

Galerie

8 Must-See Gallery Shows in December

BY PAUL LASTER, DECEMBER 6, 2022

JAMES LITTLE AT KAVI GUPTA, CHICAGO

Moving from Memphis to New York in the 1970s, James Little joined a group of Black artists—including Ed Clark, Al Loving, Jack Whitten and Stanley Whitney—who were genuinely committed to abstraction. Exhibiting regularly over the past 40 years, he nonetheless remained under the art world's radar until his paintings were included in the 2022 Whitney Biennial, which brought immediate attention to the 70-year-old artist. Mixing his own materials and devising new application methods, he makes geometric abstractions with shifting planes of color and all-over compositions, which capture the dynamism the artist finds in both creativity and existence.

For the “Black Stars & White Paintings” exhibition, his first solo show in Chicago, the Brooklyn-based artist is presenting paintings from two ongoing series. The black star canvases are made with parallel, shaded stripes that create a star form within a rectangle, while the more experimental white works consist of dozens of layers of handmade encaustic paints, which he painstakingly applies to a grid of circles and squares with an eye dropper. Little is a purist when it comes to painting, with both methods of working leading to eye-catching, meditative results.



James Little, *Spangled Stars*, 2022.