

# The New York Times

## What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in May

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By Travis Diehl, [Yinka Elujoba](#) and John Vincler

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*This week in Newly Reviewed, Travis Diehl covers art from the scrap heap, Liz Magic Laser's homage to art handlers and Tolia Astakhishvili's architectural interventions.*

### Tolia Astakhishvili

Through Aug. 12. SculptureCenter, 44-19 Purves Street, Queens; 718-361-1750, [sculpture-center.org](https://sculpture-center.org).



Tolia Astakhishvili's "When the others are within us," 2024, (detail); plasterboard, wood, oil, coffee, pigment, cement, hooks and found objects. via Tolia Astakhishvili, LC Queisser, Tbilisi, and SculptureCenter, New York; Photo by Charles Benton

Installations by the Georgian artist Tolia Astakhishvili evoke half-remembered ruins. With help from SculptureCenter's exhibitions crew and contributions from artist friends, Astakhishvili has filled the yawning main gallery of this former trolley repair shop with towers, boxes, walls and a row of open closets, precisely constructed yet roughly finished in wallboard. Delicate clusters of jewelry, chains, dishes and clipped-out pictures deepen the appealing sense of neglect, while sound works, framed collages and a video, some by Astakhishvili, some by her friends, signal the artist's careful attention.

The first sculpture you encounter — "The endless house" — mimics a section of SculptureCenter's basement, with a distinctive pattern of thick and thin ribs. At one end is "La foudre," a cast-bronze branch by Katinka Bock, suspended inside, while a speaker emits a soundtrack of ambient road noise arranged by Dylan Pierce. The lonesome honks harmonize with the sound of purring engines in Astakhishvili's installation of car motors across the room, and the white noise of an air-vent sculpture around the corner.

The space feels plausible yet improbable — a pleasant contradiction. In the sculpture "When the others are within us," an open plasterboard chute climbs 30 feet into the building's clerestory; buttons and hardware litter the floor, while hooks, baskets, drawings and tools encrust the interior to the top. A 3-D-printed resin model stuck to the building's brick wall describes dreamlike rooms, some without windows or doors. Astakhishvili's work brings to mind both expansive structure and claustrophobic delicacy, until you're unsure where the show ends — whether a tidy pile of bricks and doorstops is art, for example, or accidentally enchanting.