

PRESSBOOK

Jean-Michel OTHONIEL

Wallpaper

March 2018

Jean-Michel Othoniel's elemental artworks are creating the perfect storm in New York

* wallpaper.com/art/jean-michel-othoniel-dark-matters-galerie-perrotin



Installation view of 'Dark Matters' by Jean-Michel Othoniel at Galerie Perrotin, New York.
Photography: Guillaume Ziccarelli. Courtesy of Perrotin

Information

'Dark Matters' is on view until 15 April. For more information, visit the [Galerie Perrotin website](#)

Address

Galerie Perrotin
130 Orchard Street
New York

Beaded spirals pirouette through the air at [Galerie Perrotin's](#) freshly renovated space in the landmark Beckenstein building at 130 Orchard Street in [New York](#), once a fabric factory and now converted into five floors for programming directed by Peggy Leboeuf and Emmanuel Perrotin. Suspended as the artworks are, their stilled movement reminds you of a dancer, a whirling mobile — or, as the titles suggest, a tornado. Jean-Michel Othoniel's elemental, monochrome pearls of aluminium, mirrored glass and stainless steel, are part of the artist's latest solo exhibition, 'Dark Matters', his idea of a perfect storm.

Over a 20-year career, the French artist has become known for his mastery of glass. Elsewhere in the gallery, glass brick 'stonewalls' in brilliant turquoise and warm amber glisten and shine – a grotto even awaits the viewer, complete with a fountain. The works are the result of a trip to Firozabad, India, to research glassmaking techniques, observing local craftsmen.

Othoniel's *Precious Stonewalls* – one of them stretching to 17 metres across the gallery and looking as though you could dive into it – are experiments in radical architecture, made with glass brought back from India and arranged to refer to the stacks of bricks the artist observed piled up on roadsides in India. Their titles, meanwhile, are also a nod to the Stonewall riots on Christopher Street in 1969, a protest for LGBT rights.



Installation view of 'Dark Matters' by Jean-Michel Othoniel at Galerie Perrotin, New York. Photography: Guillaume Zicarelli. Courtesy of Perrotin

A further series of knots paintings and sculptures are the result of a collaboration between the artist and mathematician Aubin Arroyo. Arroyo explains the interest in knot theory: 'Up until today, mathematicians have cataloged more than one and a half million different knots, starting from the simplest one towards the more complicated, and the catalogue is still growing.'

Appealing in both their form and their symbolism, Othoniel's paintings and sculptures visualise the infinite complexity of the theoretical space. Other inspirations steer from surrealism through to psychoanalysis to American artist James Lee Byars, known for his flummoxing performance pieces.

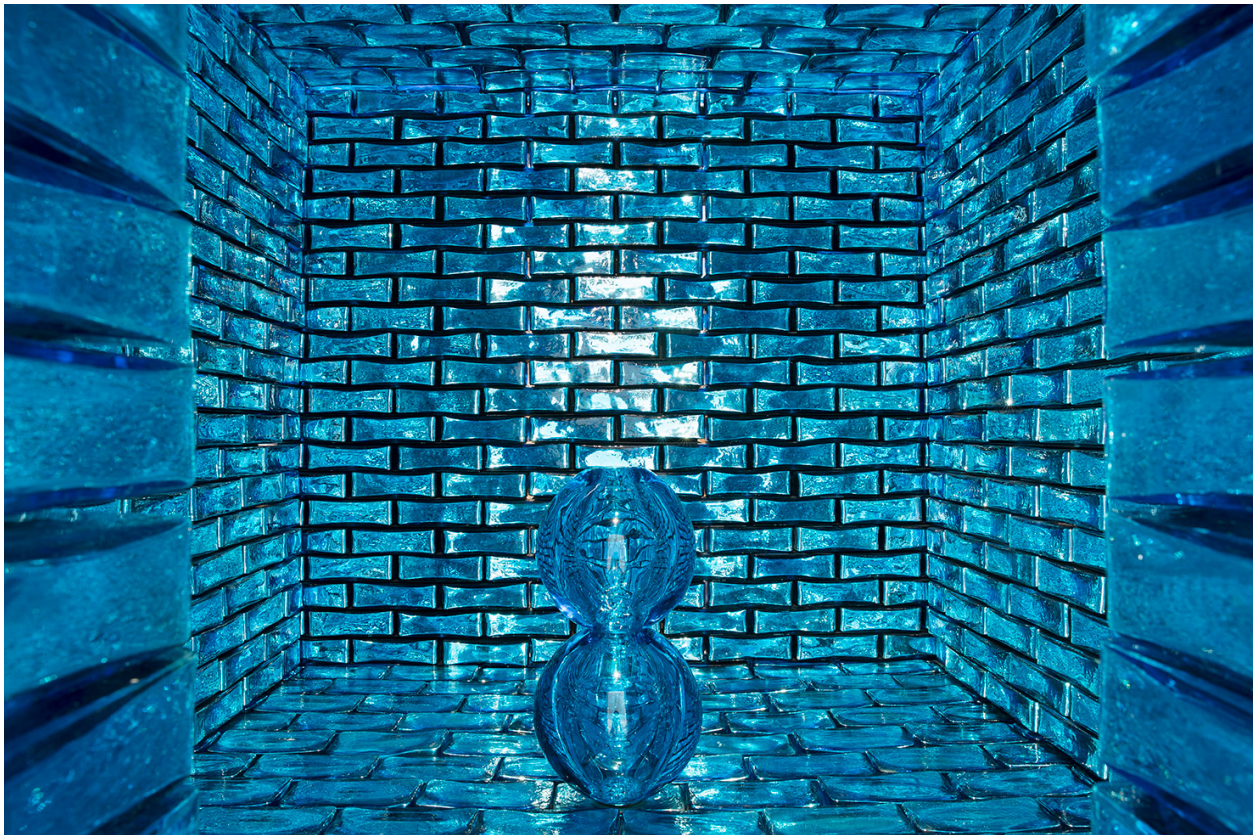
It might all be getting a bit cerebral – but Othoniel is equally invested in the beauty of things, even if it is a petulant kind of beauty. The violent force of both humans and nature comes together in 'Dark Matters', conveyed by the coldness and contradiction of the materials, and the way the works sharply interrupt the white space. Propelled by the 'desire for violent, minimal and telluric enchantment, contrasted today with the sorrow of the world', the exhibition is itself a tough knot to untangle, but sublimely tied.



Installation view of 'Dark Matters' by Jean-Michel Othoniel at Galerie Perrotin, New York.
Photography: Guillaume Ziccarelli. Courtesy of Perrotin



Installation view of 'Dark Matters' by Jean-Michel Othoniel at Galerie Perrotin, New York.
Photography: Guillaume Ziccarelli. Courtesy of Perrotin



Installation view of 'Dark Matters' by Jean-Michel Othoniel at Galerie Perrotin, New York.
Photography: Guillaume Ziccarelli. Courtesy of Perrotin