

Carlin, T.J. "Rico Gatson, 'Dark Matter'" *Time Out New York* 701 (March 5-11, 2009): 46.



Rico Gatson, "Dark Matter"



Fire Painting #4, right;
Nigeria Power, left



Ronald Feldman Fine Arts,
through Mar 14 (see Soho)

Rico Gatson treats the notion of identity the way Ed Ruscha treats text in his "liquid word" series: Gatson stretches and skews the issue until meaning strains at the end of its logical tether. For his current show, Gatson combines source materials and reference points from America's racial history in a kaleidoscopic array ranging from almost abstract to overtly political.

A three-channel video, *Spirit, Myth, Ritual and Liberation*, employs mirroring techniques to splice, loop and create moving Rorschachs of such horrific filmic moments as the one in the Rolling Stones' documentary *Gimme Shelter*, in which Meredith Hunter, a young African-American, is killed by

Hells Angels. Spotlit in the darkness of evening, Hunter can be seen in a green leisure suit as he's tossed in the tides of an increasingly agitated crowd.

Sculptures in the second part of the exhibit combine a Minimalist aesthetic with veiled allusions to black militancy. In *Nigeria Power*, a painted wood panel marked by radiating lines, the title connects the dots between the form of the work and symbols of resistance. Other freestanding sculptures recall African art in a manner that undoubtedly references its influence on Western art.

Were these works presented individually, one might miss their nuance. But taken as a whole and in context with the films, the pieces reflect on the inextricably linked histories of white and black in America.—T.J. Carlin

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