

FORT GANSEVOORT

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Goings on About Town

By Andrea K. Scott

Michelangelo Lovelace

Almost forty years after he started painting, in Cleveland, at the age of nineteen, Lovelace makes his impressive New York début with sixteen trenchant depictions of local life, from a P-Funk party and a political rally to an allegory of gun violence. Most of the images integrate text (on billboards, church signs, and T-shirts) into teeming street scenes, suggesting an unexpected alliance of two other Ohio-bred greats, Jenny Holzer and George Bellows. Lovelace attended art school for a time, in the nineteen-eighties, but had to sideline his studies for financial reasons, not the least of them fatherhood. He now supports his family as a nurse's aide, but he has never stopped making art. The vibrant and prismatically structured acrylic-on-canvas works in "The Land" (the show's title and Cleveland's nickname) bring to mind Charles Baudelaire's classic description of a painter of modern life: "a kaleidoscope gifted with consciousness."

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