

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

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For immediate release: March 3, 2006

RICO GATSON

AFRICAN FRACTALS

March 25 - April 22, 2006

Gatson works with precision, exploring the power of symbols as elements of collective imagination and bringing to light their potential for manipulation.

Ida Panicelli: ARTFORUM

Rico Gatson will exhibit paintings, sculpture, and videos that continue to investigate complex issues relating to identity and race. Based loosely on the notions of fractal geometry and indigenous design, Gatson links the African Diaspora and the intractability of a political/cultural matrix persistent throughout American history.

The work contrasts ordered patterning with emotionally charged subjects. Using a palette limited to four colors, Gatson paints hard-edged patterns on wood panels and freestanding shapes that suggest African textile and folk design. Contradicting their associative domestic functions, the patterns on panels configure into symbols of hate such as a Confederate flag or a swastika; a quasi-domestic object is reminiscent of an auction block; a cross with holes references stockades; a wall installation, festooned with light bulbs, conflates the warmth of an amber light to evoke a fiery cross.

The exhibition will also feature "*Ali Bumbaye*," a short-looped video, appropriated from a documentary based on Muhammad Ali, that scrambles scenes of a carnival celebrating his 1974 victory over George Foreman in Zaire, Africa. The footage becomes kaleidoscopic imagery that blends an assemblage of cultural references.

Rico Gatson has exhibited at the Feldman Gallery since 2000. In New York, his work has been included in *The Studio Visit* at Exit Art; *Greater New York 2005*, at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center; *African Queen* at The Studio Museum in Harlem; and *Fight or Flight* at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria. His videos have recently been shown at the Todd Madigan Gallery, California State University, Bakersfield California.

There will be an opening reception at the Feldman Gallery on Saturday, March 25th, 6:00 to 8:00. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 to 6:00. Monday by appointment. For information, contact Sarah Paulson at (212) 226-3232 or sarah@feldmangallery.com.