

Diversity & Art: A Virtual Tour

Daniel Arsham

United States (b. 1980)



Future Relic

Work

Daniel Arsham is a multidisciplinary visual artist, whose art spans a variety of forms and includes sculptures, drawings, installations, and film, all of which deal with obsolescence and destruction. His immersive installations include settings or environments marred by erosion and destruction, where nature and architecture clash and invade each other's domain.

One of his installations, *Future Relics*, features dumping grounds grooved into the surface of the earth and filled to the brim with scrapped electronic gadgets, telephones, fax machines, cameras, video game equipment, boomboxes, and countless other gadgets, whose expiration date is built into their very design, making them obsolete almost as quickly as they are made, testament to the fickleness of our popular culture, and showcasing a gluttonous and wasteful hunger for devices, the sheer volume of which marks an endless gyrating chain of frenzied consumption that permeates the very earth in which we live. His *Future Relics* are exact copies of iconic pop culture products and symbols of our era, which Arsham cast after extensive research and experimentation, in "geological materials" like volcanic ash steel, obsidian, glacial rock dust, or rose quartz crystal, achieving an ancient kind of patina that alludes to, but misses by far, the beauty of Greek and Roman treasures, conjuring more visions of a charred Pompeii, and a world that has crashed and burned.

To conceive and create this art, Arsham travels to the future and back, bringing himself and the viewer face to face with our legacy, a time capsule of calcified gadgets that will tell future generations who we were. In unearthing Arsham's landfills, the future archaeologist will find the *Venus de Milo* of our time, the iPad or iPhone. Forcing us to look at ourselves in retrospect, we not only come face to face with our mortality; we are also jolted into recognizing that the consequences of whatever we do today will impact those who will follow us.

About the Artist

Daniel Arsham was born in Cleveland and grew up in Miami, where he began his career. He studied at Cooper Union in New York, where he received the Gelman Trust Fellowship Award in 2003. He currently lives in New York City.

At the young age of 25, Arsham gained national renown when acclaimed choreographer Merce Cunningham asked him to design the set for one of his productions, an unexpected and daunting challenge for the young artist, who had not trained for stage design. The set is now in the permanent collection of the Walker Museum in Minneapolis. Arsham's interest and fascination with architecture also led him to co-found Snarkitecture, a Brooklyn-based architecture firm, where he tests the boundaries of architecture's relationship with nature and our surroundings.

Arsham's work has been exhibited in various galleries and museums in the United States, including The Museum of Contemporary Art in Miami; PS1 and The New Museum in New York; Mills College Art Museum in Oakland, California; and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. He also exhibited abroad, including at The Athens Biennale in Greece, and Carré d'Art de Nîmes, France, among others. He is also represented by galleries in Paris, Hong Kong, Seoul, São Paulo, London, and Amsterdam.

Testing the limits of his creativity, this multifaceted artist has also worked with film production, including the *Future Relic* with James Franco and Juliette Lewis.