



Marcus Vinícius De Paula  
SUPERLUMINAL  
May 5 – June 11, 2022

Davidson Gallery is pleased to present *Superluminal*, the debut solo exhibition from Marcus Vinícius De Paula.

The exhibition features sculptures made over the last two years and is an apex for the multidisciplinary artist with a career surrounding light. The works draw inspiration from his father, a Brazil-born NASA engineer, and examine relative notions of time across our lives, source materials, and the cosmos.

Naming his pieces after the moons of Saturn, De Paula explores an alternate reality in which the works are the only remnants of a lost world. The forms are at once alien yet familiar, intimating known objects but wholly unique unto themselves; their titles approximate places of origin as much as aspirational destinations. De Paula uses this narrative to engender a discussion of humanity's fragility and legacy. The COVID-19 pandemic is an inescapable context for the creation of these works - some pieces were created while the artist and his wife lived nomadically over the last year in remote locations across the United States.

The use of volcanic rock, granite, and alabaster, some as old as one billion years, also forces an acknowledgment of the age and longevity of these materials in perspective with humans' time on earth. The seemingly interminable length of the recent past is given context in how De Paula combines the ancient and the timeless; the technologically advanced LED lights and hand-blown neon gas tubes meld seamlessly with stone as though they were formed simultaneously and not manipulated by the artist's hand and mind.

Within these materials, Marcus embeds lines of light throughout to cast an ethereal otherworldliness. As with the stone, he handcrafts these elements himself from neon glass and resin, which illuminate the minerality within the stones as swirls of interstellar matter. By contrasting classical stones with charged noble gasses and brutalist cyberpunk aesthetic, the monumental works begin to transcend terrestrial notions of time.

De Paula considers his works maquettes unlimited in their potential scale, informed by the soaring Brutalist and Modernist structures of his parents' native Brazil. As a teen visiting his grandparents, Marcus would ride the bus for hours around Rio De Janeiro to absorb the city's visual culture, supplementing his parents' shared memories with sensory immersion. By incorporating those experiences into his practice, De Paula navigates his evolving relationship with that heritage.

Marcus Vinícius De Paula is a Brazilian-American multidisciplinary artist born in 1986 in California. He has designed with light for over 15 years across theater, film, and live performance. He has led creative direction and design for interactive installations at South by Southwest, on tour with indie-rock band Ra Ra Riot, and for multiple productions at the Edinburgh International Fringe Festival. De Paula's sculptures have most recently been exhibited in Radiator Show (2020), Day Marks (2020), and Current (2021). This is his first solo exhibition in New York. De Paula lives and works in Brooklyn.