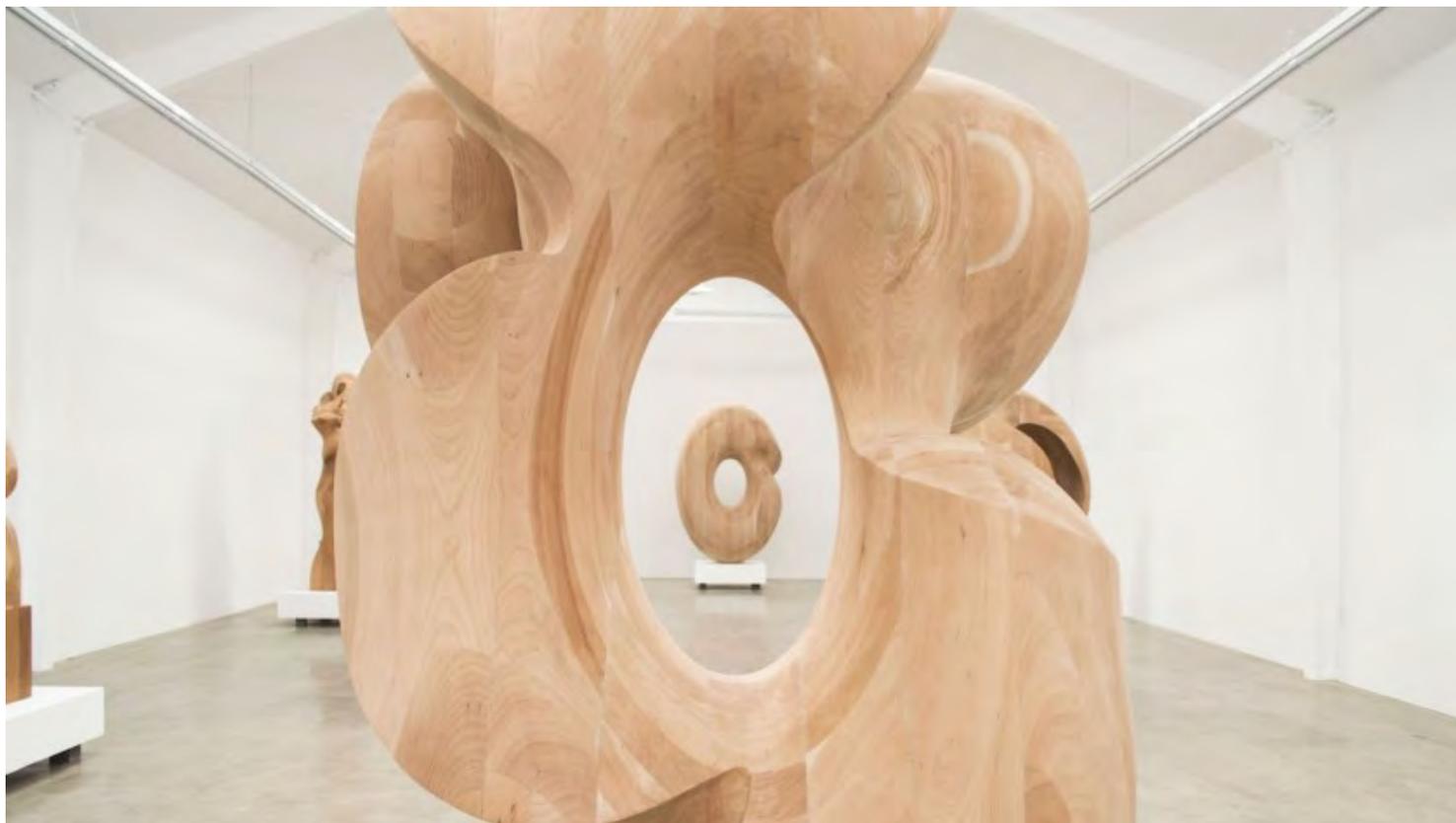




ENTERTAINMENT &amp; ARTS

## Review: Douglas Tausik Ryder's curious wood sculptures at Jason Vass Gallery



Installation view of Douglas Tausik Ryder's recent sculptures. (Jason Vass Gallery)

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JAN. 27, 2017  
12:10 PM

ART CRITIC

**W**oodworking goes digital in large-scale sculptures by Douglas Tausik Ryder. The human hand meets the alphanumeric ether, while the insistent evidence of tools and machinery acts as interlocutor.

Constantin Brancusi is an obvious inspiration for many abstracted forms in five complicated wood sculptures from the last five years at Jason Vass Gallery. (Three bronzes and a large drawing are also on view.) Here and there, nods are also made to artists as diverse as Umberto Boccioni, Isamu Noguchi and Claes Oldenburg.

But Tausik Ryder absorbs them into something peculiar and eccentric. Several are formed around an egg-shaped void, as if born of an impossible vacuum. Elsewhere, soft geometries meet bodies battered, bound or distended.



Take "Myth of Miracles," a blocky monolith with figurative undertones that's nearly 7 feet tall. Seemingly feminine, the form stands atop sturdy "thighs" and wraps a right "arm" around back and a left one across the "body" to grasp a "shoulder." No human anatomical structure is actually there, except in a suggestive, even illusory way. But the concealed figure seems helpless yet self-protective.



Move around to the back and, in a nice surprise, internal geometric openings in the wood do not conform to organic external shapes. At the bottom, a strange, child-like little chair is tucked inside smoothly carved folds of wood. Carefully honed and seamlessly pieced together wooden blocks have been charted through computer programs, pressing logical organization against psychological stress.

“Myth of Justice” is a small, tabletop bronze enveloped in crinkly fabric. It too is non-figurative, although the bulbous forms suggest a body in bondage — not justice blindfolded as much as shrouded, like Rene Magritte’s lovers frustrated in an attempted embrace.

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