

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TAUBA AUERBACH
Projective Instrument

534 W 21st Street

January 9 – February 13, 2016

Opening reception: January 9, 6pm – 8pm

NEW YORK – The Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to announce *Projective Instrument*, an exhibition of new work by Tauba Auerbach. The artist will exhibit a series of new paintings and sculptures accompanied by a library and two new publications from her imprint, *Diagonal Press*. The exhibition will be on view from January 9 through February 13, 2016 at 534 West 21st Street. There will also be a series of three concerts, inaugurated with a performance by Zs at the opening reception on January 9th, followed by MSHR on January 23rd and Travis Laplante & Peter Evans' record release performance on February 6th.

Projective Instrument celebrates and builds on the 1915 treatise *Projective Ornament*, by the American architect and theosophist Claude Bragdon, in which the author outlines a system for drawing four-dimensional ornament on a two-dimensional plane. Bragdon believed that, while practical concerns must guide architectural design, its ornamentation provides a critical opportunity for meaningful expression, the erasure of societal divisions and, ultimately, divine transcendence. Auerbach felt a kinship between Bragdon's thinking and her own — that consciousness is a four-dimensional material and that the decorative motifs and glyphs which persist throughout history do so because of their resemblance to underlying structures in the natural world: the wave, the vortex, the helix. Using Bragdon's methodology as a point of departure, Auerbach empowers projective geometry, recasting *Ornament* as *Instrument*, thereby rendering it an active tool rather than mere representation. Auerbach asserts that these figures bring us into closer contact with the mysterious and ecstatic fundamental truths of the universe: ornament as entheogen¹.

In the center of the gallery the artist will present a series of glass sculptures inspired by tools, measuring implements, and fabric. The works were all made by Auerbach during her recent residency at Urban Glass. Bent borosilicate helixes thread through one another to create *A Flexible Fabric of Inflexible Parts*. Another multipart sculpture, comprised of dozens of 3D-printed components, evokes a geomantic altar or the explosion diagram of an engine. Each element begins with the structure of a helix;

¹ "Chemical substance, typically of plant origin, that is ingested to produce a nonordinary state of consciousness for religious or spiritual purposes" (OED).

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iterations of the classic Greek Key or “meander” fret are manipulated and distorted with increasing variation; rotationally symmetric patterns are crossed, interlaced, twisted, extruded into a third dimension and then extruded again—a projection of motion into a fourth.

For her new series of large-scale acrylic paintings, Auerbach marks each work by dragging a custom-made instrument across the surface, inscribing patterns derived from chainmaille, fractal curves, and four-dimensional tilings into the paint. Like the helix, the gesture that activates the tool is defined by both translation and rotation. In addition to her acrylic works, Auerbach will show a selection of new *Weave* paintings. Begun in 2011, this series uses weaving to transform the flat picture plane, embedding macro- and micro- architecture, light and sublimation into its very structure.

A portion of the gallery’s bookstore will be dedicated to Diagonal Press, Auerbach’s imprint established in 2013. On the occasion of the exhibition, Diagonal will republish Bragdon’s *Projective Ornament* and *A Primer of Higher Space* – both touchstones for Auerbach. A Diagonal Press Library will offer a selection of forty to fifty books related to the exhibition, many of which have acted as meaningful reference points for the artist in recent years.

Tauba Auerbach was born in San Francisco in 1981 and earned a BA in Visual Art from Stanford University in 2003. She has exhibited internationally in important one-person exhibitions such as *The New Ambidextrous Universe* (2014) at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, and *Tetrachromat* (2011) that opened at Bergen Kunsthall, Norway, and traveled to Malmö Konsthall, Sweden, and Wiels Contemporary Art Center, Brussels. Her work has also been exhibited in a number of major museum shows, notably *Reciprocal Score: Tauba Auerbach + Charlotte Posenenske* at Indipendenza Studio, Rome (2015); *DECORUM: Carpets and tapestries by artists* at the Musée d’Art Moderne, Paris (2014-15); the Walker Art Center’s *Lifelike* (2012); *The Indiscipline of Painting* at Tate St. Ives (2011-12); the 2010 Whitney Biennial; MoMA P.S.1’s *Greater New York* (2010) and the New Museum’s *Younger Than Jesus* (2009). In 2011 she received the Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship Award.