It features a lovely plaid-upholstered armchair resting on its side, its back, its head—like a conscientious traveler, doing its morning calisthenics.

Walter Robinson



"Clouds/  
Mannequins/  
Fruit"  
1993, by  
David Byrne