

ALEXANDRE

The New York Times

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

Want to see new art in the city? Check out Arthur Dove's swoony, museum-weight exhibition at Alexandre and Pentti Monkkonen's uncanny office environment at Jenny's.

Published May 3, 2023 Updated May 12, 2023, 1:40 a.m. ET

Arthur Dove

Through May 25. Alexandre, 25 East 73rd Street, Manhattan; 212-755-2828.

The unmissable first full survey in a quarter century of the great American modernist painter Arthur Dove (1880–1946) is a swoony, museum-weight exhibition compressed into an Upper East Side gallery the size of a one-bedroom apartment. With 40 works, more than half of them paintings, all on loan from private collections, the show deftly sketches Dove's leaping, jolting career trajectory from Manhattan magazine illustrator, to Paris Impressionist, to fully abstract painter, some say the first such in the United States.

What he was for sure was American Modernism's great visual Transcendentalist. His images of molten rain clouds and God's-eye sunrises are views of the natural world as Thoreau might have seen and, more important, felt it. Dove always said that the meteorology — the "sensation of light" — he painted was a personal, intuitive one. And only somewhat more objective were his depictions of forces he saw as threats to that light: images of derricks, freight cars and cinder barges that evoked a spreading plague of industry and pollution.

Dove's art, despite its exultations, is tough and complex, as is clear at a glance through the splendid catalogue raisonné by Debra Bricker Balken. And although his reputation grew steadily in the New York art world, that world wasn't the one he really cared about. For years he lived in a sailboat moored on Long Island. And he spent his last years in a converted one-room former post office, a space probably not much different in size from that in which this gallery survey, one of the best of the season, is installed.

HOLLAND COTTER

291 Grand Street, New York, New York 10002

25 East 73rd Street, 2nd Floor, New York, New York 10021 212.755.2828 alexandregallery.com

ALEXANDRE GALLERY ALEXANDRE FINE ART INC. ESTABLISHED 1996