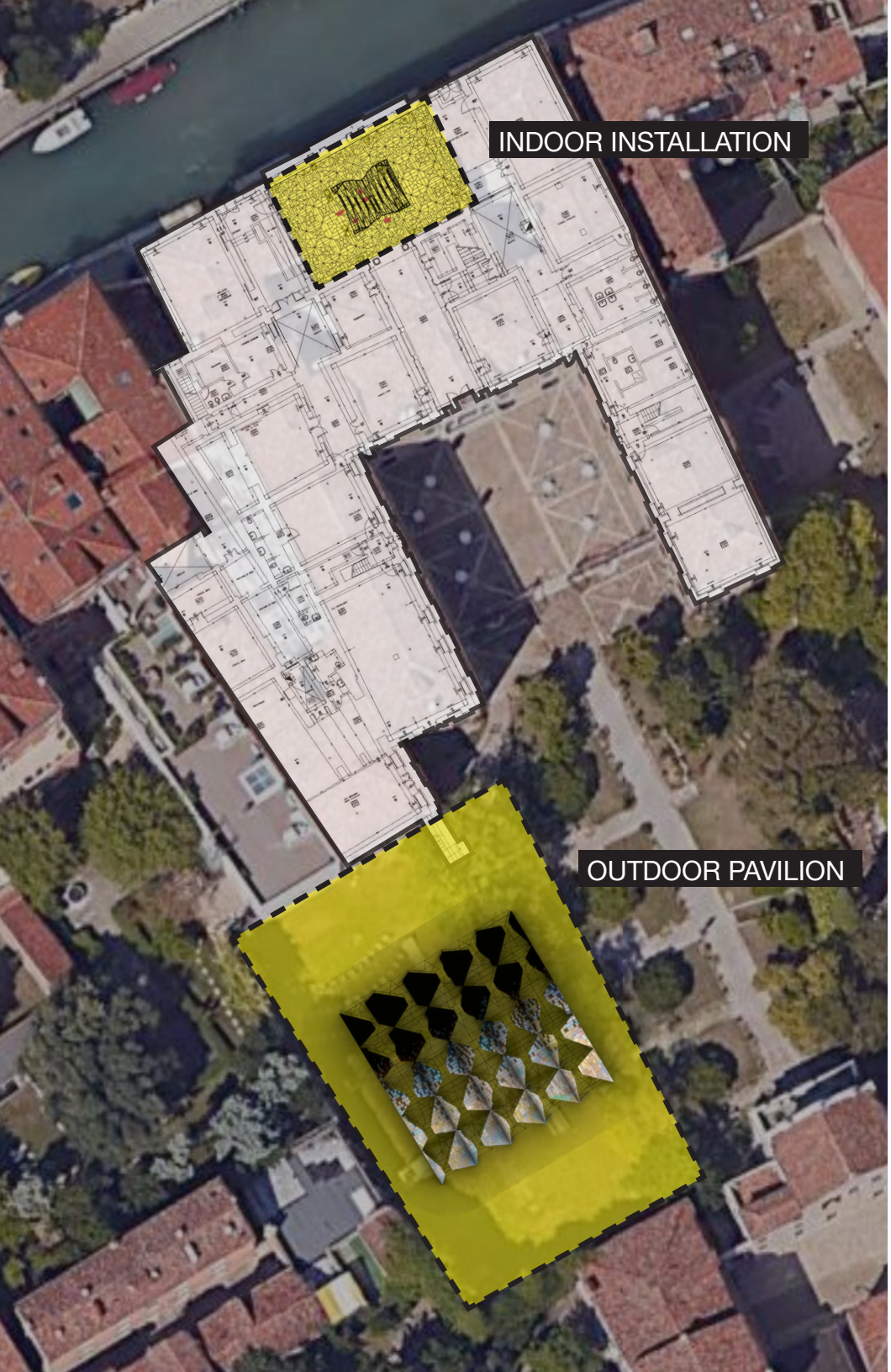
How will we live together?

HYBRID IDENTITIES

17th International Architecture Exhibition,
La Biennale di Venezia, Armenia Pavilion

2020



Hybrid Identities Locations

Locations

1) Indoor:
Structures inside Colegio Armenio's Hall of Mirrors

2) Outdoor:
Structures in the designated garden in the outdoor grounds at Colegio Armenio

The two locations complement each other and serve as portals to each other. Interactions at one will be digitally connected to the interactions at the other.

