

Matthew RONAY

The New Yorker,
Matthew Ronay

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ART

Matthew Ronay



Art work © Matthew Ronay / Courtesy the artist and Casey Kaplan

Nov. 4-Jan. 8
Kaplan
121 W. 27th St.

Looking at the exhilarating hand-carved and dyed sculptures of **Matthew Ronay** at the Casey Kaplan gallery, I found myself thinking of octopuses—and not just because, under the American artist’s blade, wood can appear as undulant as a tentacle. The psychonautic ethnobotanist Terence McKenna championed cephalopods for the uncanny eloquence of their visual language; the animals express themselves by shifting their surface colors and textures, and those are Ronay’s remarkable abilities, too. Subaquatic ecosystems are among the many associations that the twelve virtuosic, biomorphic abstractions on view (through Jan. 8) usher in. “Reinstantiationizer,” from 2021 (pictured), suggests the absurd, interlocked logic of a Rube Goldberg machine, had it been designed by the Surrealist Yves Tanguy—or the percussive instruments of a gamelan, waiting to sound

their gongs in Alberto Giacometti's multipart wooden masterpiece, from 1932 "The Palace at 4 A.M."

— *Andrea K. Scott*