REFIK ANADOL

2025-2026

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- Refik Anadol (b. 1985, Istanbul, Turkey) is an internationally renowned media artist and pioneer in the aesthetics of data and machine intelligence. He is the Director and co-founder of Refik Anadol Studio in Los Angeles and teaching at UCLA's Department of Design Media Arts from which he obtained a Master of Fine Arts. Refik Anadol Studio brings together a globally diverse team of designers, architects, data scientists, and researchers—originating from 10 countries and fluent in 12 languages—who share a deep commitment to inclusion, equity and cross-cultural collaboration at every stage of artistic production. Anadol is also the co-founder of Dataland, the world's first Museum of AI Arts. Opening at The Grand LA in 2025, Dataland promises unparalleled, multisensory experiences at a scale and quality never before realized with real-time interactions between museum and audience.



- Refik Anadol's work locates creativity at the intersection of humans and machines. Taking the data that surrounds us as primary material, and the neural network of a computerized mind as a collaborator, Anadol offers us radical visualizations of our digitized memories and expands the possibilities of interdisciplinary arts. Anadol's AI data paintings and sculptures, live audio/visual performances and immersive installations take many forms, while encouraging us to rethink our engagement with the physical world, public art, decentralized networks and the creative potential of AI. Entire buildings come to life. Floors, walls and ceilings disappear into infinity. Breathtaking aesthetics take shape from large swaths of data and what was once invisible to the human eye becomes visible, offering the audience a new perspective on and narrative of their environments.



- https://refikanadol.com/refik-anadol/

Refik Anadol is primarily a symbolic and iconic artist. Born in Istanbul in 1985, he lost hıs father, a bank manager, at the age of 15. He completed hıs high school education at Kadıköy Anatolian High School. He began hıs university studies at Istanbul Bilgi University, specializing in photography and video. He graduated in 2009 with a double major in Visual Communication Design. As hıs graduation project, he created the first 3D video projection project in Turkey. In this work, in which he covered the façade of Santralistanbul with artificial intelligence, he brought to life the idea of "transforming the facade of an architectural structure into a canvas, using light as the material." When the video of this work was published, it became very popular online, and the project quickly gained global recognition.

After earning hıs Master of Fine Arts from Istanbul Bilgi University, he moved to the United States to attend the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) for a second Master of Arts in Multimedia Arts. Hıs experience in new media deepened during his second Master's degree at UCLA.

During his student years, the artist participated in numerous events, including the Istanbul Biennial, Ars Electronica and the Montreal Biennial, with audiovisual installations and performances. In his work, organized in conjunction with the 12th Istanbul Biennial, he created the installation "Active Structures; Acoustic Formation", an interdisciplinary work with architect Alper Derinboğaz. This work is an installation placed on the facade of the Yapı Kredi Cultural Center on İstiklal Street. Starting from Taksim and continuing along İstiklal Street, the artists recorded the sounds of that area on certain days, created data from these recordings, transformed the collected data into algorithms, visualized them and transformed the work into a multimedia installation. It is considered the first project in Turkey to describe the relationship between space, light, audiovisual performance, sound and architecture.

