



# THE ART NEWSPAPER

## Three Exhibitions to See in New York This Weekend

By Wallace Ludel and Gabriella Angeleti

4 December 2020

Our editors and writers scour the city each week for the most thoughtful, relevant and exciting new exhibitions and artworks on view at galleries, museums and public venues across all five boroughs of New York. This week we recommend:



Rico Gatson, *Untitled (Young Mystics)* (2020) Courtesy of the artist and Miles McEnergy Gallery

### **Rico Gatson: Ghosts**

Until 19 December at Miles McEnergy Gallery, 520 West 21st Street, Manhattan

Rico Gatson works across painting, sculpture, video and collage, often using abstraction as a means to explore the Black experience in America. In his show at Miles McEnergy, he demonstrates how he has been able to use the same visual lexicon developed in works past to investigate Blackness in its relationship to the mystical, opening doors to see how one experience may bleed into the next. At what point does a struggle transcend the corporeal? And how are beauty and innovation possible in the midst of it all? The show's paintings are done in acrylic on wooden, door-sized panels, and some paintings, like *Untitled (Rainbow)* (all works 2020), probe this metaphor of the threshold even further. *Untitled (Ghosts After Albert Ayler)* uses abstraction to explore how the titular jazz musician pushed sonic boundaries to their outermost extremes, with combating upright and inverted geometry that allude to the poignancy of conflicting desires—Ayler pushed beauty to its extremes, then took his own life. Also on view are a half dozen works on paper from Gatson's ongoing Icons series, which collage images of historic Black figures amidst the artist's sunburst-like rays. —Wallace Ludel