dixit algorizmi
the garden
of knowledge

The Pavilion of Uzbekistan at the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia will present a reflection on the seminal work of Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī, a scientist and polymath born and raised in the city of Khiva (present-day Uzbekistan). Al-Khwārizmī's treatise *On the Calculation with Hindu Numerals* (825 CE) was responsible for the introduction of Hindu-Arabic numerals to Europe, and it was the Latin transliteration of al-Khwārizmī's name to Algorizmi that gave us the modern word algorithm.

Dixit Algorizmi – The Garden of Knowledge sets out to question the origin myths and narratives surrounding modern technologies, using the lens of contemporary artistic practices to explore their forgotten roots and overlooked resonances with distant places, times, and cultures. The pavilion engages divergent interpretations of technology as a medium, acknowledging the depth and complexity of its history to be explored through an extensive public program.

Al-Khwārizmī's most significant research took place at the House of Wisdom in Baghdad. The House of Wisdom was a place of gathering and exchange and is widely assumed to have been centered around formal gardens planned in the Islamic tradition. During his tenure at House of Wisdom, al-Khwārizmī was instrumental in countless scientific activities that involved a wide-ranging group of scientists and intellectuals. The design of the Uzbekistan Pavilion will reference this tradition in its spatial arrangement, recasting the Islamic tradition of the garden as a place of gathering and exchange as a technologically augmented space of research, reflection, and experimentation. The gatherings and exchanges within the Garden of Knowledge will be structured in a public program scheduled for the duration of the Biennale.

Thursday 21st April, 2022

inauguration day

10.50–11.00	Press Registration
11.00–11.15	Speakers Arrival
11.15–11.17	Moderator introduces speakers
11.17–11.22	Saida Mirziyoyeva – the Special Support of the National Pavilion of Uzbekistan
11.22–11.25	Gayane Umerova, the Commissioner of the National Pavilion of Uzbekistan
11.25–11.33	Joseph Grima (Space Caviar) and Sheida Ghomashchi, Curators of the National Pavilion of Uzbekistan
11.33–11.35	Moderators welcome everyone for a guided tour of the Pavilion
11.35–12.00	Guided Tour by curators Space Caviar and Sheida Ghomashchi
12.00–12.20	Performance: Velocity0: Transcode/Transmute Charli Tapp and Abror Zufarov
12.20–12.30	Curators and Commissioners available for press interviews

Tuesday 19th April, 2022
15:00

velocity0: transcode/transmute

Performance

Abror Zufarov
(Musician. Uzbekistan)
Charli Tapp
(Artist. Europe, Japan)

Velocity0 is an ever-evolving installation by the artist Charli Tapp in which, driven by a series of computerized processes, 88 electromagnets hit the keybed of a beat-down touring Yamaha CP80 Grand Piano.

In 2021, Uzbek musician Abror Zufarov's music met with the ghostly Neural Network composer during the exhibition Dixit Algorizmi (CCA, Uzbekistan), attempting to produce an infinite score based on the teachings and misunderstandings of its encounter.

Running in parallel with the public program hosted in the pavilion, the installation will serve as a materializing hub for a program of international composers, invited to experiment with Velocity0's algorithm, through a dematerialized platform called The Program.

In doing so, each participant's input will output a unique generative score, ephemerally played until the next update, feeding a non-linear organic soundscape narrative.

While the installation will serve as an endless algorithmic concert, its program will kick off with Transcode/Transmute: a series of intermittent performances based on the building blocks of the Shashmaqom's centuries-old musical system.

