

Richard Kern
POLARIZED
Opening Reception: Friday, September 9, 6-8pm

Fortnight Institute
60 East 4th Street
New York, NY

Fortnight Institute presents *Polarized*, an intimate, underground history of New York City in never-before-seen polaroid photographs by Richard Kern from the 1980s and 90s. *Polarized* is an archival exhibition that serves as a historical record through slides, video footage, books, early experimental publications, and flyers.

Kern has become well known for photographic and filmmaking work that is often mistakenly labeled as 'erotic'; this exhibition challenges the boundaries of that uniform narrative. Here, instead of finished, archival work being on display, 'side' or test photographs are taken as the main event: images of theatrical sequences in his apartment on East 3rd street, footage of drug busts from his window, documentation of his student work as a sculptor and land artist in the 1970s, portraits of friends and collaborators, including the actor Lung Leg and the writer/performer Lydia Lunch, weave together a subversive vision which has become meaningful and faceted beyond seductive aesthetics.

Kern's polaroids are as vital as ever, and paint a nuanced portrait of fringe-culture in New York City, full of desire, wonder, darkness, and kinship. *Polarized* connects Kern's work to the constantly evolving and innovating East Village, where he had his first-ever exhibition, *You Killed Me First*, 1985, in collaboration with artist David Wojnarowicz on East 10th street at the legendary Ground Zero Gallery over 30 years ago. The exhibition re-examines the work of an artist long deemed controversial in regard to picturing fixations of pleasure and perversion.