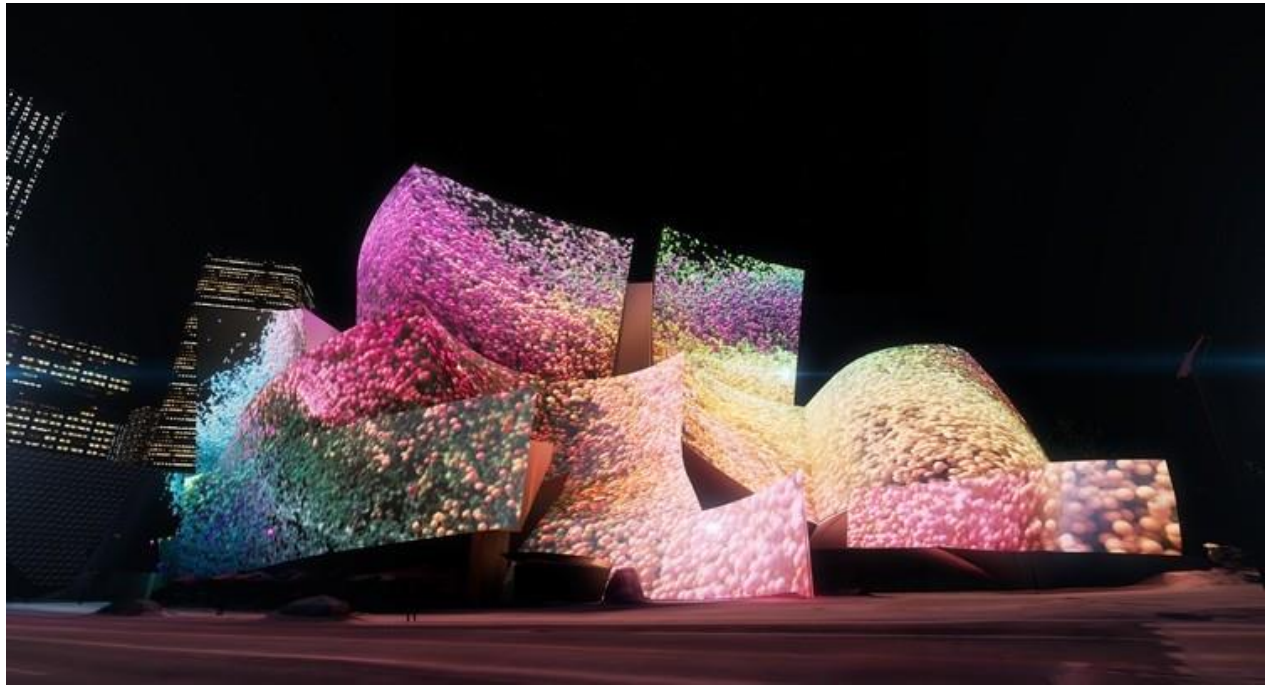
- We could spend a whole day discussing his past and achievements, so it would be better to quickly give examples from her works.

- Active Structures; Acoustic Formation (Istanbul Design Biennial - Turkey)

- https://www.arkitera.com/haber/refik-anadol-ve-alper-derinbogaz-etkinlige-konuk-oluyor/



- **L.A.'s Walt Disney Concert Hall Will Be Lit by Algorithms in Dream-Like Light Show**
- Refik Anadol is a media artist and director working in site-specific public art. Using a parametric data sculpture approach and immersive installations with live sound/visual performance, he explores the space between digital and physical entities, creating a hybrid relationship between architecture and media arts. Anadol collaborated with Google Arts & Culture to translate the archives of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, creating a "data universe" that can be shaped by neural networks, transforming and enlivening the concert hall designed by Gehry Partners.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdNb_q6Ji5A&time_continue=11&source_ve_path=NzY3NTg&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Fsearch%3Fnum%3D12%26sca_esv%3D918d0965cae38051%26sxsrf%3DANbL-n4cq9wpmYbJB3E218zEOaM3bvijvQ%3A1774880602457%26udm%3D7%26fbs%3DA&themeRefresh=1



