

# MARTOS GALLERY

Smith, Roberta, "Right Back Here," *The New York Times*, October 2, 2008

## The New York Times

### Right Back Here

*White Columns*

*320 West 13th Street (entrance on Horatio Street), West Village*

*Through Oct. 25*

The centerpiece of a well-matched selection of exhibitions at White Columns is "Begin Again Right Back Here," a timely group show of modest items that pass muster as some hybrid of sculpture, design object, architectural model, furniture or even clothing or book. It is the first curatorial effort of the artist B. Wurtz, a veteran brinksman of sculptural variousness. A small, early [Sol LeWitt](#) grid sculpture is the touchstone here; the remaining 15 artists seem to build on it, contaminating its geometry, idealism and transparency.

The artists Vincent Fecteau, Sterling Ruby, Taylor Davis, Jessica Jackson Hutchins and a newcomer named Fawn Krieger contribute to this meditation on restrained, unmonumental bricolage, along with two Italian designers, Caesar Stoffi and Anna Castelli. Wayne Koestenbaum's recent book, "Hotel Theory," designed by Greenblatt-Wexler, contains parallel texts about the goings-on in hotels across the street from each other. The two columns of text resemble side-by-side elevators moving at different speeds.

The delicate mood is sustained in an exhibition of the wry, delicate paintings of Mark Barrow, whose four slightly obsessive freehand iterations and emphasizing of the canvas weave are countered by a fifth, made in collaboration with Sarah Parke, that involves paint added to hand-woven linen. Either way, the hazy grids owe something to both LeWitt and Anni Albers.

But the general reticence is disrupted by two other shows: the raucous quilt paintings of Violette Alby and a 25-year survey of the alternately Minimalist and Expressionist paintings and drawings of the talented Dan Asher.

But Mr. Asher brings everything to a gentle fade-out with a recent irresistibly musical video titled "Moonscape," in which a succession of blurry photographs of a moonlit ocean finds its ideal accompaniment in Liz Durrett singing "The Sea a Dream." It is amazing what can be accomplished with a cellphone in motion.