HYPERALLERGIC

POCKET REVIEW

Olivia Reavey's Impromptu Sensuality

Everything is a treasured scrap for Reavey to pull from in her unorthodox black-and-white photography.



Bryan Martin
November 17, 2026 — 2 min read



Detail of "Easel" (2025), silver gelatin print (photo Bryan Martin/*Hyperallergic*)

Olivia Reavey moves at breakneck speed. Her silver-gelatin-analog printing process is frenzied and intense: Black-and-white prints are cut into irregular quadrilaterals with crumpled edges, then hung unframed and loosely fixed to the walls with clips, pins, and other supports. But this is not just slapdash; everything here is intentionally energetic and playful, with images asserting the body's formal pleasure captured in film.

Many bare their flesh but are often obfuscated or appear with objects: a broken branch covers a male's buttocks in "Stick" (all works 2026); a wooden lever protrudes from a woman's pubic area, captured in the reflection of a mirror in "Untitled." The penetrative and phallic elements here are obvious, but also read neutrally in a recurring tension between eroticism and form — shapes and tonal values outweigh anything provocative.



Installation view of *Olivia Reavey: Distention* at Thomas Erben Gallery (photo courtesy Thomas Erben Gallery)