



ART

## “Souls Grown Diaspora”

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This lively, jam-packed exhibition, curated by Sam Gordon, features ten African-American artists, most of whom are self-taught. About half of them are performers, too: music fills the gallery. Highlights include tracks by the jazz singer Stephanie Crawford, whose lovely still-lives of flowers and of boxes of chocolates occupy one wall. Other works range from the speculative (Raynes Birkbeck's canvases referencing extraterrestrial narratives) to the political (Dapper Bruce Lafitte's detailed cartographic drawings of a post-Katrina New Orleans). But assemblage is one shared theme, as seen in the mixed-media portraits of the Reverend Joyce McDonald, which incorporate clay, beads, African textiles, and, in one particularly beautiful piece, aluminum foil. Curtis Cuffie, who is best known for his elaborate public installations in the East Village, is represented here by smaller works, such as a shard of lucite held in a vise. In bringing these remarkable works into the same easy conversation, Gordon undercuts stale assumptions about so-called outsider artists while establishing a vibrant alternative lineage.

—*Johanna Fateman*

Through March 7.

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