

Galerie

From Coast to Coast, 8 Must-See Gallery Shows in January 2023

By Paul Laster | 4 January 2023



Rico Gatson, *Cicely*, 2022.

PHOTO: COURTESY THE ARTIST AND MILES MCENERY GALLERY, NEW YORK

I. Rico Gatson at Miles McEnery Gallery, New York

A 1991 Yale MFA grad, Rico Gatson has been actively making and exhibiting work in a variety of media—including video, sculpture, painting and collage—for the past 30 years. Widely recognized for his “Icon” series of collages commemorating Black cultural beacons, which currently grace a Bronx subway station as massive mosaic murals, Gatson is presenting new abstract paintings that explore history, race and power through geometric symbols and vibrant colors in “Spectral Visions.”

Large-scale paintings on wood take confederate flags, Klansmen hoods, targets and keyholes as points of departure for hard-edge abstractions with graphic stripes, circles and triangles, which are dynamically rendered—and often layered—in a vivid, pulsating palette. Sparkling glitter brings attention to select areas of black paint, as if to highlight the suggested subjects of the racial wrongdoing. Preferring to keep his paintings in an objectified form, the artist paints on readymade wooden doors (think portals, leading to a better place) or planks of wood, as in his multi-patterned piece *Untitled (Seven Panels)*. The powerful panels are displayed deeper into the gallery, where several new “Icon” images, including *Cicely* and *Sidney*, are also on view.