

OBSERVER

Jessica Silverman: "10 Exhibitions Not to Miss During San Francisco Art Week"

By Elisa Carollo

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Installation view: "Trevor Paglen: "The Horizon Waved, and Nothing Was Certain: 2006-2026." Photo: Phillip Maisel

San Francisco and the Bay Area sit at the epicenter of one of the world's largest pockets of tech wealth, with Silicon Valley just down the road and giants like Google on prime space along the waterfront. And yet the art world has long struggled to court this audience, let alone convert it into the kind of committed buyers who once fueled the early-2000s contemporary boom, when hedge fund managers played an outsized role in shaping the market. The money is here. The question is whether the cultural circuitry knows how to plug into it.

Now in its 12th edition, FOG Design+Art has become a critical proving ground for testing that connection. Beyond its annual, tightly curated international showcase, the fair has cultivated a local collector base while amplifying the strength of the city's existing cultural ecosystem. That ecosystem spans the ambitious programming of major institutions—from SFMOMA and the de Young to the now-nomadic ICA San Francisco and the recently opened Museum of the African Diaspora—alongside a gallery scene that is both resilient and increasingly self-assured, with established woman-led spaces like *Jessica Silverman*, *Wendi Norris* and *Catherine Clark* to newer, dynamic players such as *Rebecca Camacho*, *Jonathan Carver Moore's* gallery and residency and the future-forward design gallery *Future Perfect*.

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To navigate—or simply discover—the latest artistic energies of Golden Gate City, we've compiled a list of must-see exhibitions and installations on view during San Francisco Art Week.

Observer's must-see SF Art Week shows

"The Horizon Waved, and Nothing Was Certain"

Jessica Silverman, through February 28, 2026

A timely and ominously resonant title frames this exhibition by artist, geographer and writer *Trevor Paglen*, whose practice interrogates the hidden infrastructures of power and technology that shape, monitor and control contemporary life—and increasingly, our visions of the future. Since the early 2000s, Paglen's work has focused on mapping the visual culture of surveillance and secrecy, examining how images operate within regimes of control, governance and algorithmic decision-making. This inquiry has since evolved into a sustained investigation of machine vision and A.I., raising critical questions about how images are produced, interpreted and potentially weaponized by non-human observers.

Having recently joined the roster of established yet consistently forward-looking San Francisco gallerist Jessica Silverman, Paglen presents new prints from four award-winning series that probe the outer limits of visual perception. These works reveal landscapes and skylscapes unseen by human eyes, generated instead through computer vision systems, drone surveillance technologies and imaging of secret military sites. As philosopher *Brian Holmes* has noted, these works operate at "a crossroads of critical analysis and cosmic experience... creating encounters with currently invisible realities." Paglen will participate in a panel discussion during FOG Design+Art, titled "A.I., Art & the Future of Creativity," which explores how artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping artistic production while raising urgent questions around authorship and responsibility.

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