

**"Returnal" and "In the Returnal"****SOLOMON PROJECTS****1037 Monroe Drive****June 22–July 28**

These two exhibitions are the result of a unique collaboration between visual artist Radcliffe Bailey, choreographer Fatima Robinson, and musician/singer Marc Anthony Thompson. Sponsored by the National Black Arts Festival, the three African Americans had their DNA mapped and traveled to Senegal, a location of shared roots, to meet with the locals and visit historical sites. Back in the US, they created works in response to the experience, some collectively and some independently. Highlights of "In the Returnal," at the Clark Atlanta University, include Bailey's titular room-size installation, which is an elegant testament to the idea of passage and features found objects such as boats, trunks, and lanterns scattered on the floor in front of a large black, white, and red clay-and-soil painting. Around the corner, one of Thompson's seven videos, *Tourism* (all works 2007), juxtaposes footage shot on their journey with still photographs of contemporary African Americans and the text BLACK FATHERS, WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THE PRAYERS YOU PRAYED FOR US.

Across town at Solomon Projects, Bailey's *Untitled (DNA Helix)*, a re-creation of a double helix enshrined in a glass case, sets the stage for the installation *Returnal*. Visitors enter through an archway in a stone-and-mud wall that the artists created after their trip to the "door of no return" at Gorée Island, which captured Africans had to pass through en route to the New World. Inside, one encounters a video of Robinson dancing to a jazz-inspired composition by Thompson. Projected onto a canvas Bailey has covered with blue and black glitter, Robinson's physical details are unreadable. Yet the sweeping gestures of her spectral figure seem to sum up centuries of toil, suffering, and celebration experienced by their ancestors, whose presence suffuses both exhibitions.



*Returnal*, 2007, stone and mortar wall, glitter curtain, antique banister, and color video with sound. Installation view.

*"In the Returnal" is on view at the Clark Atlanta University Art Gallery from June 21 to October 26.*

—Rebecca Dimling Cochran

All rights reserved. artforum.com is a registered trademark of Artforum International Magazine, New York, NY