

Jose Dávila: Artist Feature

Jeffrey Grunthaler

Artist features

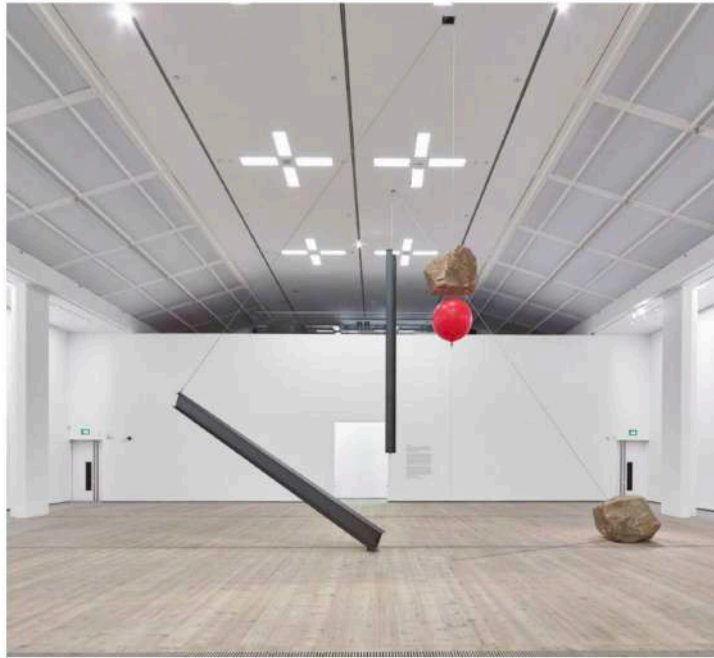
Jose Dávila



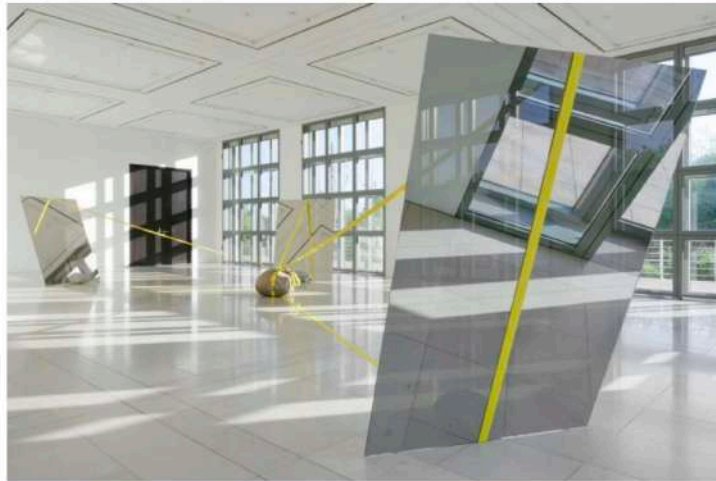
Over the course of a career spanning more than 20 years, Guadalajara-based Jose Dávila has engaged with the architecture, symbolism, and material integration of space. Intimating utopian ideals, uncut rock and sculpted concrete are brought into uneasy congruence, realizing an equilibrium that holds differently weighted materials in place.

Text Jeffrey Grunthaler All images Courtesy of the artist and König Galerie.

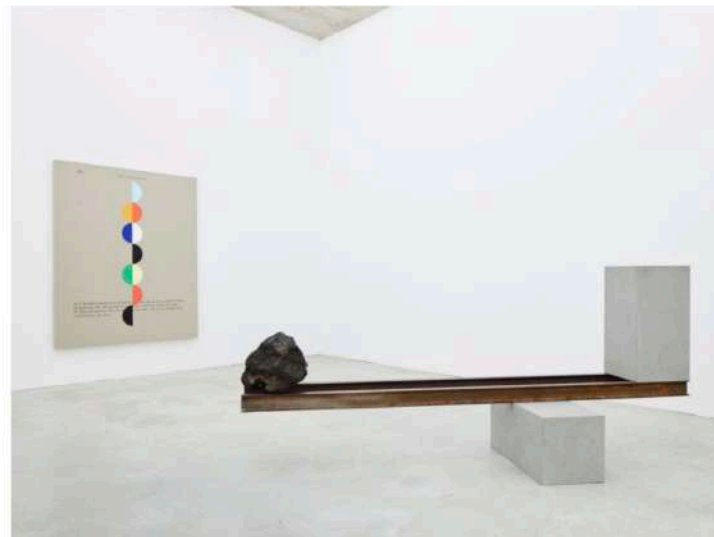
While the language of sculpture traditionally speaks to solidity and permanence, Dávila's work evinces a decided fragility that contrasts with the density of the materials he puts to use. As though verging on the brink of collapse, his take on sculptural form introduces viewers to a clash of directional energies, resulting in a precarious appearance that undercuts monolithic stability. What comes to light is less a single unified object than an exchange of physical forces, a cross-section of elemental processes that refer to the inexorable law of gravity.



