

NOHRA HAIME GALLERY 500 W 21<sup>st</sup> STREET

## THE VIEW FROM NOWHERE

JUAN CORTÉS

January 16 – February 29, 2020

Reception for the artist: Thursday, January 16th from 6 to 8 p.m.



*The View From Nowhere, Variation 2, 2019, sound levitator and LED lights*

In *THE VIEW FROM NOWHERE*, Colombian artist Juan Cortés explores the connection between art, science, and educational processes to visually translate our simple understanding of complex phenomena in the universe through sound, video and sculptural installations. This marks his first solo exhibition with Nohra Haime Gallery.

*The View from Nowhere* references American philosopher Thomas Nagel's idea that a united and global view of the world is impossible, that essentially, our view always starts from nowhere. Cortés uses his scientific upbringing and natural artistic abilities in this aptly named exhibition to illustrate humanity's varying points of view on the mysterious forces of astronomical happenings in the universe.

Comprised of 7 sculptural installations, or "translation machines", he interprets vast concepts like dark matter and black holes into intelligible art on a micro scale. Each work references a particular scientific question in connection with authentic scientific research.

In *Variation 2*, Cortés plays with the discovery that while black holes are known to absorb and destroy, they can also transform energy and exchange particles with white holes. This beautifully-crafted device uses colliding sound waves and LED lights that force small black "particles" to levitate in mid-air between two

conical discs - one black, one white. The artist strives to break down an enormous and problematic occurrence into a perceivable phenomenon that can be observed with the human eye.

In the tripod-like *Variation 3*, Cortés demonstrates the similarly impossible estimation of mapping the universe using scientific data downloaded from the internet. Events in the universe, such as solar flares, trigger a lamp inside the device that projects ethereal light patterns on the wall. While these situations are nearly impossible to truly replicate or translate on a small scale, the challenge of doing so is brilliant in its own way.

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Deciphering the greatness of our universe into an understandable scale is ambitious with humanity's limited point of view. Each model proposes a tantalizing challenge to grasp something that cannot be grasped. We must accept that complex scientific questions cannot always be resolved, therefore allowing the line of understanding to become blurred in our "view from nowhere".

Born in 1989, Juan Cortés lives and works in Bogotá, Colombia. An audiovisual artist and lecturer in Art and Audiovisual Media at the University of Los Andes, Colombia, Cortés works in the areas of research and interdisciplinary processes. He has exhibited both nationally and internationally, performing in institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; Center for the Arts (CMA), Madrid, Spain; Bilbao Exhibition Center, Spain; Fridman Gallery, New York; NYC Creative Tech Week; and Centquatre-Paris, France. He is cofounder and curator of the RADAR Video Art Festival and the SATELLITE Festival of Sound Art, and regularly works with the Hyphen-Hub space for artistic and community creation. He is the recipient of numerous awards such as the VII Bogotá Prize for Alternative Art Spaces in Colombia and the prestigious PRAC Grant of the Ministry of Culture of Colombia. In 2016, he received an Honorary Mention in the CERN Collide International Prize, which is awarded as part of CERN's Art and Science program, Art at CERN.



*The View From Nowhere, Variation 1, 2019, multichannel video installation*

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