

THE USES OF ART: FINAL EXHIBITION

Works by Abbas Akhavan, Refik Anadol, Futurefarmers, and Laure Prouvost intervene throughout SALT Galata.

April - June

What are the implications of urgent conditions, responsibilities, and goals for cultural institutions? These are some of the key issues discussed by those participating in conversations across and beyond the six European museums that make up the L'Internationale confederation.

In April 2017 the five-year L'Internationale program *The Uses of Art* will culminate in a series of simultaneous activities: exhibitions, (online) publications, discursive events, and more. The program offers a wide and prolific reflection on the role of cultural institutions, and aim to encourage broader dialogue between the L'Internationale and partner institutions. Internationalism is not a space of uniformity in politics, industry or culture, and L'Internationale understands that pluriversality can be agonistic.

During *The Uses of Art* program, SALT produced two major research-based exhibition projects. [How did we get here](#) was shown at SALT Beyoğlu and SALT Galata (2015), at SALT Ulus (2016), and as part of [The 1980s. Today's Beginnings?](#) at Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, the Netherlands (2016). [One and the Many](#) opened at SALT Galata in 2016, and is on view until April 4 at Çankaya Municipality Contemporary Arts Center, Ankara. SALT team collaborated on a range of inter-institutional development programs in archives, mediation and access, as well as [L'Internationale Online](#) and [Glossary of Common Knowledge](#) projects. SALT also sourced single-work presentations from the collections of the partner institutions.

SALT's final L'Internationale exhibition attempts to provoke original responses and readings from its users of what SALT Galata, as a cultural entity, is or could be. Four artistic interventions/architectural gestures –by Abbas Akhavan, Refik Anadol, Futurefarmers, and Laure Prouvost– embrace the user through their reinvigoration of previously under-used aspects of the building and its resources, such as the archive, bringing to the foreground suggestions of different potential functions or possibilities that temporarily reframe the institution.

This is the first time that SALT has commissioned all the works in one project. The four independent positions have developed out of shared concerns and questions, in order to make a set of related, yet contrasting responses creating spaces of dissensus and conversation. For example, through their practices Futurefarmers and Refik Anadol both research ways to disperse and share cultural knowledge for common use, and yet their means of doing so, and collaborative choices, are in many ways diametrically opposed. While

Futurefarmers encourage the need to regenerate acts of cultural heritage, such as baking and exchanging seeds to ensure a more wholesome and diverse future of shared values, Anadol works hand-in-hand with Google's Artists and Machine Intelligence, engaging technological-prosthesis to explore masses of archival data and their relationships.

The commissions will be on view until June 11. Futurefarmers' intervention will remain and grow in tandem with [Seed Journey](#) and the boat's arrival to Istanbul in September. Talks will take place at different moments during the exhibition period with the first by Akhavan and Prouvost on April 26.

This exhibition is part of the five-year program *The Uses of Art – The Legacy of 1848 and 1989*, organized by L'Internationale.



With the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union:



Refik Anadol

Archive Dreaming

April 20 - June 11

What does it mean to hold the archival collections of SALT Research and in particular the content of the Ottoman Bank Museum in a fixed condition? What if these elements could be visualized through machine learning algorithms and artificial intelligence-driven processing power inaccessible only a few years ago, and high-dimensional data brought into interreactions and translated into immersive spaces?

Refik Anadol has been commissioned to work with the massive holdings at SALT Research and the Ottoman Bank Archives to create an immersive interface as well as a user navigated VR experience that challenges our very perception of the notion of a museum and a collection. His intervention on floor -1 transforms the gallery space into an all-encompassing environment that intertwines history with the contemporary.

Abbas Akhavan

"they hit a tree with an axe"

April 27 - June 11

The roof terrace of the restaurant at SALT Galata has remained empty, but always with the potential to accommodate meaningful interventions. It is a visually dominant sight, that acts as an introduction to an impressive view of the

historical peninsula, the architecture of which is reflected in the design of SALT Galata's rear facade. It is a space that is viewed and can view; it offers a pause for the eye but without intent. It is a rare "gap" in the city that could speak to and about urban density, climate change, pollution, and perspectives to and from heritage via the contemporary.

Abbas Akhavan's site-specific works often respond to the environment, reflecting upon both the fragility of life, but also the structures of life that we dwell within. Having spent many months living and producing in Turkey, Akhavan is more than familiar with the context. His work "*they hit a tree with an axe*" (2017), installed on the terrace, is one of the interventions dispersed through SALT Galata. This piece is part of an ongoing series where text written on rooftops acts as a poetic gesture, but also as a kind of SOS call presented for aerial viewing by helicopters and airplanes. As part of his intervention, two other works can be seen in the atrium of SALT Research, and on the stair landings.

Laure Prouvost

April 27 - June 11

Can a building respond to its users, present its own fictions and layers of history? Laure Prouvost's interventions around SALT Galata integrate aspects of earlier works along with site-specific reflections on the spaces and uses of the building. She often brings to the surface activities that remain hidden, through intended miscommunications, cultural slippages and storytelling.

Prouvost's mop men remind us of ongoing behind-the-scenes work such as cleaning and maintenance, yet here they provocatively greet those entering the building with surreal humor and wordplay. Their presence leads to a central installation on the first floor, where through techniques of *trompe-l'œil*, the artist plays with some of the most visible architectural components of the building, and we are invited to question what we believe and understand about the physical elements and intellectual concerns of the space around us.

Futurefarmers

Amy Franceschini & Martin Lundberg

April 27 - ongoing

"Imagine a fantastic voyage from Norway to Istanbul in an old wooden sailing boat built for arctic voyaging. This boat is carrying an ingeniously crafted mini-boat like a chalice containing a mere handful of old wheat and rye seeds found in a museum in St Petersburg in Russia and in the roof beams of a sauna in northern Norway. They are like jewels these seeds... Surreal to a fault, this voyage is at once mythical, scientific, and political. It is a voyage back through time and space to the origins of these seeds in what is eastern Turkey."

This is an extract from the opening words of Michael Taussig's description of [Seed Journey](#), a project by Futurefarmers that launched from Norway in 2016,

and will conclude in Istanbul in September 2017. In advance of the boat's arrival, Amy Franceschini and Martin Lundberg will begin to narrate aspects of the crew's research and combined knowledge through an installation of sourced and produced materials to be housed in the treasury found inside SALT Research. The contents will adapt and accumulate over the next six months as the *Seed Journey* continues its route to Istanbul.

IMAGES

1.

Refik Anadol, image from the SALT Research data process, 2017
Courtesy the artist

2.

Abbas Akhavan, "*they hit a tree with an axe,*" 2017
The Uses of Art: Final Exhibition, SALT Galata, 2017
Photo: Mustafa Hazneci

3.

Futurefarmers, *Seed Journey*, 2016
Courtesy the artists

4.

Laure Prouvost, *softer and rounder so as to shine through your smooth marble*, 2017
The Uses of Art: Final Exhibition, SALT Galata, 2017
Photo: Mustafa Hazneci

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