

RICO GATSON

19 NOVEMBER – 19 DECEMBER 2020

NEW YORK, NEW YORK – MILES McENERY GALLERY is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings and works on paper by Rico Gatson. The exhibition, *Ghosts*, will open on 19 November at 520 West 21st Street and remain on view until 19 December 2020. *Ghosts* is accompanied by a fully illustrated publication featuring an essay by Antwaun Sargent.

Over the course of the last three decades, Rico Gatson has developed a language that includes painting, sculpture, collage, and video and that has been chiefly concerned with the icons and symbols of history, race and power. He developed his interest in color and geometric symbols while studying Graphic Design and Fine Art as an undergraduate in the 1980s. While he began experimenting with the formal simplicity of Minimalism and Constructivism, his most recent works are rooted in abstract mysticism.



Gatson employs a limited and specific repertoire of lines, colors, and geometric representations. His language of color and shape is drawn from an African-American sensibility to create optical, repeated patterns. “There’s a fast and slow thing that occurs within the work,” notes the artist. “The pattern and color are spatially active to the point that I hope the loudness produces a focus that slows the viewer down.”

Gatson’s exploration of the transformative possibility of color and shape is evident in his ongoing series of works on paper, *Icons* (2007–). The series pays homage to what he calls “Black Cultural Beacons” and goes beyond their political and cultural meaning. In this body of work, Gatson extracts monochrome images of civil rights leaders, musicians, actors, and writers from found photographs and recreates them juxtaposed against mesmerizing rays of color, as if they were suns at the center of their own universes.

RICO GATSON (b. 1966 in Augusta, GA) received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Bethel College in 1989 and his Master of Fine Arts degree from Yale School of Art in 1991.

Recent solo exhibitions include “Ghosts,” Miles McEnery Gallery, New York, NY; “My Eyes Have Seen,” Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York, NY; “Rico Gatson: 2007-2017,” The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; “Power Lines,” Samsøñ Projects, Boston, MA; “Rico Gatson: When She Speaks,” Studio I0, Brooklyn, NY; “The Promise of Light,” Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, NY; “2013 Ginsberg Artist in Residence, Rico Gatson,” Wright Museum of Art, Beloit College, Beloit, WI; “RICO GATSON: Three Trips Around the Block,” Exit Art, New York, NY and “History Lessons,” Suzanne Lemberg Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, Bennington, VT.

Recent group exhibitions include “True Lines,” Over The Influence, Los Angeles, CA; “New Symphony of Time,” Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, MS; “Historicity,” Ochi Projects, Los Angeles, CA; “Art + Activism: Drawing the Line,” Children’s Museum of Art, New York, NY; “Jazz and Love,” La Viellie Chartié, Marseille, France; “Identity Document,” Gallery Bergen, Bergen Community College, Paramus, NJ; “We the People,” Minnesota Museum of American Art, St. Paul, MN; “1967: Parallels in Black Art and Rebellion,” Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Detroit, MI; “Phantom,” OSMOS, New York, NY; “Accumulation: 5000 Years of Objects, Fictions, and Conversations,” Mead Art Museum, Amherst College, Amherst, MA; “Every Five Minutes,” Columbus State University, Columbus, GA; “Language Product,” Boston Arts Academy, Boston, MA; “When Artists Speak Truth...,” The 8th Floor, New York, NY and “Magic Objects” (curated by Rico Gatson), 99 Cent Plus Gallery, New York, NY.

His work is included in the permanent collections of The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, MN; Bethel College, St. Paul, MN; Cheekwood Museum of Art, Nashville, TN; Denver Art Museum, Denver CO; Kempner Museum, Kansas City, MO; Malcolm X Institute, Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN; Mead Art Museum, Amherst, MA; Peter Norton Family Foundation, Santa Monica, CA and Yale University Art

Miles McEnery Gallery

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Gallery, New Haven, CT.

He is the recipient of many awards including the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award for Visual Artists; Prized Pieces Video Award from the National Black Programming Consortium; Oil Bar Ltd. Award for Excellence in Sculpture from Yale School of Art and the Pew Charitable Trust Graduate Fellowship.

Rico Gatson lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

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Miles McEnergy Gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM and by appointment.

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 [@milesmcenergy.gallery](https://www.instagram.com/milesmcenergy.gallery)

Image: Untitled (*Fiery Fire*), 2020, Acrylic paint on wood, 36 x 80 inches, 91.4 x 203.2 cm

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