

# The Palm Beach Post

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### Mural brings civil rights inspiration to CityPlace's social setting

By Tony Doris



Artist Rico Gatson's mural *Mountain Top*, inspired by the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, underway on CityPlace's Gardenia Garage on Friday. The work relates to the assassinated civil rights leader's final speech, in which he says "I have been to the mountaintop and I have seen the promised land." The project will be complete by February 2019. [BRUCE R. BENNETT/palmbeachpost.com]

WEST PALM BEACH — Artist Rico Gatson is bringing the legacy of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. to downtown West Palm Beach's CityPlace, with a series of multi-colored triangles in progress called *Mountain Top*, on the center's Gardenia Garage, harkening to the assassinated reverend's final speech.

The mural, in a palette of green, red, black, orange and violet, draws its inspiration from King's words, "I have been to the mountain top and I have seen the promised land."

Gatson is conducting a free public talk Monday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in CityPlace's Culture Lab, 575 S. Rosemary Ave. The talk will focus on Gatson's political artwork, as well as on King's impact.



Artist Rico Gatson's mural *Mountain Top*, inspired by the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., is scheduled to be completed by February 2019 [BRUCE R. BENNETT/palmbeachpost.com]

Despite its thoughtful undercurrents, the outwardly cheerful work contributes to CityPlace's "reimagining," an effort to make the dining, shopping and entertainment center more colorful and inviting to visitors. Rosemary Avenue is undergoing transformation into a curb-less plaza, taking the emphasis off cars and placing it on pedestrians.

Gatson, a Brooklyn artist, has made his name with political and confrontational themes touching on black history. These include images of the Watts riots, Black Panthers and the election of Barack Obama. Gatson works in painting, video, sculpture and installations, thinking of himself as "an object maker," he says.

*Mountain Top* is scheduled to be completed in February.

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