Depending on the budget and the committee's preferences, we are open to constructing either the indoor or the outdoor structures, instead of both.

Hybrid Identities

Indoor

In today's globalized world, one's identity becomes composed of pieces from different places; your identity becomes like a kaleidoscope.

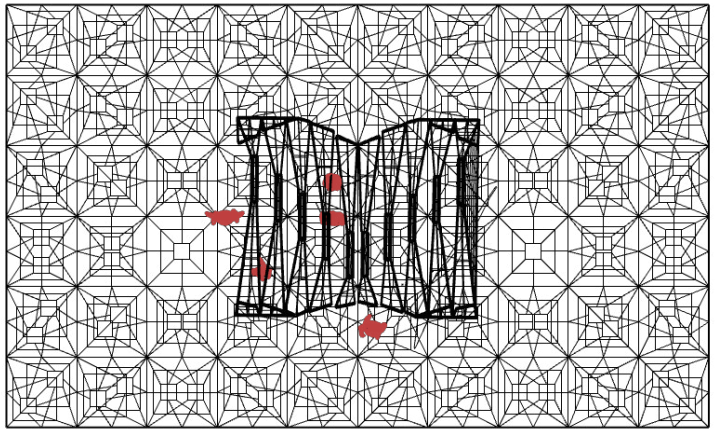
As an immigrant or a person of the diaspora, you develop a special ability to go between locations without losing your sense of self. People develop the capacity to jump between places, and the places each give you something to add to your kaleidoscope. And on the flip side, those places get to add you as another facet of their kaleidoscope.

Thesis: don't be afraid to have lots of facets to your kaleidoscope.
"You" is twofold here: "you" can mean an individual, or "you" can mean a community or a country. The kaleidoscope shows the beauty that can arise from the diversity.

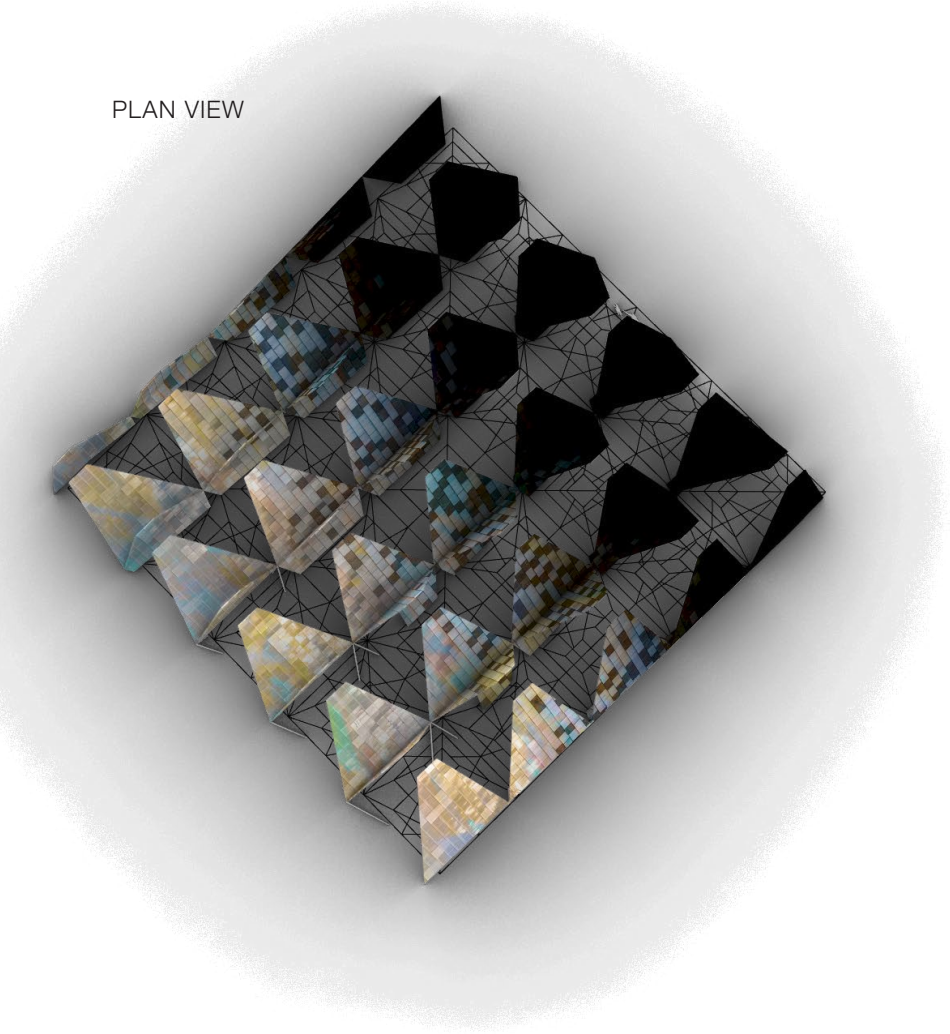
The kaleidoscope then represents the facets of each individual's identity; and it can also represent facets of a country's identity. It only becomes richer and more beautiful with more facets.

