

CHARLES GAINES (b. 1944, Charleston, SC)

***Submerged Text: Representations of Race***, 1997-2003.

Silkscreen text, ink, paper, wall installation

Dimensions variable

*Exhibitions:*

*Charles Gaines: A Survey Exhibition, 1979-1991*. Gallery Lavignes-Bastille, Paris; John Weber Gallery, New York; Leo Castelli, New York; Dorothy Goldeen Gallery, Santa Monica, Calif., 1991-93

*Notes:*

A paragraph or two from an article in a magazine, or a section of a book is selected. The text is visually scanned to select words that references 'race'. It is important that the subject of the essay is not about 'race'. The point is to select words that infer that meaning even though they are not used that way in the text.

*Submerged Text: Representation of Race* was completed both as drawings and as wall works. The area of the drawing or the wall is mapped out with horizontal guidelines. The intention was to use the guidelines to copy the chosen words from the text on to the drawing paper or the wall. The list of selected words is therefore written out. They are located in the same scale position that they were found in the actual article. Words not selected are not used. Instead, the letters and the space between words are numbered, and these numbers are counted out on the drawing or the wall.

Even though the chosen text was not about 'race', the selected words form a text that produces the subject of race. The text is highly charged as we discover that the signifiers of 'race' are themselves politically charged. But this is due to cultural convention and not to the intention of the artist.

*Literature:*

Cotter, Holland. "Charles Gaines Survey Exhibition: 1991-2004," *New York Times*, 30 April 1991, p. B31.

Geer, Suvan. "Group Effort Using Science Pays Off." *Los Angeles Times*, 19 July 1991.

Gookin, Kirby. *Charles Gaines: A Survey Exhibition, 1979-1991*. Paris: Lavignes-Bastille Gallery, 1991, ill. p. 21-25 (color)