Wednesday 20th April, 2022
12:00

chapter one
representing uzbekistan

Conversation

Speakers:
George Itzhak
(Cinematographer. Uzbekistan)
Malika Zaynitdinova
(Artist. Uzbekistan)
Munis Juraeva
(Artist. Uzbekistan)
Olga Shurygina
(Photographer. Uzbekistan)
Saidazim Fazilov
(Photographer. Uzbekistan)

Moderated by:
Sofia Pia Belenky
(Space Caviar)
Sheida Ghomashchi
Madina Badalova
(Art and Culture Development Foundation
of the Republic of Uzbekistan)

Officially, the first Uzbek photograph was taken in 1903, when Khudaibergan Devanov took the photos of ancient Khorezm. Khudaibergan independently photographed both Khiva minarets and the sky of Khorezm.
An early representation of Uzbekistan is a photograph of the Emir of Bukhara holding a sword taken by Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky in 1911. In many ways one can argue that the image of Uzbekistan is divided in three moments:
   The colorful pre-Soviet images of Uzbekistan
Color photographs taken by chemist Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky during an expedition to what is now Uzbekistan to observe a solar eclipse mark a particular moment in the representation of Uzbekistan. This week-long trip failed in its main goal after cloud cover blocked any glimpse of the eclipse but the journey was not a lost cause. With his German-made camera that enabled vivid color images to be produced, Prokudin-Gorsky explored the backstreets and ancient centers of Samarkand and Bukhara, capturing photographs unlike any that had been taken before.
   The Soviet era Uzbekistan
Defined mostly by the photojournalism of Max Penson and similar reporters, whose photographs were between tradition and revolution.
They reported Uzbekistan's transformation from a medieval social structure to a Soviet Socialist Republic.
   The post Soviet vision
After the independence from Soviet power, the identity and image of a newly liberated country became a cultural aesthetic in a variety of aspects from fashion to architecture. A panel of image makers discuss their work in relation to the current representation of Uzbekistan today.

Wednesday 20th April, 2022
15:00

velocity0: transcode/transmute

Performance

Abror Zufarov
(Musician. Uzbekistan)
Charli Tapp
(Artist. Europe, Japan)

Wednesday 20th April, 2022
16:00

poetic duels

Performance

Tillaniso Nuryog'd
(Poet. Uzbekistan)
Jamolova Nodirabegim
(Poet. Uzbekistan)

The lively, impromptu oral poetry duel is often performed to the accompaniment of musical instruments in which one poet-singer attempts to outdo another with clever verses made up of rhyming couplets. It has long been a popular component of wedding feasts, fairs and other public celebrations, where eager crowds encourage poets to perform. The most common metrical form is the iambic fifteen-syllable verse in a rhyming couplet, although a poet may use eight-syllable, six-syllable or even nine-syllable verses.

Thursday 21st April, 2022
7:00
Location: Bar Olimpia Sprint

brutally early club

Hans Ulrich Obrist
open to public participation

A breakfast salon for the 21st century where art meets science meets architecture meets literature. In 2006, Hans Ulrich Obrist founded BEC-the Brutally Early Club- to better fit in conversations with writers and artists before starting a day at his desk. BEC had been organized in different cities. This will be the first time that Hans Ulrich Obrist will hold the Club at Venice in the context of "Dixit Algorizmi, The Garden of Knowledge "in the National Pavilion of Uzbekistan at the 59th International Venice Biennale.

Thursday 21st April, 2022
10:50–12:30

inauguration of the
national pavilion of uzbekistan

Thursday 21st April, 2022
15:00

velocity0: transcode/transmute

Performance

Abror Zufarov
(Musician. Uzbekistan)
Charli Tapp
(Artist. Europe, Japan)

Thursday 21st April, 2022
16:00

chapter two
the future history of art infrastructure:
culture and representation
in the metaspace

Conversation

Speakers:
Denis Davydov
    (Artist. Uzbekistan)
Ekaterina Inozemseva
    (Curator. Russia)
Faina Yunusova
    (Artist. Uzbekistan, Germany)
Flaka Haliti
    (Artist, Kosovo. Germany)
Normurad Negmatov
    (Curator. Uzbekistan)
Shumon Basar
    (Writer, Editor, Curator. Bangladesh, UK)
Trevor Paglen
    (Artist. United States)