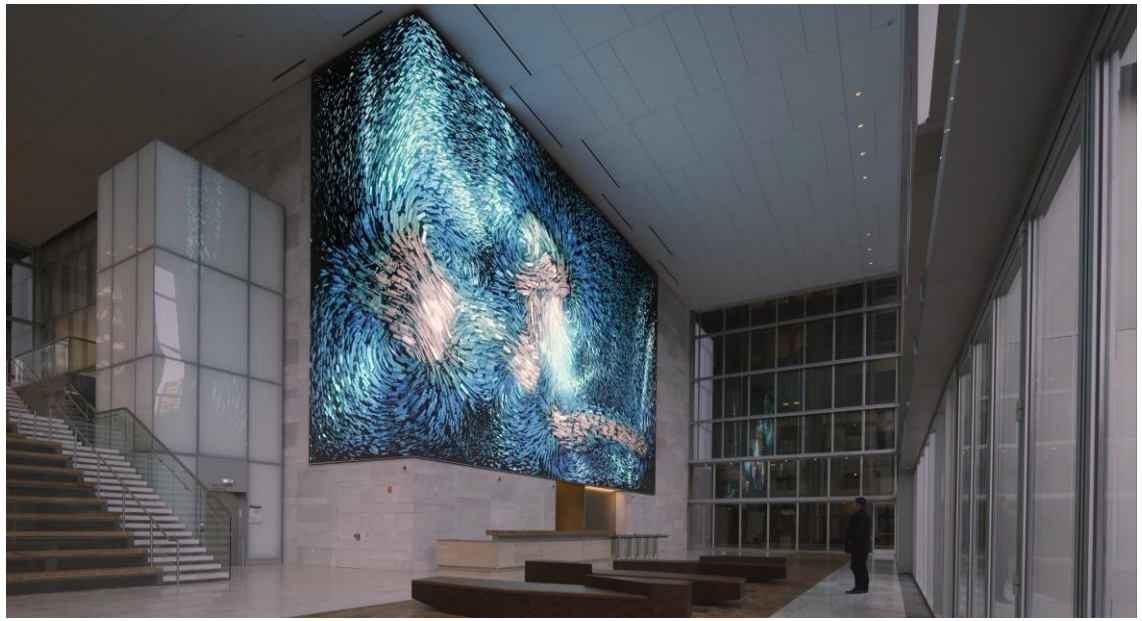
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4HDG3klSy8

- This installation is part of Anadol's "Temporary Immersive Environment Experiments" series and features the following key characteristics:

- Physical Experience: within a room covered on all four sides with mirrors, the visitor's perception of physical space is completely transformed using projection technology.
- Algorithmic Art: light and sound patterns created through algorithms transform a static screen into a three-dimensional, kinetic and infinite void.
- Theme: using the concept of "infinity," the project aims to break down the boundaries of the traditional viewing experience and invite the viewer into a non-physical world.



- "Virtual Depictions: San Francisco" is a pioneering public art project created in 2015 by Turkish media artist Refik Anadol and is considered "the world's first visual data sculpture".
- Location: Displayed on the massive 12-meter (40-foot) high LED media wall of the 350 Mission building. Data Source: Uses real-time data such as Twitter posts from the city of San Francisco, open datasets like SFGOV.org, and 3D depth camera footage of contemporary dancers. Content: Features a 90-minute loop consisting of 12 episodes. Visuals include particle trails, fluid simulations and geometric compositions.
- https://www.bitforms.art/artwork/virtual-depictions-san-francisco



- Refik Anadol's work, "Composite," designed in 2017 for the Beverly Center shopping mall in Los Angeles, is a permanent media art installation realized as part of the mall's large-scale renovation project.

- The key features of the work are:
- Data Visualization: The piece transforms urban and environmental data (weather, wind speed, social media interactions, etc.) from Beverly Hills and Los Angeles into a visual narrative through artificial intelligence and algorithms.
- Architectural Integration: Displayed on the giant LED screens on the mall's exterior, this work aims to transform the architectural structure into a living, breathing and interacting digital sculpture.
- Fluid Forms: Anadol's signature style of fluid, paint-like digital forms is prominent in this work, giving a dynamic movement to the surface of a static building.
- Public Art Quality: Its placement in a high-traffic public space like Beverly Center ensures the integration of art into daily life and its accessibility to a wide audience.
- https://www.instagram.com/reels/DRPyyPmDU7o/



- Data Pool: The project is based on the analysis of over 1.7 million documents in the SALT Research archive using machine intelligence algorithms.
- Technology: The artist worked with the Google AMI team for six months, using artificial neural networks and developing algorithms that classify these documents according to their characteristics.
- Experience: The work presents an interactive space that creates unexpected visual relationships between documents by "dreaming" through moments when the viewer does not intervene.
- Significance: This work is one of the turning points in Refik Anadol's career, where he transformed libraries and archives from static storage spaces into "living" digital structures.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yhYUFJD9oA#:~:text=Konu%C5%9Fma:%20Refik%20Anadol%20%22Ar%C5%9Fiv%20R%C3%BCyas%C4%B1,://saltonline.org...



