

ADRIÁN VILLAR ROJAS TO CREATE A NEW SCULPTURE (*UNTITLED*) *THE LANGUAGE OF THE ENEMY* CO-COMMISSIONED BY ASPEN ART MUSEUM AND AUDEMARS PIGUET CONTEMPORARY



Portrait of Adrián Villar Rojas. © Courtesy of the artist and Panos Kokkinias.

ASPEN, COLORADO (June 18, 2025) – This November, Adrián Villar Rojas will unveil (*Untitled*) *The Language of the Enemy*, a new sculpture that conjures a fictionalized prehistory—an imagined moment when Neanderthals and Homo sapiens first collaborated in the invention of meaning. Co-commissioned by Aspen Art Museum and Audemars Piguet Contemporary, the work envisions a scene from deep time, in which an encounter with fossilized dinosaur remains might have sparked the earliest act of art-making.

The commission will be first presented in the Jura Mountains, within the renowned Vallée de Joux—the birthplace of Swiss horology—before traveling to Aspen Art Museum in summer 2026 as part of a multi-floor exhibition of Villar Rojas’ site-specific new works. This marks the first time Audemars Piguet Contemporary has premiered a commission in the Vallée de Joux, and the first joint commission with Aspen Art Museum.

Villar Rojas’s practice unfolds through collaborative fabulation, constructing speculative worlds across sculpture, drawing, video, literature, and performative systems of making. In this new work, he proposes a theoretical history that challenges prevailing anthropocentric narratives of human exceptionalism. While symbolic creation—language, art, ritual—has

long been considered an invention of Homo sapiens, recent findings suggest Neanderthals may have engaged in such meaning-making practices before us. Villar Rojas imagines this ancient encounter as a transmission: that what we consider the foundation of human culture may have been inherited from a now-vanished branch of the human lineage. In this frame, the birth of art is not a triumph of our species, but a gift from another.

Presented in the Vallée de Joux—a region whose limestone formations housed the first-studied Jurassic fossils—*(Untitled) The Language of the Enemy* draws a parallel between paleontology and speculative memory. It is both a return to origins and a projection into alternate futures.

Emerging—in the artist’s words—in a “moment where the human species teeters at the threshold of its own continuity”, Villar Rojas’ work inhabits the liminal space between extinction and inheritance—between the disappearance of worlds and the possibilities they leave behind. Following its premiere in the Jura Mountains, *(Untitled) The Language of the Enemy* will travel to Aspen Art Museum in summer 2026 for the artist’s solo exhibition, which will take over two entire floors of the building. Both Aspen Art Museum and Audemars Piguet Contemporary share a commitment to supporting artists in research and creation, fostering imaginative thinking for global audiences in dialogue with place, history, and time.

Artist **Adrián Villar Rojas** said, “What if we could see and think of ourselves - humanity - from an alien perspective; detached, unprejudiced, acultural? What if we could think of ourselves from the borders of our own completed path?”

Claude Adjil, Curator-at-Large, Aspen Art Museum, said, “Adrián Villar Rojas’s works are entire ecosystems in and of themselves, shaped by geological time and speculative futures. Amidst rapidly growing global instability, he creates worlds that force us to imagine and consider the end of the human species and how culture will evolve. Over the past decade, I’ve had the pleasure of working with Adrián on a number of occasions and I am delighted to continue to amplify his critical dialogue with the *debut (Untitled) The Language of the Enemy* with our collaborator and co-commissioner Audemars Piguet Contemporary in the Vallée de Joux. I look forward to welcoming visitors to Aspen Art Museum in 2026 to see the work as part of our multi-floor exhibition.”

Audrey Teichmann, Curator, Audemars Piguet Contemporary, said, “Adrián Villar Rojas’s *(Untitled) The Language of the Enemy* explores the first manifestations of the ability to imagine and fantasize. Debuting the work in the Vallée de Joux, an important region for paleontological research, raises questions about the way in which we consider the narrative surrounding our cultural foundations. Accompanying the process of building this

speculative fiction reinforces Audemars Piguet Contemporary's commitment to supporting works that challenge our vision of the world we live in. We are proud to present Adrián's work together with Aspen Art Museum, our co-commissioner and the site for this work's presentation next summer."

ABOUT ADRIÁN VILLAR ROJAS

Adrián Villar Rojas was born in Rosario, Argentina in 1980. He lives and works nomadically. Villar Rojas has been the recipient of numerous awards including Sharjah Biennial Prize, awarded by the Sharjah Art Foundation (2015), The Zurich Art Prize at the Museum Haus Konstruktiv (2013); the 9th Benesse Prize in the 54th Venice Biennale, (2011); the Nuevo Banco de Santa Fe Scholarship for Young Artists (2006); and the first prize in the Bienal Nacional de Arte de Bahía Blanca at the Contemporary Art Museum of Bahía Blanca, Argentina (2005). In 2020 he was shortlisted for the Hugo Boss Prize.

Recent solo exhibitions include Bass Museum of Art, Miami (2022); Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, (2022); Tank Shanghai, China (2019); the Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada (2018); The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Los Angeles (2017); NEON Foundation at Athens National Observatory, Athens (2017); Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz (2017) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2017); the Moderna Museet, Sweden (2015); the Serpentine Gallery, London (2013); the Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland (2013); and the Musée du Louvre, Paris (2011).

Participation in international group exhibitions include the Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2018); 14th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul (2015); 12th Bienal de La Habana, La Habana (2015); Sharjah Biennial 12, Kalba (2015); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel and Kabul (2012) and 54th International Art Exhibition: La Biennale di Venezia, Argentina's National Pavilion, Venice (2011).

ABOUT AUDEMARS PIGUET CONTEMPORARY

Audemars Piguet Contemporary, the brand's dedicated art programme, commissions international artists to create contemporary artworks. The resulting artworks belong to the artists and contribute to their body of work. With the support of two in-house curators, new commissions are realized across a variety of scales and media, enabling artists to explore new territories in their practice. The team follows each commission process from inception to exhibition. The nomadic programme fosters collaborations with cultural institutions around the world to present commissions to global audiences. Each Audemars

Piguet Contemporary commissioned artwork is as an opportunity for new creation, bringing together audiences and broadening horizons, as well as leading to a better understanding within and between individuals.

Since 2012, Audemars Piguet Contemporary has commissioned over 20 international artists including Andreas Angelidakis, Meriem Bennani, Aleksandra Domanović, Cao Fei, Petrit Halilaj & Álvaro Urbano, Ryoji Ikeda, Theo Jansen, Yu Ji, Alexandra Pirici, Sallisa Rosa, Tomás Saraceno, Jana Winderen and Sun Xun. Commissioned artworks have been presented worldwide at major venues spanning Asia, Europe, and the Americas. – audemarspiguet.com/art

ABOUT THE ASPEN ART MUSEUM

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums in 1979, Aspen Art Museum is an artist-founded institution dedicated to supporting artists, while being a globally engaged non-collecting contemporary art museum. Following the 2014 opening of the Museum's facility designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Shigeru Ban, the Museum enjoys increased attendance, renewed civic interaction, and international media attention. In July 2017, the Museum was one of ten institutions to receive the United States' National Medal for Museum and Library Services for its educational outreach to rural communities in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley and its learning partnerships with civic and cultural partners within a 100-mile radius of the Museum's Aspen location. – aspenartmuseum.org

Museum hours

Tuesday–Sunday, 10 AM–6 PM. Closed Mondays

AAM ADMISSION IS FREE courtesy of Amy and John Phelan.

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Press release and visuals – dam.audemarspiguet.com/ap-linkshare?t=4b75e0a55031420