Moderated by curators:
Joseph Grima
    (Space Caviar)
Sheida Ghomashchi

Eric Hobsbawm once stated that if humanity is going to build a recognisable
future, it will not be by prolonging the past or present. Today, as in the past,
the influence of technology and media are central to the practice of artists -
practices which are continually exploring new boundaries and new dimensions.
In this chapter, the conversation will revolve around the future of individual
and institutional practice across art, film, theory, technology and wider cultural
spheres. How does technology influence art today? Is the speed of innovation today
enlightening or bewildering? Will art survive the Metaverse? Participants in this
gathering will be invited to share their ideas and insights regarding the strategies
and tools to support the cultural infrastructures of the present and future,
embracing the paradoxes of artistic production in the age of "fragmented reality".

Friday 22nd April, 2022
14:00

velocity0: transcode/transmute

Performance

Abror Zufarov
(Musician. Uzbekistan)
Charli Tapp
(Artist. Europe, Japan)

Friday 22nd April, 2022
15:00

what does the transition to digital art and design imply for its traditional practitioners?

Conversation

Speakers:
Jérôme Neutres
(Chief curator at Ullens Foundation. France)
Luisa Ausenda
(Head of Collectors Relations and Institutional
Partnerships at Aorist. Italy)
Serena Tabacchi
(Director and co-founder of the Museum
of Contemporary Digital Art MoCDA. UK)
Andrés Reisinger
(Artist. Argentina)

Guest curated and moderated by:
Cyril Zammit
(Design Advisor & Consultant. France, UAE)

The National Pavilion of Uzbekistan welcomes a conversation with art experts and practitioners on the current shift towards digital platforms and creations. This unprecedented shift is not a simple change of technique nor support, it is also a complete revolution for the artists too. Could AI and algorithms substitute the human hand? More importantly, the panel will also look at the sustainability of digital creations. How can mediums like film and video continue to be preserved and archived and how will digital artworks survive in the case of power outages or without storage vaults? Can digital art survive as long as prehistoric wall paintings?

Saturday 23nd April, 2022
15:00

velocity0: transcode/transmute

Performance

Abror Zufarov
(Musician. Uzbekistan)
Charli Tapp
(Artist. Europe, Japan)

Monday 23rd May, 2022
16:00

chapter three
decolonizing data: on the myth
of machine objectivity

Conversation

Speakers:
Audrey Large
(Designer. Netherlands, France)
Ibiye Camp
(Artist. Sierra Leone, UK)
Nishant Shah
(Writer, Director of Research & Outreach and
Professor Aesthetics and Culture of Technologies
at ArtEZ University of the Arts. Netherlands)
Taus Makacheva
(Artist. Russia)
Faina Yunusova
(Artist. Uzbekistan, Germany)

Moderated by curator:
Camilo Oliveira
(Space Caviar)

In the approximately 1200 years since the basic principle of the algorithm was first put forward by Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, the power of machines has grown at an exponentially. Today, AI's ability to perfectly imitate human skills such as memory, intelligence and perception is giving us the first glimpse of a world where humans and machines interact as equals - or appear to, at least. Ultimately, machines are conceived by humans, and as such reflect the biases, preferences and prejudices that are hard-coded into their creator's cultures.

As an increasing number of artists engage with and deploy machine intelligences in their work, these biases rise to the surface to undermine the perceived neutrality of this space. In this conversation, the invited guests will address the question of ethics in technology, and the opportunities and responsibilities facing artists engaging with the field of AI across disciplines.

Sunday 19th June, 2022
16:00

chapter four
coders and weavers: on the interlaced histories of computers and cloth

Conversation

Speakers:
Amandine David
 (Designer. Belgium)
Maya Christodoulaki
 (Architect, Researcher. Austria)
Metahaven
 (Research and Design Studio. Netherlands)
Dilyara Kaipova
 (Artist. Uzbekistan)

Moderated by:
Martina Muzi
 (Designer. Netherlands, Italy)

When it was invented in 1804, the Jacquard loom was hailed as a revolution: it caused the cost of fashionable, highly sought-after patterned cloth to plummet. Thanks to the ability to be "programmed" through an innovative system of punch cards, patterned textiles became affordable to a far wider market of consumers.