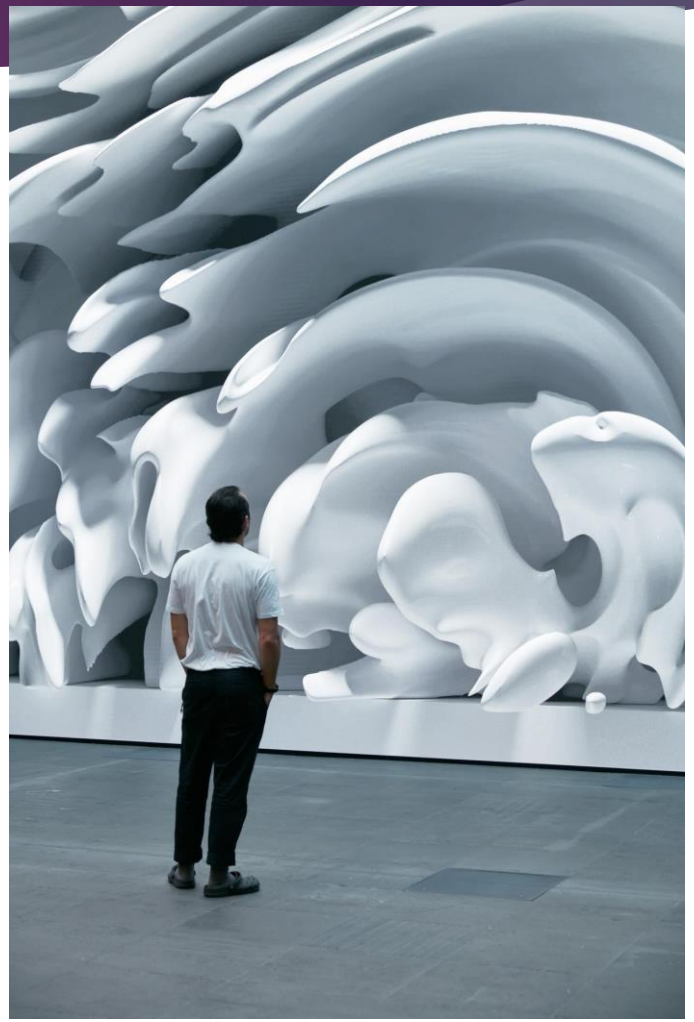
- Refik Anadol's "Machine Hallucinations" project is a comprehensive art series that uses artificial intelligence to visualize collective memory using datasets. Its connection to Seoul (South Korea) and developments in 2019 are as follows:
- Machine Hallucinations and Seoul (2019)
- The Birth of the Project: In 2016, during his residency in Google's "Artists and Machine Intelligence" (AMI) program, Anadol coined the terms "AI Data Illustration" and "AI data Sculpture," and launched this series with the question, "If machines can learn, can they also dream?" South Korean Influence: Pieces from the "Machine Hallucinations" series have been exhibited in various locations in Seoul over time. Especially recently (2024), works from this series (e.g., LNM: Coral) were presented to the audience at the Futura Seoul gallery. Key Milestone in 2019: 2019 was the year that **"Machine Hallucination: NYC"**, one of the most iconic pieces in this series, was exhibited at ARTECHOUSE, a digital art museum in New York. This work uses over 100 million architectural images of New York City to present the city's "collective memory" in the form of hallucinations.
- https://refikanadol.com/works/machine-hallucinations-latent-study-mars/#:~:text=As%20a%20masterfully%20curated%20multi,but%20to%20imagine%20beyond%20it.%E2%80%9D



- Quantum Memories is a massive digital data sculpture designed by artist Refik Anadol for the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) Triennial in Melbourne, Australia in 2020.

- The work visualizes the "collective memory of nature" by combining artificial intelligence, quantum computing and nature imagery.

