

GALLERIES

Minimalist touch makes the most of everyday materials



**Tara Donovan:
Drawings & Sculpture**
At: Barbara Krakow Gallery,
10 Newbury St., through Nov. 29.
617-262-4490,
barbarakrakowgallery.com

Tara Donovan's "Untitled (Pins)" (left) imbues geometry with mysticism.

In Tara Donovan's art, you can see the democratic impulse and willingness to make any material a work of art that characterize Pop Art and Dada. There are also the obsessively repetitive gestures that have been in vogue during the last decade. Then, surprising amid the rest, there's a nod to Minimalism.

Donovan's smart and surprisingly beautiful show at the Barbara Krakow Gallery features two cunning and magical sculptures and several drawings, which are fun but come across as mere finger exercises beside their three-dimensional counterparts.

For the drawings, Donovan gathers rubber bands in a wooden box, makes a pattern of the elastics as they curl and nudge into one another, then inks them and applies a sheet of paper. The results look like a convention hall packed with skinny paramecia, their bloated heads and tails flicking this way and that in patterns across the page. The accumulation of gestures makes a fluid, engaging whole.

That accretion, from the tiny individual to the much larger whole, makes Donovan's sculptures nuanced and absorbing. "Untitled (Pins)" is a Minimalist-style cube sitting squat on the floor, 42 inches high, made up of thousands of tiny straight pins. The artist sprinkled the pins into a frame that held a smaller wooden cube inside it. She removed the frame, and the pins, locked together in a spiny tangle, held in place. Light plays over the piece in slivers, as elusive as sunlight on water, imbuing the stolid geometry of the cube with a stirring mysticism.

"Moire" features 15 spools of adding-machine paper, each ridiculously large at about a meter in diameter. They lie in a heap on the floor, one stretching, opening and undulating over the next, creating a winking moiré effect. Who knew office supplies could be so lovely?

By Cate McQuaid
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

BARBARA

KRAKOW GALLERY