

## **EAST COAST VIDEO**

*Ramis Barquet*

*532 West 24th Street*

*Chelsea*

*Through Aug. 14*

This smart, cool show, organized by Nick Kilner, presents five videos by six artists. With one exception, each involves a straightforward shot of human performers. In “With Open Arms” (2005), the artist and performer Kate Gilmore repeatedly flings her arms wide as though about to burst into song, at which point she is pelted by tomatoes thrown from off-camera. Her determinedly cheerful bravado is funny and sad.

In “Test Run” (2004), Alex McQuilkin films her face as bathtub water rises and covers it. For a long time she holds her breath underwater. A dreamlike feeling creeps in. Then she suddenly erupts to the surface, gasping for air.

Rashaad Newsome’s “Shade Compositions: Screen Tests 1 & 2” (2008-9) is loaded with sociological complexity. Following instructions from an off-screen director, young black women perform gestural, facial and vocal mannerisms commonly associated with black women. It’s a wry comment on racial stereotyping and identity politics.

Jamie Diamond’s “Untitled, From the History of the Portrait Series” (2009) is more enigmatic. Two monitors show the same

well-dressed, male-female couple sitting on a couch from the neck down. For undisclosed reasons, they move closer, hold hands and move apart, generating a frustratingly lukewarm sexual tension.

Finally, the team of Caraballo-Farman offers “For a While We Were All Protagonists” (2007), in which colorful, battery-driven vibrators — some of which light up — run until exhausted. It is not profound but it is fun to watch for about half a minute. **KEN JOHNSON**