- Key Features
- Massive Size: The work is displayed on a giant 10 x 10 meter LED screen in the Federation Court area of NGV International.
- Data Set: Over 200 million nature images (sky, rivers, flowers, etc.) compiled from open sources on the internet were used to train the artificial intelligence algorithm (GAN).
- Quantum Contribution: Anadol collaborated with the Google AI Quantum team, using data from experimental quantum computers as a kind of "thinking brush" to guide the AI algorithms and "paint" the images.
- Interactive Experience: The work tracks the movements of viewers in real time. The viewer's position influences the shaping of the visual outputs on the screen, making them part of the artwork.
- https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/refik-anadol-quantum-memories/



- Machine Memoirs: Space is a widely acclaimed solo exhibition by artist Refik Anadol, held at the PİLEVNELİ Dolapdere gallery in Istanbul from March 19 to April 26, 2021.

- The exhibition explored the relationship between artificial intelligence and space exploration, transforming it into a visual feast and seeking an answer to the question, "Can machines dream?"

- Important Details About the Exhibition

- Data Source: The works were created by processing millions of publicly available photographs and datasets from NASA missions such as the ISS, Hubble, and MRO (Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter) using artificial intelligence algorithms. Content: The exhibition consisted of two main sections:

- Memories: Static and moving tables where images taken by space telescopes were transformed into dynamic data tables. Dreams: An artificial intelligence data sculpture offering a completely immersive, 15-minute 3D cinematic experience for the viewer.

- Technology: Over 2 million images have been transformed into "machine dreams" using GAN (Generative Adversarial Network) algorithms and displayed using high-resolution projection systems.

- Technology: Over 2 million images were transformed into "machine dreams" using GAN (Generative Adversarial Network) algorithms and displayed using high-resolution projection systems. Achievement: The exhibition was awarded the iF Design Award, one of the most prestigious awards in the design world.

- https://www.pilevneli.com/exhibitions/38-refik-anadol-machine-memoirs-space-pilevneli-dolapdere/works/



- Alkazar Dream is an interactive digital art installation created with artificial intelligence technology by world-renowned media artist Refik Anadol for the reopening of the historic Alkazar Cinema.

- Key details about the project are as follows:
- Location: The historic Alkazar Cinema in Beyoğlu reopened its doors in November 2021 after a 10-year hiatus, under the name HOPE Alkazar, with this exhibition.
- Content: The work was created by processing the visual data of approximately 150 films from Turkish cinema using artificial intelligence algorithms.
- Experience: Visitors can watch this digital dream projected onto the cinema walls in sessions lasting approximately half an hour.
- Technology: Refik Anadol Studio used artificial neural networks to transform the memories associated with the space into a visual and auditory experience.
- Collaboration: The exhibition was realized with the contributions of Nike and aimed to bring together sports, culture, and art.
- https://www.instagram.com/p/CWU1UDKolPp/



- Awards Received by Refik Anadol
- Microsoft Research Best Vision Award
- German Design Award
- UCLA Moss Award for Art and Architecture
- 2014 University of California Art Research Institute Award
- 2016 SEGD Global Design Awards, Honorable Mention
- Google – Artist of Art and Machine Intelligence

- Some Quotes from Refik Anadol
- "Our emotions and memories are our most powerful weapon against machines."

- "For me, success is the journey from dream to reality."

- "We are in an information age where questions are more important than answers."



- He was the one who summarized the 200-year history of MoMA in New York in a single abstract work projected onto a video wall, who brought the sky into a room by reprocessing millions of photos taken by NASA's satellites and telescopes, and who shared his thoughts on climate change interactively with renewable energy-powered LED screens and sensors at the Davos 2025 World Economic Forum.

- He encountered his first computer at age eight, taught himself basic programming on a Commodore 64, was passionate about Blade Runner and graduated from Istanbul Bilgi University with a degree in Visual Communication Design; while a student, he transformed a concrete wall on campus into a wavy sea using a simple projector. A single click behind windows to the future.

- Refik is currently in Bilbao with the exhibition "Living Architecture," which will be on display at the Guggenheim until October 19th, and in the near future, the world's first museum entirely dedicated to artificial intelligence will open in Los Angeles. He continues his work in computer science by capturing the inputs around us, examining historical archives and books and researching the latest software.

- The computer becomes an extension of the hands and mind: "In all my work, I am always looking for the connection between the physical and the digital and exploring how data can shape immersive experiences. The aim is to transform the abstract into something that we can collectively feel and experience through narrative and perception."

