

# The New York Times

**Art in Review**  
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**Matthew Monahan**

Anton Kern Gallery  
532 West 20th Street  
Chelsea  
Through Thursday

The sculptor Matthew Monahan has been moving backward through time. Now, in his fifth solo at Anton Kern, he's in his own personal Bronze Age, a departure from the Dieter Roth-esque, wax, foam and glass figures he exhibited a few years ago.

The change isn't all about Mr. Monahan's choice of material; it's also driven by his art-historical wanderlust. The square-headed, columnar "(Sub)Mariner" nods to Olmec carved-stone sculpture (though it's bronze with a white patina), while "Mask (Concentric Self)," essentially a set of giant ears linked by a cylinder, looks more West African.

More impressive than the range of references, though, is the bizarre and often competitive relationship between the figures and their pedestals. The elegantly attenuated "Lady Barb" rests on a hollow, patinated bronze base with side cutouts that reveal glimpses of a beautifully polished interior; it's a neat twist on the medieval reliquary. And the one-armed warrior of "Young Nitrate" stands on a pile of bricks, his lower body imprisoned in aluminum stocks.

The skeletal figures in "Body Electric," scratched into oil-coated boards with a fork, are more awkwardly primitivist. But Mr. Monahan can toggle among sculpture, drawing and printmaking without much trouble, as he has in past shows and does here in the back room.

In the sculpture "Stainless Lingam," an image of a Virgin or Saint is photocopied onto urethane and rolled around a priapic tube. And a satisfying series of etchings leaps from manuscript illuminations right into Cubo-Futurism.

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