Eileen Neff: *Newton's Field*, 2001, C-print, 44 by 64½ inches; at Locks.

PHILADELPHIA

Eileen Neff at Locks

Those are real blurs you see in the 12 large-scale photographic images of "Moving / Still." Eileen Neff's minimal after-the-fact digital manipulations of the original shots, made from moving trains over a few years, have yielded arresting works whose dislocations lodge deeply within the viewer.

On one level, these mostly autumnal landscapes recall and induce a kind of train-ride reverie, lulling and reassuring with their views of forest, meadow and river. But the interplay of focus and blur, stillness and motion, is joined by other doublings. Several works are vertical diptychs, with an upside-down view rippling below. What could read as a scene reflected in water is, in every case, slightly off from the upper view. *Night Falls*, the show's most painterly image, contrasts a twilight woods scene above with an amber smear of sun-glare below, manifestly from a different time of day. (Like all the works, this one took on an individual size and shape—here a narrow quadrilateral over 9 feet long—that felt informed by Neff's years of calibrating photos and objects in her installation works.)

In *Almost (November 21, 2000)*, the lower, "reflected" woods scene reveals a half-hidden, upside-down white house where there is none above. The paired tree-scales in *Almost (No. 3)*, heavily streaked and flanked above and below by sky, feel entirely untethered, a fast-moving, flying island. The loss of definition here recalls Gerhard Richter—both his blurred, photograph-based paintings and his squeegeed abstractions—but the resemblance only goes so far. Where Richter's work seems to be about some cultural loss of focus, Neff's half-veiled images feel like elegies to lost stability, or essays on the anxiety of motion. In contrast to the exhilaration in speed of, say, some of Nam June Paik's video work, here a condition of pervasive acceleration is soberly contemplated. The apparitional, upside-down house becomes an icon for the loss of grounding this experience engenders.

Newton's Field offers this awareness in a compositionally stark, though visually rich equation. A stand of deep-green bushes in a field of grass, crisp with a pre-storm, ozone-saturated anticipation, is backed by a slur of speed-bleared tree forms. More Einsteinian than Newtonian, this thought-experiment of a picture seems to lay bare the gap between quantum realities and our desire for ordinary material perception.

The mural-sized, green and azure *Spring Seen* dares to be pretty, and with its clouds of scumbled green, advances a kind of nostalgia for prettiness. In fact, many of these works are beautiful, and in the midst of their destabilizing effects, quietly assert the power of landscape to move us still. —*Miriam Seidel*