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James Casebere and Jose Dávila

The Poetic Dimension

Sean Kelly, Los Angeles

September 13 – November 1, 2025

Opening reception: Saturday, September 13, 5-7pm

Sean Kelly, Los Angeles is delighted to announce *The Poetic Dimension*, a two-person exhibition featuring photographs by James Casebere and new sculptures by Jose Dávila. Marking the first time these two artists have been paired together, the exhibition centers around their shared dialogue on the work of Mexican modernist architect Luis Barragán. Through their respective practices, Casebere and Dávila explore the expressive potential of form, space, and color, inviting a deeper meditation on architecture's emotional resonance. There will be an opening reception on Saturday, September 13 from 5 to 7pm.

James Casebere's photographs in *The Poetic Dimension* respond directly to Luis Barragán's architectural masterpieces, including the Gilardi House, the Galvez House, and the architect's home and studio in Mexico City. A seminal figure in the Pictures Generation, Casebere is known for constructing meticulously crafted models that he photographs, reimagining built environments through a conceptual lens. In these works, he engages with Barragán's spaces not simply as formal subjects, but as sites of emotion and psychological depth. By subtly modifying architectural elements, adding apertures, altering proportions, and shifting light, Casebere imbues his images with an affective charge, deepening their contemplative quality. As he notes, Barragán's architecture is "contemplative and solitary and beautiful, without the associations of confinement." This poetic sensibility resonates strongly with Casebere's practice, which has long sought to explore how architecture can reflect social structures, elicit emotional states, and inspire transformation.

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Barragán's architectural language has been a foundational influence for Jose Dávila, who trained as an architect before turning to sculpture. His materially rich works incorporate industrial elements, including ratchet straps and concrete juxtaposed with natural materials such as volcanic stone, balancing tension and gravity with a distinctive elegance. In these new sculptures, Dávila continues his investigation into structural equilibrium and formal restraint, using vibrant color and precarious construction to create works with both conceptual clarity and playful irreverence. Dávila's engagement with Barragán's legacy is most evident in his chromatic palette featuring bright hues of red, blue, and yellow which directly reference the architect's structures and draw from the vernacular architecture of Mexico. Like Barragán, Dávila elevates raw, utilitarian materials into expressions of volume, color, and balance.

As Luis Barragán wrote, "Architecture is an art when one consciously or unconsciously creates aesthetic emotion in the atmosphere and when this environment produces well-being." In the spirit of this philosophy, *The Poetic Dimension* foregrounds how both Casebere and Dávila translate architecture's fundamental elements, light, form, color, material, into transcendent aesthetic experiences. Engaging in a deeply personal dialogue with Barragán's legacy, they reveal how the built environment can become a vehicle for reflection.

For additional information on the exhibition, please visit skny.com

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Image caption: James Casebere, *Courtyard with Orange Wall*, 2017, framed archival pigment print mounted to Dibond, framed: 67 x 47 x 2 1/4 inches, edition of 5 with 2 APs © James Casebere; Jose Dávila, *Joint Effort*, 2024, concrete, boulder, and ratchet strap 92 13/16 x 26 1/2 x 22 5/8 inches, Images Courtesy the artist and Sean Kelly, New York/Los Angeles