No one knows this better than the Armenians. Regarding the current international refugee crisis, Armenians have been on both side of the narrative - both the refugees and those taking in refugees. Through this pavilion, Armenia is saying that we've experienced both. Learn from Armenians as a case study – they have learned we have to embrace each other and live together.

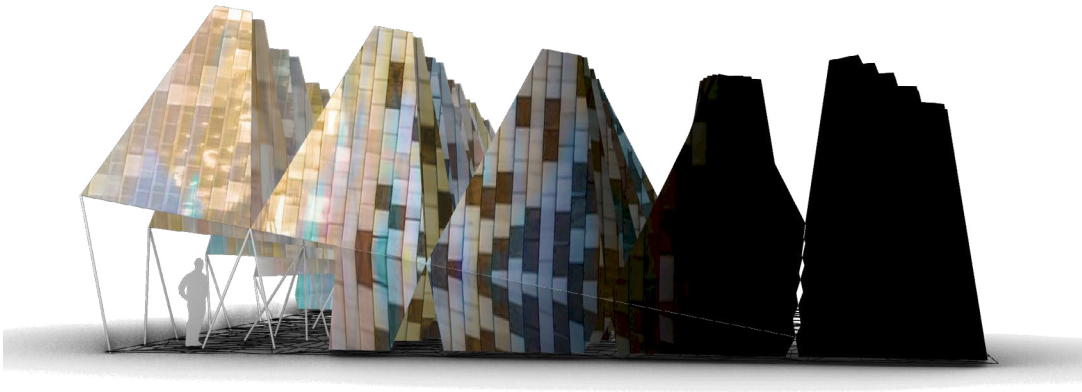
Hybrid Identities Indoor



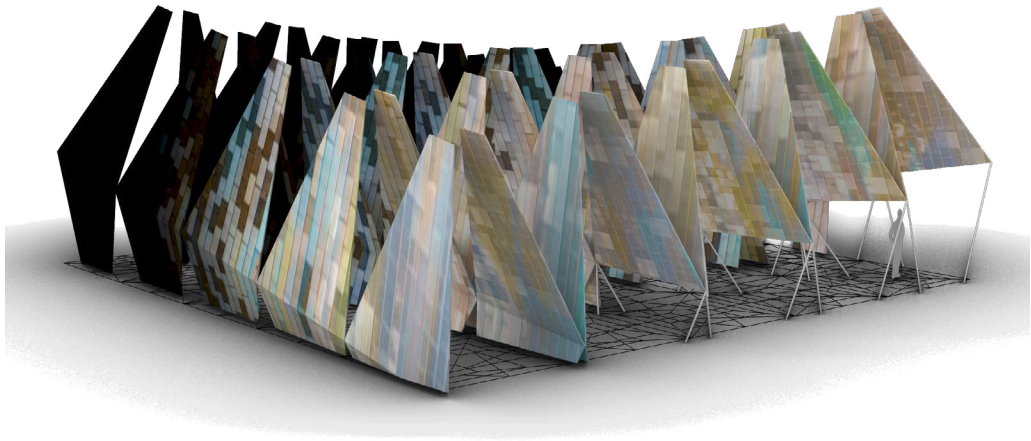
PLAN VIEW



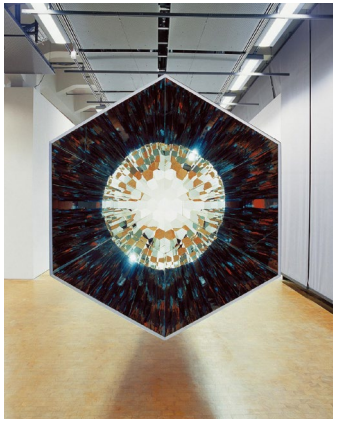
SIDE VIEW

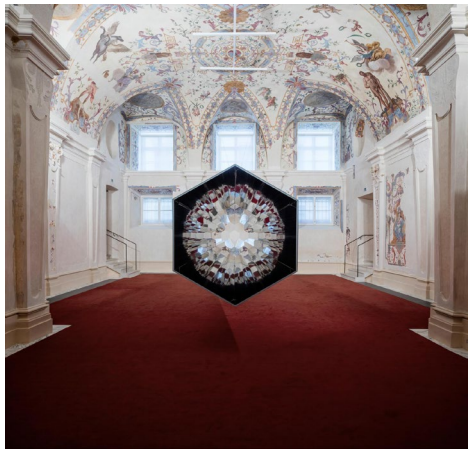


