

**OBSERVER**

Installation view: Sanford Biggers "The Gift of Tongues" at Marianne Boesky.  
Photo: Jason Wyche

## 10 AMBITIOUS GALLERY SHOWS TO SEE DURING FRIEZE NEW YORK

By Elisa Carollo  
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As the city embarks once again upon its springtime marathon of fairs and marquee auctions, galleries across Chelsea, Tribeca, the Lower East Side and the Upper East Side are mounting some of the best sculptural and installation-driven exhibitions New York has seen in years.

Spring has finally arrived in New York, and with it the city's annual two-week art world endurance test: marquee auctions colliding with an almost excessive concentration of fairs that only the Big Apple—the still-undisputed capital of the global art market—could sustain with a straight face. As Frieze, et al., once again pull collectors, curators and art world nomads from across the globe, galleries in Manhattan and the surrounding boroughs are unveiling some of their strongest shows of the year—many of which are surprisingly ambitious, sculptural and installation-heavy, defying the myth that New York's gallery scene has become nothing more than a glossy extension of the market. To help navigate the sprawling geography of shows opening across Chelsea, Tribeca, the Lower East Side and what remains of the Upper East Side, Observer has selected 10 must-see exhibitions worth a stop as you scurry from fairs to auction previews.

# BOESKY GALLERY

## **Sanford Biggers' "The Gift of Tongues"**

Marianne Boesky Gallery

Through June 13, 2026

For his new exhibition at Marianne Boesky, Sanford Biggers goes all in, staging an immersive, psychedelic choreography articulated through quilt-based two-dimensional works, layered canvases and eclectic sculptural assemblages drawing from multiple iconographies and cultures. "The Gift of Tongues" unfolds as a fluid, idiosyncratic crossing of histories and creative expressions, all seemingly converging in a simultaneously imaginative and spiritual pull toward transcendence beyond earthly, time-bound reality. Biggers transforms the gallery's White Cube into a kind of playhouse: an intricate theatrical labyrinth of strategically placed curtains and false walls where new works from his Codex, Chimera and Shimmer series emerge like fragmented vignettes, inviting visitors to move through a tangled web of historical assumptions and slippery symbols—a patchwork of mutable archetypes that remains perpetually open to reinterpretation. Biggers works through a deliberately hybrid practice combining painting, sculpture, textiles, video, performance, sound and archival material, creating collisions between materials, histories and symbolic systems that layer African diasporic traditions with American popular culture, Buddhism, jazz improvisation and postminimalist abstraction.