

AT THE GALLERIES

NEW YORK

Jen DeNike

In seven identical video portraits, unremarkable men sing variations of the 1970s one-hit wonder *Seasons in the Sun*. Terry Jack's iconic song, once pitched to the Beach Boys and subsequently canned, went on to become a staple of the era and the song was

covered by countless others. At Oliver Kamm/5BE Gallery, Jen DeNike's new series of covers, amateur karaoke videos of sorts, are generically staged at the oceanfront. The shoeless singers, blocked center stage, sing self-consciously off pitch. In combination, the atonal chorus creates a chaotic, claustrophobic space, tempered disconcertingly by the performers corniness. *Seasons*, originally a French poem, tells the story of a dying man, who says his farewells to family and friends. Terry Jack adapted the poem to *Lighten up* his schmaltzy song. Its greeting-card sincerity inspires DeNike's unflattering portraits — caricatures of male sentimentality.

—Matt Wolf

JEN DeNIKE, *Seasons In The Sun*, 2005. 7-channel video installation, Courtesy Oliver Kamm/5BE Gallery, New York. Photo: Becket Logan.

