

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

523 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011 Tel: 212-243-0200 Fax: 212-243-0047

## THE NEW YORKER

### CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK THE NIGHT STUFF

The forty-five black-and-white photographs in Robert Adams's current show at the Matthew Marks gallery, "Summer Nights, Walking," are about the American landscape after dark, when serenity can turn to dread with the snap of a twig. Made between 1976 and 1982 in the suburbs and countryside of Colorado, the images expand on a project first exhibited and published, as a book, in 1985. (Aperture's revised edition nearly doubles the length of the original.) Adams says that the new photographs bring the series "closer to our actual experience of wonder,

anxiety, and stillness," but they also tend to skew the mood toward film noir's harsh day-for-night look. A newspaper blown into a dandelion patch, a long stretch of empty sidewalk, and a gas station glaring like an alarm in the near distance don't call up sense memories of the soft evening air so much as hint at crime scenes, night sweats, and lost weekends. But, even at its darkest, the work is alluring. Adams, always identified with the chill objectivity of the New Topographics movement, is as suave and seductive as any neoclassicist.

—Vince Aletti

