

ART WORLD

David Ebony's Top 10 New York Gallery Shows This Winter

David Ebony, Friday, January 29, 2016



Installation view, Tauba Auerbach, "Projective Instrument," 2016.

1. Tauba Auerbach at Paula Cooper, through February 13.

"Projective Instrument," an elegant and exciting show of new works by San Francisco-born artist Tauba Auerbach, features large-scale abstract paintings as well as table-like sculptures which hold curious glass objects that resemble scientific instruments. Auerbach was inspired by a 1915 treatise by American architect and theosophist Claude Bragdon, in which he outlined a system for representing four-dimensional ornament on a two-dimensional plane.

With consummate craftsmanship and a visionary's intensity, Auerbach adapts Bragdon's proposals into a unified iconography that resonates throughout the show. In the sculptures, Auerbach transforms Bragdon's "ornaments" into three-dimensional "instruments." The paintings as well as the three-dimensional works highlight repeated patterns—lines and shapes alluding to the vortex and the helix, thus to movement and the passage of time. A number of the glass pieces, resulting from Auerbach's recent residency at Urban Glass in Brooklyn, are refined and imaginative interpretations of the ancient Greek "meander" pattern; only now, they convey ultra-cool precision and a rather menacing beauty.