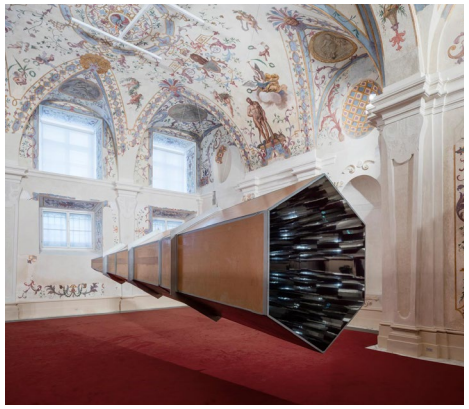
AXON VIEW



Hybrid Identities Materials

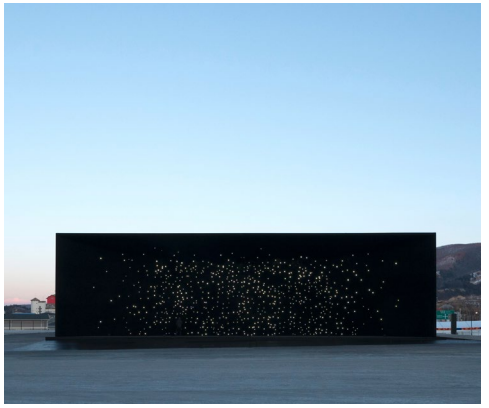


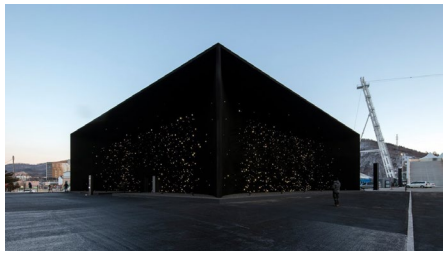




Precedent: Olafur Eliasson's

FACETS: DIGITAL AND ANALOG
The mirrored facets will reflect bits of Colegio Armenio's Hall of Mirrors, of places in Armenia, and of places and other countries where the Armenian diaspora has touched. This selection of locations you're seeing into - these portals - will be important. Some mirrored facets are actually digital livestream screens showing these places.

