



Daniel Arsham, *Classical Speaker Sculpture 001*, 2026. Aluminum, white bismuth patina, wood, speakers. 82 x 45 x 32 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

DANIEL ARSHAM *VARIOUS THOUGHTS*

March 5 - April 11, 2026

Perrotin New York is pleased to present *Various Thoughts*, an exhibition of new sculptures, paintings, and drawings by Daniel Arsham. Focusing on his *Labyrinth* series, the artist explores architecture as a site for memory and historical record, as well as our psychological connection to place. Across the works on view, he plays with slippages between artifact and machine, permanence and disappearance.

Cast in sand, marble, and bronze, Arsham's *Stairs in the Labyrinth* sculptures feature doubled figures that shift from portraiture into labyrinths of architectural stairwells. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth consists of a single, uninterrupted path and has historically been used for meditation, mental clarity, and spiritual reflection. In mythology, labyrinths function both as traps for malevolent forces—most famously Daedalus's confinement of the Minotaur—and as harrowing journeys toward spiritual rebirth. Intentionally left open, Arsham's sculptures invite viewers to lose themselves within their own interior landscapes. In the surrounding paintings, the artist depicts these busts within landscapes where past and future

surface in unexpected ways, hovering somewhere between simulated reality and memory.

Similarly, his *Marble Robot* busts are left open, this time revealing a cyborg-like technological interior, like artifacts from the future. They read simultaneously as relics and blueprints, occupying a space between machine and myth.

Arsham also creates a sonic experience within the gallery through sculptures that function as stereo speakers, activating the space with ambient sound. *Audio Bonsai* broadcasts randomized environments—music, rain, wind, or voices—creating an evolving ecosystem. In *Classic Speaker*, ancient sculptural forms are brought into the present, given a voice in unexpected ways.

Concurrent to the exhibition, on March 17, Daniel Arsham will release his autobiography *Future Relic*. Perrotin Store will host signing events on March 14 from 1-3pm at Perrotin Store New York and March 20 from 3-5pm at Perrotin Store Las Vegas.

In an accompanying essay, art critic Linda Yablonsky considers the ideas and experiences behind Arsham's exhibition:

Daniel Arsham imagines how the future of the material world will appear after it ages out. You can see the possibilities in sculptures that transform fast cars into beautifully crystallized wrecks and bonsai trees into audio components. You can fixate on their vertigo-inducing properties in his painted mashups of antiquity and pop culture. Look both ways, as solitary human figures confront bewildered stone goliaths in dreamscapes borrowed from the Romantic German painter Casper David Friedrich by way of Indiana Jones.

This is an artist who communicates a similar disrespect for boundaries in and out of the art world. His resumé includes the design of clothing, stage sets, and restaurants, as well as collaborations with Pharrell Williams, Merce Cunningham, Kim Jones, Virgil Abloh, Usher, Porsche, and Adidas. Additionally, he serves as creative director of his hometown basketball team, the Cleveland Cavaliers. And now he is the author of *Future Relic*, a streetwise memoir recounting the multidisciplinary career that has earned him more than a million followers on social media and that he is launching in conjunction with his exhibition at Perrotin. In other words, his horizons are as wide as his audience and his ambitions limitless.

Arsham himself is a future relic, as are we all, if we're lucky, though his work has the advantage of being made of materials both ephemeral and enduring: sand, volcanic ash, paint, pencil, amethyst, bronze, marble. But mostly what he plays with is passing time. Arsham gives it a place to rest, letting it collapse from exhaustion while generating new forms out of its displacement and loss.

His process is not without precedent. The title, *Future Relic*, echoes the "ruins in reverse" touted by Robert Smithson, the land artist, sculptor, theorist, and creator of *Spiral Jetty*. Smithson's embrace of science fiction, geology, entropy, and a natural world poised for extinction in its pursuit of technological progress resonates in Arsham's objects and images, but with a difference.

His work begins in Smithson's dystopia but, through sudden shifts of narrative and scale, surface and interior, moves forward and back into a kind of post-futurism that is trapped in our recyclable present. Where Smithson traipsed through the industrial wastelands of Passaic, New Jersey, Arsham went to Rapa Nui, or Easter Island, famous for its thousands (now hundreds) of ginormous, beetle-browed, wooden heads, the hotly debated origins of which remain an insoluble mystery.

That two-month visit to the island, in 2011, not only put Arsham face to face with those magnificent, half-buried totems but also the its enormous landfill, where cast-off electronics, cars, cameras, appliances, and piles of other expired refuse were left to putrefy and rust. The destabilizing juxtaposition of recent and ancient obsolescence with an altered but unbowed natural world has had a continuing and profound impact on Arsham's creative sensibilities. It deepened in 2018, when he accepted an invitation to explore the plaster conservation molds of every Greek and Roman statue collected by the Louvre since the nineteenth century.

During subsequent travels, he sketched ideas for new casts of the reassembled torsos and fragments he chose from this library on hotel stationery. A selection of these studies is on view at Perrotin alongside the eerily patinated bronzes and marbles that came of them.

Among the most striking of these "labyrinths" is the bust of a woman, titled *Stairs in the Labyrinth*, who could be Nefertiti, or perhaps Taylor Swift dressed for a theme party. She is certain of her pronouns but not her transiting morphology. Her unblemished complexion feels like sandpaper and part of her body is an architectural ruin. A staircase that runs longer than Rapunzel's hair descends from the darkened chambers of her excavated mind and past her bare shoulders without offering any escape from her fossilized condition.

An Apollonian juggler of bookshelf audio speakers, *Classical Speaker*, is equally resilient. Though his powerful physique has cracked under the burden of living a myth for millennia, he remains upright within tangles of copper wire that channel the sounds of birdsong or crickets. Nothing is static in an Arsham, and nature is never far off, whether it's the head of young boy with headphones visibly embedded in his skull or a vibratory bonsai tree.

In Arsham's formal vocabulary, decay is disclosure and robotics move the inanimate a step closer to human. Eyes cloud, faces flush, ears ring, and the future draws as close as the past, looking just like us.