

ARTnews

reviews: new york

Ryan Mosley

Tierney Gardarin

Some motifs recur in Ryan Mosley's paintings: beards, afros, skulls, stages, prickly pear cacti, triangles. These seemingly disparate things are assembled into rambunctious scenes that recall paranormal rituals and historic paintings from

alchemy, Rosicrucianism, or freemasonry. Or he has simply made up his own hermetic system.

In both *Delta House Blues* (2012) and *Thoughts of Man* (2013), skulls appear as ghastly, though charming, characters (with big hairdos) in the main narratives, and as huge, semi-architectural forms hidden in the backgrounds. Portholes

and afros can double as eye sockets for these camouflaged craniums, and patterned shirts worn by heavily whiskered men correspond to nose holes. Whatever spirits Mosley may be conjuring, he is definitely a bold visionary unafraid to probe the dark mysteries that linger in our world—or in parallel worlds.

—Trent Morse



Ryan Mosley, *Delta House Blues*, 2012,
oil on linen, 90½" x 78½". Tierney Gardarin.