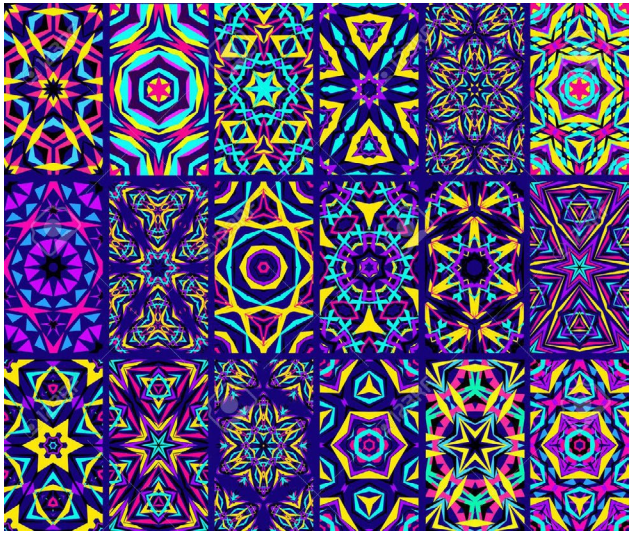




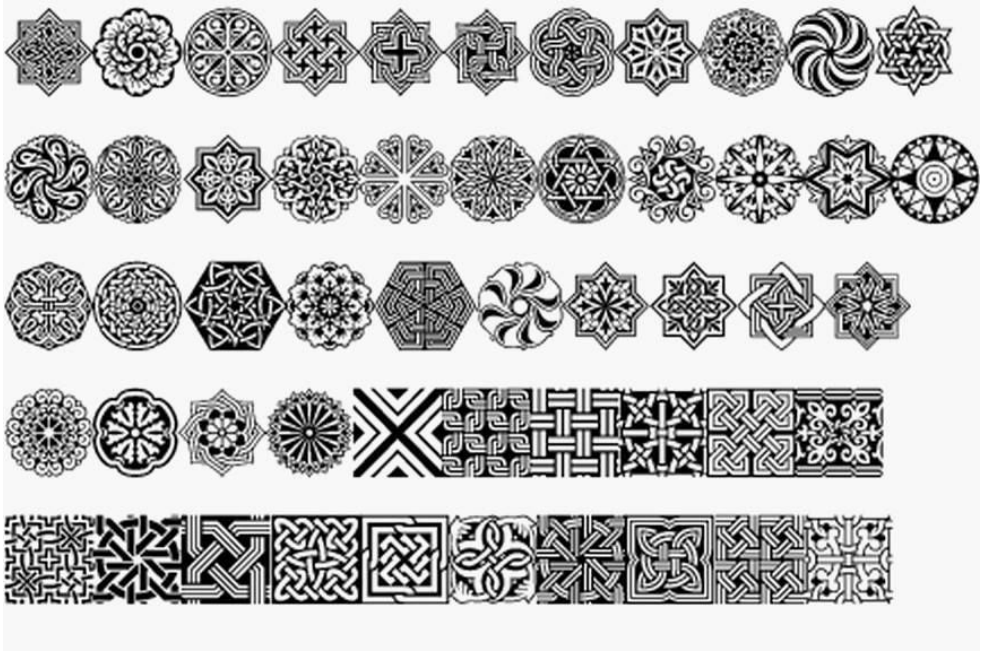
VANTABLACK
The vantablack exterior represents the fear of unknown (fear of other, fear of refugees, etc) - but by making it physical, something to be experienced, seen, and stepped into - the installation says if you get past the fear (step into it to confront it) it's actually beautiful.

It also creates an interesting contrast to the ornateness of the Hall of Mirrors and kaleidoscope.

