

Dahlia Elsayed and Andrew Demirjian, *SK3000*, 2024. Installation view at Locust Projects.



**LOCUST
PROJECTS**



SK3000 Andrew Demirjian & Dahlia Elsayed

March 2 - May 4, 2024

ARTIST TALK & ACTIVATION: Saturday, April 6 | 3-5pm

Locust Projects presents *SK3000*, a newly commissioned interactive architectural sculptural installation in the 625 sq ft Project Room by New York City-based artists, Dahlia Elsayed & Andrew Demirjian.

A multi-sensory ritual site to quench intellectual and physical thirst, *SK3000* reinterprets the iconic Islamic architectural form of a *sabil kuttab*. Originating in the 1400s, the structure traditionally holds a community fountain at the ground level with a school built on top. The artists reimagine the *sabil kuttab*'s form and function for the future, in the context of privatization of water sources, democratic access to clean water, and as a learning space that resists education for productivity, profit, or politics.

In the installation, Elsayed & Demirjian use elaborate decoration, including crafted water elements, carpets, cushions, sculptures, and original soundtrack to create a transportive installation conceived of as an ancestral gift structure for an indeterminate future, as a meeting space to collectively imagine new ways of being.

In this speculative future, the artists conjure a world where different species of animals, plant life, fungi, and minerals are able to communicate through a shared non-linguistic form of communicative pulses. Here, within this school that does not privilege Western thought, humans have developed the ability to listen and learn from other lifeforms.

Dahlia Elsayed and Andrew Demirjian's *SK3000* proposal for the Project Room was selected as part of Locust Projects 2022 open call for proposals from more than 350 applications by a review panel consisting of Miami-based independent curator Tam Gryn; and past exhibiting artists, Marcus Kiser 2017 (Charlotte, NC); Jeff Thompson 2020 (Hoboken, NJ); and Raul Romero 2020 (Philadelphia, PA) and coordinated by LP Co-founding artist, Elizabeth Withstandley.

VISITOR ACCESSIBILITY NOTE: To stay true to the architectural form, it wasn't possible to make the upstairs space ADA accessible. The following describes the space and various elements within:



Inside the sculpture on the second floor, three rugs are hanging on the walls, each is 4' wide by 6' high. This space, the school portion of the sabil kuttab, features geometric shapes and a color palette of ochre, yellow, light and dark blue waves, and alternating maroon and rose rectangular stripes running across the top of the walls. Two rugs on the floor are in the same style as the ones on the wall, with orange circles, triangles, and black and white waves, similar to the rug hanging by the welcome desk.

In the center of the room is a sound sculpture in the form of a ziggurat with four speakers. Sounds of distant signaling and low and high-frequency call and response play from the speakers. Two colorful cushions, similar to those found on the floor of the gallery invite visitors to rest and listen to the soundtrack.

SK3000 is presented, in part, with support from Odabashian Rugs.



Dahlia Elsayed and Andrew Demirjian, *SK3000*, 2024.
Installation view at Locust Projects.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Dahlia Elsayed is an artist and writer who makes text and image based work that synthesizes an internal and external experience of place, connecting the ephemeral to the concrete. She writes short fictions for created landscapes that take the form of narrative paintings, print and installation. Her work has been exhibited at galleries and institutions throughout the United States and internationally, including the 12th Cairo Biennale, Robert Miller Gallery, BravinLee Programs, The New Jersey State Museum and Aljira Center for Contemporary Art. Her work is in the public collections of the Newark Museum, the Zimmerli Museum, Johnson & Johnson Corporation, the US Department of State, amongst others. Dahlia has received awards from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the Edward Albee Foundation, Visual Studies Workshop, the MacDowell Colony, Women's Studio Workshop, Headlands Center for the Arts, and the NJ State Council on the Arts. She received her MFA from Columbia University, and lives and works in New Jersey. Ms. Elsayed is Professor of Humanities at CUNY LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City, NY.

Andrew Demirjian builds linguistic, sonic and visual environments that disrupt habituated ways of reading, hearing and seeing. His interdisciplinary artistic practice examines structures that shape consciousness and perception, questioning frameworks that support the status quo and limit thought. The works are often presented in non-traditional spaces and take the form of multi-channel audiovisual installations, generative artworks, video poems, augmented reality apps and live performances.

Andrew's work has been exhibited at The Museum of the Moving Image, The New Museum – First Look: New Art Online, Fridman Gallery, Transformer Gallery, Eyebeam, Rush Arts, the White Box gallery, the Center for Book Arts, The Arab American National Museum, The Newark Museum and many other galleries, festivals and museums. Andrew was awarded a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship in 2023 and his work has been supported by The MacDowell Colony, Nokia Bell Labs, Puffin Foundation, Artslink, Harvestworks, Rhizome, Diapason, The Experimental Television Center, The Bemis Center, LMCC Swing Space, the MIT Open Documentary Lab and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. He teaches theory and production courses in emerging media in the Film and Media Department and the Integrated Media Arts MFA program at Hunter College.

Together, they use contemporary and historical interdisciplinary research to create tactile objects and visual and sonic experiences that pull from the past to anticipate alternative futures. They are known for bright and thought provoking immersive mixed media installations which are influenced by their South West Asian and North African backgrounds.

Their work has been exhibited widely in the US and internationally, including: Transformer Gallery and The Arab American National Museum. Their work was recently featured in the group exhibition, *What Models Make Worlds: Critical Imaginaries of AI* at The Ford Foundation Gallery in NY from September 7-December 9, 2023.

Photo of Dahlia Elsayed and Andrew Demirjian by Sara Stadtmiller.

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.



Locust Projects 2023-2022 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council; The Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children's Trust; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; State of Florida through the Division of Arts and Culture; The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Grant; The Albert and Jane Nahmad Family Foundation; Susan and Richard Arregui; Diane and Werner Grob and the Incubator Fund Supporting Sponsors and Friends.

ART HAPPENS HERE.

297 NE 67 ST, Miami, FL 33138

305.576.8570 info@locustprojects.org | www.locustprojects.org