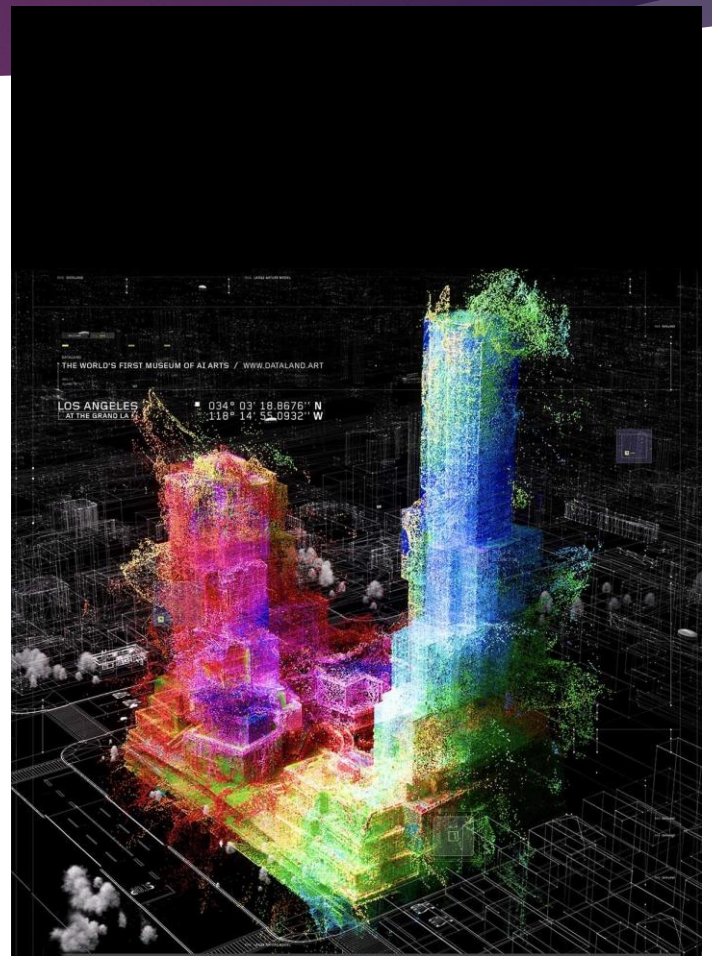


- The site-specific installation, Renaissance Dreams, is a dreamlike journey through the history of Italian art, exploring it through four sections: painting, architecture, sculpture, and literature. Permanently exhibited since Anadol's first exhibition in Italy in 2020, the work is located at the MEET Digital Culture Center (open Tuesdays 3 pm - 7 pm), an international digital culture hub in Milan.

- Renaissance Dreams was also recently exhibited at the Palazzo Citterio, which reopened after more than 50 years. To create the exhibition, countless paintings and texts produced between 1300 and 1600 were collected and examined; these documents were then processed with the help of programmers and data scientists and reinterpreted using algorithms. The result is a new, parallel, virtual reality that alters the perception of time and transcends the boundaries of physical space, reinterpreting the past.

- In his works, floors, walls, and ceilings disappear, textures bloom like flowers, and pigments transform into vibrant patterns that bring entire buildings to life. In Barcelona, Gaudí's Casa Batlló was illuminated at night with a video mapping applied to its facade, bringing it to life with a hypnotic walk through the various rooms.

- For the new Living Architecture project at the Guggenheim Bilbao, designed by Frank Gehry in 1997, Anadol reinterpreted the Canadian architect's design legacy, presenting period drawings and sketches as a fluid, constantly evolving visual narrative. This is not Anadol's first engagement with Gehry's architecture: he previously transformed the curved facade of the Walt Disney Concert Hall with a light performance.



- Refik Anadol is, first and foremost, a significant and contemporary artist. He is one of the few names who introduced digital art to the world. Unlike NFTs, his use of outdoor works, music and ambiance has elevated him to a completely different level of artistry. This success has garnered attention worldwide. Refik Anadol has also encouraged a new generation of artists to create art.

- Thank you

- Furkan Zengin