

JUPITER

Paul Verdell: *Trailing Away*
Jupiter Contemporary
February 19 - March 25, 2023
Opening reception: February 19, 6-8 PM
1217 71st Street, Miami Beach, FL 33141



Miami – February 10, 2023 — Jupiter Contemporary is pleased to present *Trailing Away*, a solo exhibition of new work by Detroit-based artist Paul Verdell. Over the course of his artistic practice—from his earlier portraits and narrative painting to his more recent sunsets and seascapes—painting and drawing have always served as a way for Verdell to understand not only the world, but also himself.

The works on view all take as their inspiration the ocean view from Verdell’s studio window at Black Rock Senegal, the artist-in-residence program founded by Kehinde Wiley in Dakar, where Verdell spent 1 month this past fall. Watching the crashing waves, speckled with surfers, swimmers, and boats crossing the sea, Verdell was inspired to digress from the far more representational approach to painting that has characterized much of his past work and instead dive headlong into abstraction.

A sense of immediacy guides Verdell’s gestural marks in richly colored oil paint on canvas as he translates the seascapes emblazoned with sunrises and sunsets out his window in Dakar to canvas. Having abandoned the use of brushes, he recently turned to oil bars, which allow for a process far more akin to drawing and serve to cut through wet oil paint to deliver more intense trails of pigment. This turn towards drawing could be seen as a return to the earliest form of his artistic practice, one rooted in realism, and an interest in animation. While his aesthetic may have changed drastically over the course of his career thus far, Verdell’s confident strokes, bold colors, and the visceral sense of his hand as it moves across the canvas all capture the dynamism and fecundity of life within his canvases.

This can be seen *RYG* (2022) and *Sienna Sand* (2022), both of which were made in Dakar, but may be even more apparent in the seven paintings made by Verdell upon his return to Detroit. There, far removed from his source of inspiration, he works not from photos but from memory, such that fiery reds, yellows, and pinks collide in *Cosmic Gods* (2023); sinewy lines of blue, green, and white swirl like wind made visible over a landscape in *Permanent Green* (2023); and a sense of loss and change percolates in *Losing the seascape* (2023), not only prompted by a change in light over the ocean but by saying goodbye to a special place. All such works are thus characterized by fluid and interpretive painting process, as Verdell draws upon older pieces made in Dakar without directly referencing the land or seascapes that informed them, to conjure instead a richly textured surface rife with expressive mark-making and a distinctly playful imagination.

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About the Artist

Paul Verdell (b. 1991, Long Beach, CA), currently based in Detroit, has exhibited widely throughout the United States at Library Street Collective, Detroit; Desert Center, Los Angeles; Louis Buhl & Co., Detroit; o-oLA, Los Angeles; Quappiprojects, Louisville; False Cast Gallery, San Diego; River House Arts, Toledo; and Walter E Terhune Gallery, Perrysburg, Ohio; amongst others. He earned his BFA from Bowling Green State University, Ohio, and was an artist in residence at Black Rock Senegal in 2022.

Caption: Paul Verdell *Cosmic gods*, 2023 Oil stick on canvas 69 by 77 in. 175 by 195.6 cm.
© Paul Verdell. Photo by Tim Johnson. Courtesy of the artist, Library Street Collective, and Jupiter Contemporary, Miami Beach, FL

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786.238.7299

Regular Hours

Tuesday - Saturday | 11 am - 6 pm

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