 The history of fabrics and of computing are deeply intertwined. Computing pioneer Ada Lovelace is famously quoted as saying that the Analytical Engine - an early prototype of the computer - "weaves algebraic patterns, just as the Jacquard loom weaves flowers and leaves." The design and production of textiles require the precise manipulation of large amounts of numerical data, which is perhaps the reason it was one of the first fields to be partially automated.
At the same time, the history of textiles is also the history of humanity's social and political development - from the birth of the Silk Road and its influence on Eurasian commerce and culture, to the Luddite destruction of looms out of fear of automation. This conversation will unpick the stories embedded in silk textiles, abr fabrics, handwoven ikats, Soviet fabric factories and contemporary digital looms, examining the ways in which artists, designers and coders are all connected by seemingly new but factually ancient ideas.

Monday 4th–Saturday 9th July, 2022
10:00–18:00, daily

the panoptic garden

Workshop

Guest curated by:
Sara Raza
    (Curator, Writer. United States)
Andris Brinkmanis
    (Art Critic & Curator. Italy, Latvia)

Open to public participation

"The Panoptic Garden" is organized by Sara Raza, NYU ITP, and Andris Brinkmanis, NABA, and is a one week intensive public program that focuses on transcultural themes relating to garden as a discursive space through the lens of utopia, heterotopia and dystopia. Designed in response to the 59th International Venice Biennale "Dixit Algorizmi—The Garden of Knowledge" the intensive poetically addresses algorithmic thinking and bias from a human-centric and non Euro-American centric perspective. Through the metaphor of "world-building" the program questions colonial historical narratives, assumptions and optics. Employing both on and offline components it offers both a site specific and site responsive program of land cultivation/ gardening, workshops, talks, radio program, walking tours and supper club. The program takes into account the theme of surveillance and the role of algorithms in control over global citizens, via the implementation of AI and the emergence and rapid development of quantum computing, and investigates its links to Western ideology and history.

In concert with artists, local hosts, facilitators, artists, architects, scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, writers, musicians the one-week intensive will culminate in a live and virtual programming, daily radio program and digital archive and publication. Participants will undertake daily field trips across Venice visiting gardens, institutions, private homes and other public sites and engage in lively activities. The program will culminate in the creation of a collective publication including the intensive's participants edited by Raza and Brinkmanis.

Who can apply?
The program is open to emerging artists and thinkers who have a knowledge and interest in global art and technology and how it intersects with the practices of everyday life. Participants must organize their own travel and accommodation and some costs will be incurred in terms of local travel and meals. The intensive will be taught in the English language.
The in-person program is limited to 24 participants only and they must be able to devote full days to the program from 10-6pm daily. There is no capacity to join the online program, which will be updated daily.

chapter five

cosmic intelligences: on philosophies and technologies of knowledge

Conversation

Speakers:
to be confirmed

Moderated by curator:
Joseph Grima
(Space Caviar)

In a recent paper titled "The Autodidactic Universe", a group of physicists working with Microsoft put forward the theory that the laws governing the cosmos amount to nothing less than an evolutionary learning system. The universe, they argue, is a self-learning computer and, rather than exist in a solid state, it perpetuates through a series of laws that change over time - an idea not dissimilar to those put forward by philosophers such as Michel Serres, who has described the universe as an "infinite computer". Whether or not these theories of pancomputationalism have merit, they suggest that our perception of the universe is shaped by the machines we build. What epistemological possibilities does the history of technology unlock for philosophers? And how is the thinking of philosophers reflected in the work of scientists today?

Tuesday 22nd November, 2022

finissage
dixit algorizmi - the garden of knowledge

Performers:
to be confirmed

The Garden of Knowledge is filled by the sounds of practitioners and performers using voice, linguistics, and storytelling to share knowledge and form communities.

exhibition catalogue