



# Daniel Arsham Installation Opens at Watermill Center

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by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

Daniel Arsham unveils a new site-specific installation at Watermill Center on Saturday that will remain on view through June 7, 2015. Commissioned by Watermill Center, *The Formless Figure*, 2015 is sited on the second floor rehearsal hall and is designed to converse with the building and nearby objects displayed from Robert Wilson's collection. Made from fiberglass, metal and plaster, the piece is reminiscent of Arsham's draped, hollow figures. The installation opens to the public with an Artist Reception on Saturday from 4 to 6 p.m.

"I see in Daniel's work something very personal, a unique visual vocabulary," said Watermill Founder and Artistic Director Robert Wilson of Arsham's work. "Through sculpture, drawing and performance, Arsham challenges his viewer's perceptions of physical space in order to make architecture perform the improbable. The surfaces of walls appear to melt, erode and ripple. Animals contemplate the emergence of floating shapes in nature and sculptures from antiquity are infused with rigid, geometric forms."



"The Formless Figure'" by Daniel Arsham. Fiberglass, metal and plaster. Courtesy of The Watermill Center.

Architecture is a prevalent subject in Arsham's art and can frequently feature environments with eroded walls and stairs going nowhere, landscapes where nature overrides structures, and a general sense of playfulness within existing architecture, according to the artist's website.

Arsham's art pushes architecture to do things it is not intended to do while mining everyday experience to create a mix that can confound viewer's expectations of space and form. Simple yet paradoxical gestures dominate his sculptural work. Structural experiment, historical inquiry, and satirical wit all combine in Arsham's ongoing interrogation of the real and the imagined.

Arsham said of the interface between art and architecture, "When we think about architecture, it's the most lasting gesture we can make as human beings—art too, I suppose, although one could argue that architecture is the most visible and present. Therefore its disruption can be very uncanny and powerful, and this is where I'm trying to allow the work to reside, a place where people are a little bit shaken by the disruption of the familiar and the everyday."

Arsham's work appealed to Watermill Center for its ability to transform surface and space into a visceral interaction between the viewer and the work, according to Watermill Center.

Based in New York, Arsham was born in Cleveland and raised in Miami. He attended the Cooper Union in New York City and received the Gelman Trust Fellowship Award in 2003. He is a founder of the seminal Miami artist-run spaces The House and Pacemaker Gallery.

In December 2014, Arsham's site-specific work *Welcome to the Future* was installed at Locust Projects in Miami. The piece transformed the gallery's main exhibition space into an excavation site set in a 25-foot wide trench featuring thousands of calcified "artifacts" that were, in fact, 20th century media devices.

Arsham also works in film. In April 2015, his short "Future Relic '03" was screened at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Arsham's interest in collaboration is a long-standing one. In 2004, Arsham worked with choreographer Merce Cunningham to create the stage design for his eyeSpace and toured globally with the company. Arsham has also collaborated with Calvin Klein, Jonah Bokaer and Robert Wilson. Arsham recently worked with musician and producer Pharrell Williams where the musician's first keyboard was recreated in volcanic ash.

Daniel Ashram's work has been exhibited at MoMA PS1 and the New Museum in New York, The Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami and the Carré d'Art de Nîmes in France, among others. Arsham is represented by Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin in Paris, Hong Kong and New York; OHWOW in Los Angeles; Baro Galeria in Sao Paulo; and Pippy Houldsworth in London.

*The Formless Figure* compliments Watermill Center's budding exhibition efforts and its artist-in-residency program which has welcomed over 150 artists from around the world through its fall, spring and summer residencies. For the last two summers, Watermill Center has presented solo exhibitions in the main building. Featured artists included Mike Kelley and work by Robert Wilson that traveled to the Louvre.

**BASIC FACTS:** *The Formless Figure* by Daniel Ashram is on view from April 4 through June 7, 2015 at The Watermill Center, 39 Watermill Town Road, Water Mill, NY 11976. An Opening Reception takes place on Saturday, April 4 from 4 to 6 p.m. On Saturday, June 6, the artist will hold a talk to discuss his work and art practice at 4 p.m. For details and reservations, visit [www.watermillcenter.org](http://www.watermillcenter.org).

*EDITOR'S NOTE:* The original version listed the Opening day as Sunday instead of Saturday in the first sentence. This has now been corrected. We regret the error.