

# THE NEW YORKER

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*"Topiary, Staten Island, 1995," by Richard Rothman (see Photography).*

RICHARD ROTHMAN—"Shrubs," a selection of photographs taken over a six-year period, which superbly illuminate our relationship with the often meagre landscape of New York City and its environs. The first picture you see, in the gallery's stairwell, is the most dramatic: a two-trunked front-yard birch has been polled at about seven feet and adorned with cloth markers that look like pathetic, useless bandages; the gently understated title, "Pruned Birch with Ribbons," only intensifies the grisliness. In another mesmerizing picture, a weeping blue cypress sits on its root ball at a Long Island nursery, its branches outstretched as if to say, "I've been ready for a while." The rest of the two dozen clear-eyed images here are no less poetic but sometimes more hopeful. Through Feb. 7. (Sorokko, 430 West Broadway. 941-8888.)