Installation view: *The Weaker has Conquered the Stronger* (2019), Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK. Image courtesy of the artist and Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead. Photo: John McKenzie © 2017



Installation view: *Die Feder und der Elefant* (2017), Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, DE. Image courtesy of the artist and Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg. Photo: Kay Riechers © 2017



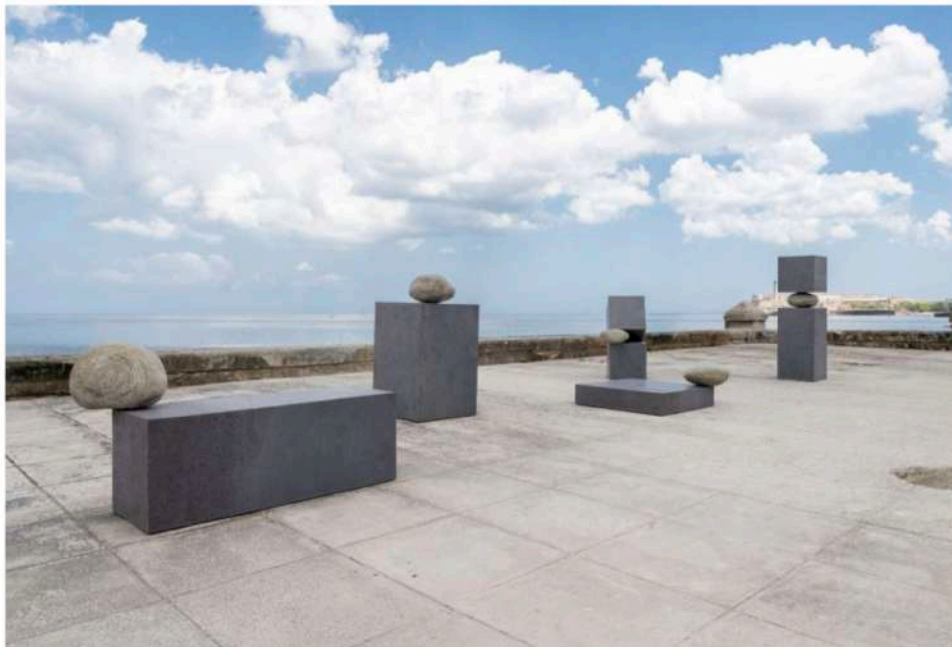
Installation view: *Somewhere Behind the Eyes* (2018), Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf, DE. Image courtesy of the artist and Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf. Photo: Paul Schöpfer © 2018

Dávila's articulation of space mimics primal human behaviours, such as stacking and balancing, underscoring their capacity to express a collectively shared impulse toward construction. Several works feature uncut rock tethered to angular concrete blocks by a ratchet strap. An aura of weightlessness halos the topography of the linked stones. As individual works, these layered sculptures foreground the disintegrating influence of time, concretizing an entropic process that ends in perpetual stasis.



Installation view: *The Moment of Suspension* (2019), König Galerie, Berlin.
Image courtesy of the artist and König Galerie.
Photo: Roman März.

Places of meeting and points of intersection also constitute recurring aspects of Dávila's work. His architectural eye recasts volume itself as a raw material, using vertical surfaces, rectangles, and spheroid shapes to signify development and growth. The makeshift stratification underlying each sculpture invokes the uniqueness of a once visited place, or remembered physique, preserving only its constructed essence.



Every work on exhibit embodies an architectural rhythm where the vastness of geologic time becomes affixed to the spatial planes of a concrete surface. The necessary union of each element functions like the organs of a body, the vehicle of consciousness. Blending structural innovation with a cosmological understanding of duration, Dávila shows how individuated parts relate to an overarching design. If the microcosm is removed, the macrocosm collapses.



Installation view: The Moment of Suspension (2019), König Galerie, Berlin.
Image courtesy of the artist and König Galerie.
Photo: Roman März.



Jose Dávila, Aporia X (2017), Brown Camberos marble and smoked glass, 190 x 183 x 102 cm.
Exhibited at Somewhere Behind the Eyes (2018), Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf, DE.
Image courtesy of the artist and Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf.
Photo: Paul Schöpfer © 2018