

The New York Times

ART & DESIGN

What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries Right Now

By **Travis Diehl, Roberta Smith, Jason Farago and Will Heinrich**

Sept. 28, 2022

Want to see new art in New York this weekend? Start in TriBeCa to see works by Yevgeniya Baras and Julia Kunin. Then head to the Lower East Side for Rindon Johnson's tribute to Cuvier's beaked whales. And don't miss Sturtevant's mind-blowing mini-retrospective in Chelsea, as well as a little taste of Capri at Gagosian's Upper East Side location.

Newly Reviewed

Summer hours vary at galleries. Visitors should check in advance.

TRIBECA

Yevgeniya Baras | Julia Kunin

Through Oct. 15. Mother Gallery, 368 Broadway, Manhattan; 845-236-6039,
mothergallery.art.



“Untitled” (2017-2021), a relief-like painting by Yevgeniya Baras at Mother Gallery. via Yevgenia Baras and Mother

Not many gallery exhibitions look as perfect as this one. Titled “Wild Chambers,” it presents five ceramic wall reliefs by Julia Kunin, who specializes in slightly crazed, sometimes Baroque forms animated by the gleam and variegated colors of luster glazes, in conversation with five relief-like paintings by Yevgeniya Baras, who builds lines and shapes into somewhat raised, visionary talismans. The pairing fits exquisitely into the modest one-room TriBeCa outpost of Mother Gallery, whose home base is in Beacon, N.Y.

Both artists, who live in New York, use an unresolvable tension between the abstract and representational as a main power source in their work. Kunin's compartmentalized surfaces give glimpses of extruded eyes, mouths and breasts while outbursts of incised drawing add a second level of consciousness. Their effect is both hilarious and primeval and evokes Picasso's "[Weeping Woman](#)," minus the tears, as well as Adolph Gottlieb's divided compositions given a matriarchal vibe. Dating from 2015-16, these pieces are among Kunin's best.



Julia Kunin's "Chambered Rainbow," a 2016 ceramic. via Julia Kunin and Mother

Baras uses thick paint, small pieces of wood and canvas collage to give surfaces, shapes and brushstrokes lives of their own, while calling to mind the paintings of [Paul Klee](#), [Forrest Bess](#) and [Elizabeth Murray](#). Baras's largest painting (untitled, like the rest) could be a swaddled infant or an erupting volcano. But what matters most is the staccato energy of her green or black bars and lines against the paler, stirred-up fields of lavenders, blues and tans. Like Kunin, Baras imbues the physical and formal aspects of her art with an unusual emotional magnetism. *ROBERTA SMITH*