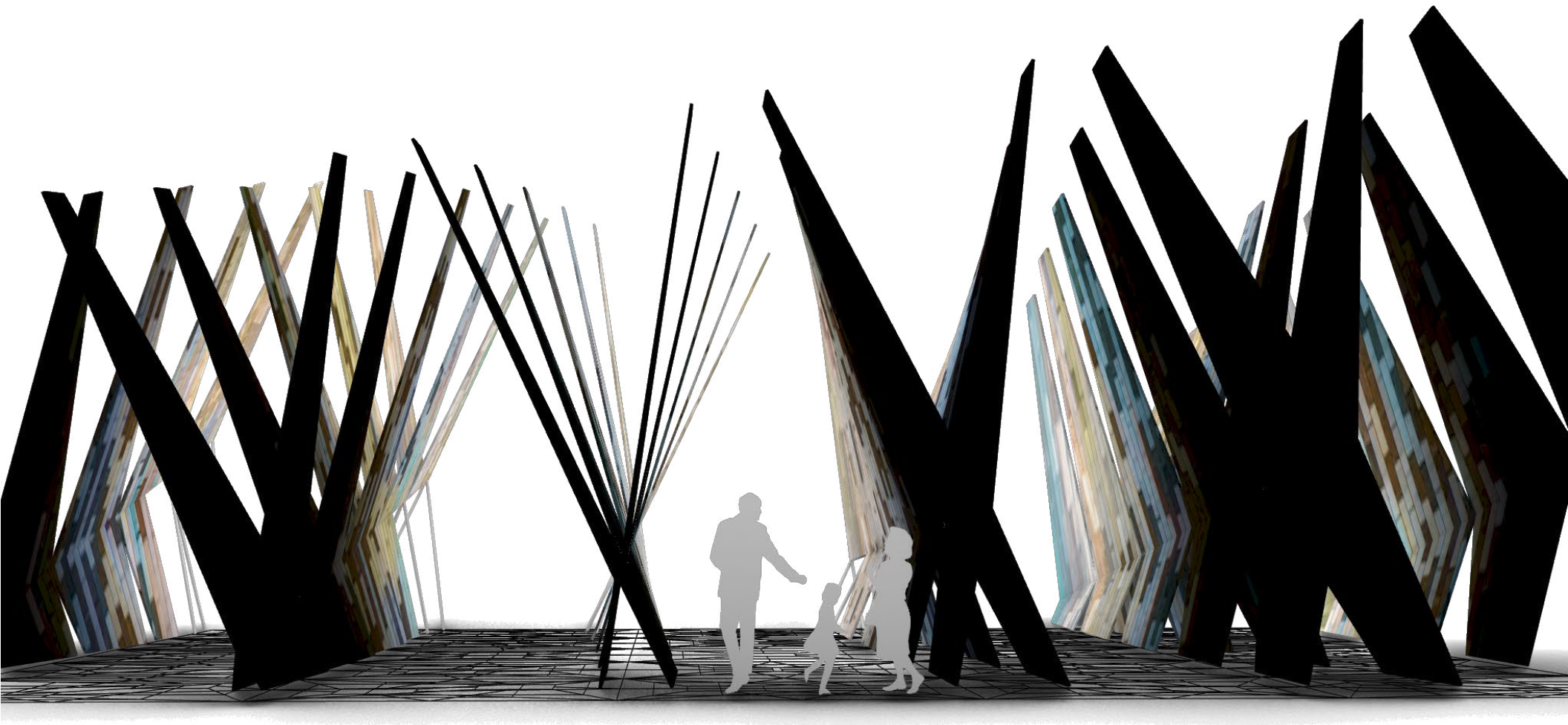
KALEIDOSCOPE



ARMENIAN ORNAMENTS



Hybrid Identities



Team

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In Collaboration with -
Storaket Architectural Studio

Meroujan Minassian, Principal

Meroujan Minassian is the Principal of Storaket Architectural Studio in Yerevan.

INVIVIA

INVIVIA, the design, technology, and research studio founded in 1999, navigates the increasingly blurred boundary between the physical and the digital. The practice focuses on responsive environments and interaction design at urban, architectural, and artifact scales. Projects vary from a large campus masterplan to consumer electronic products, with a diverse list of clients such as Microsoft, Samsung, Hewlett Packard, Guggenheim Museum, Boston Museum of Science, Fidelity, and cities such as Beirut, Copenhagen, and New York.

Many of the studio's projects use digital media augmentation to revitalize existing urban environments. Familiar Strangers, scheduled to open in Calgary, Canada in the spring of 2020, transforms a dark but well-used underpass beneath an expressway by media augmentation and interaction. It reclaims city infrastructure as a "space for conversation," integrating urban design strategy and interactive public art. This work is one of the largest permanent media art installations in Canada.

Another current project is the campus masterplan at Yerevan Physics Institute, a dilapidated 70 building Soviet-era research campus with a large particle accelerator and a long history of pioneering scientific research. The centerpiece of the masterplan will be a 200 meters wide media-integrated responsive pathway, which will act as a circular spine of a new tech hub and research campus.

Familiar Strangers, Calgary 2019

Proposal for Yerevan Physics Institute, Yerevan 2019-

Other, more poetic projects include MIMMI, the cloud that reacts to the mood of the city. This air-pressurized sculpture hovered over a downtown plaza in Minneapolis and created dynamically changing microclimates underneath, responding to real-time algorithmic analysis of geotagged tweets from the city.

Another is the public art installation The D.R.A.E.M in Copenhagen, created in collaboration with the Cultural Ministry of Denmark. The 10-meter tall sculpture behaved as an empathy gatherer, collecting and conveying virtual messages from all over the world. This work sparked a national debate in the Danish Parliament on human rights and international issues, involving the Turkish and the Armenian embassies.

Responsive environments and artifacts, regardless of scale, all deal with the same fundamental questions about how people perceive, feel, and react to the world around them. The studio aspires to be both poetic and pragmatic in creating these new multi-sensory realities and environments.

DRAEM, Copenhagen 2015

MIMMI, Minneapolis 2012