



Ken Gonzales-Day, "St. James Park," inkjet on vinyl, 2006

## **KEN GONZALES-DAY: LYNCHING IN THE WEST**

CUE Art Foundation

511 West 25th St. between Tenth & Eleventh Aves.

Closed Sunday & Monday

Through October 14

Admission: free

212-206-3583

<http://www.cueartfoundation.org>

Investigating the history of the lynching of Latinos in California, Ken Gonzales-Day discovered that more Hispanics than blacks were hanged in California between 1850 and 1935. Just as these events have been erased from history textbooks and the minds of most Americans, so too have the anonymous victims been erased from Gonzales-Day's photos. In the black-and-white inkjet print "St. James Park," dozens of men and women lurk around a tree (from which a man used to hang); Gonzales-Day has removed the victim from the familiar image, leaving the spectators to suddenly become the subject of the photo, making them all equally guilty. "Golden Chain" might look like a beautiful tree cast against a bright blue sky, but its meaning changes when you realize it was the site of hangings many years before. The same is true of the moss-covered tree tilting toward the ground (perhaps with the weight of its past) in "At Daylight the Miserable Man Was Carried to an Oak," its captivating color hiding its lurid story. The exhibit also includes historical postcards such as "Cowboy Justice" and "Santa Rosa Triple Lynching" that featured lynchings on them when they were purchased and mailed, but these disturbing images have been removed by Gonzales-Day, paying tribute to the victims while also placing the people who watched and/or committed these atrocities (and those who distributed these images, in stores and through the post office) front and center to face their crimes.

[www.twi-ny.com](http://www.twi-ny.com)