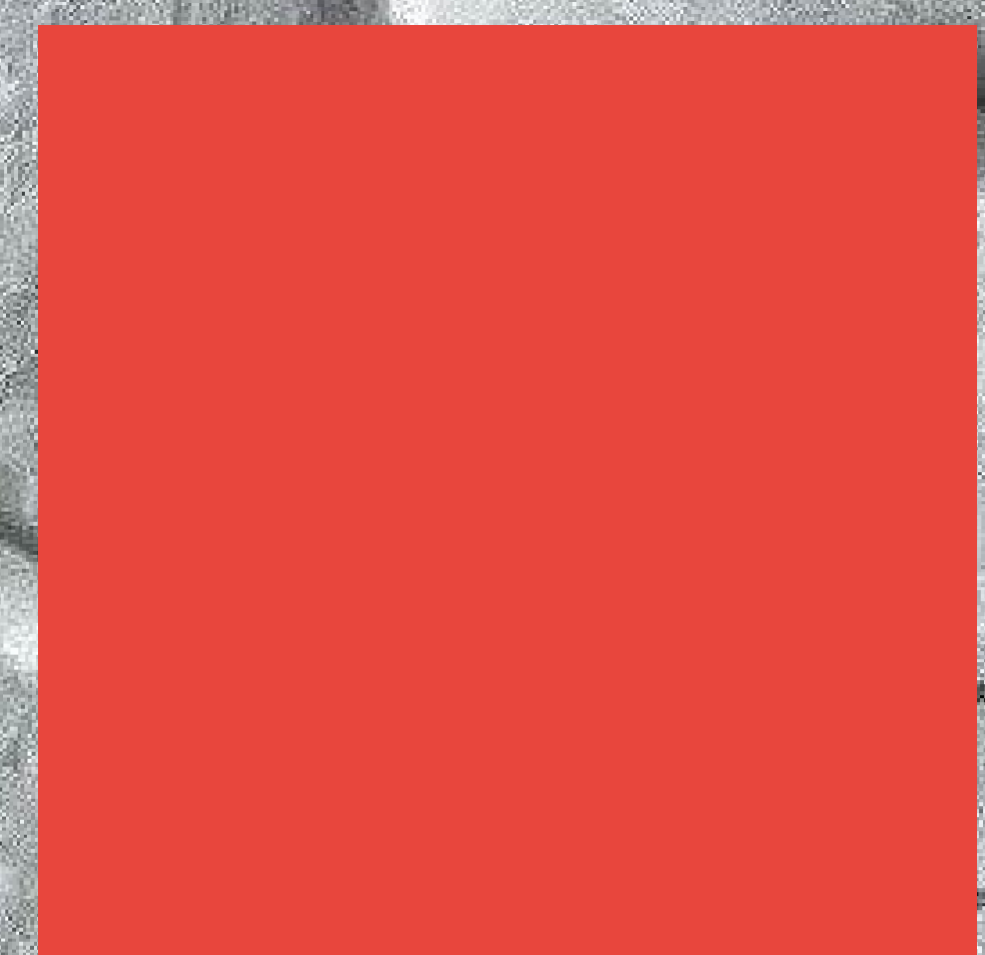




**ARTIS  
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Expert Art Advising for Exceptional Collections



**AKI**  
**ART COLLECTION**



The AKI Collection was never about decoration. From the beginning, the idea was to create a living story inside the restaurant — where art, architecture and gastronomy weave into one experience.

We wanted the collection to reflect four values close to Japanese philosophy — materiality, craftsmanship, transformation, elegance. They became our compass. Every artist here has institutional weight — from Venice Biennale and Documenta to the Joan Miró Prize and major museum collections — but even more importantly, each one brings these values into today's conversation.





Impermanence runs through the collection: smoke that disappears (Daniel Knorr), suns that rise and set (Yoshirotten), or the memory woven into fragile textiles (Aziza Kadyri, Kapwani Kiwanga). Albano Hernández went further — he came to AKI, collected fragments of the space, and literally built his work from its materials. His painting is almost an anatomy of the restaurant itself, echoing questions of sustainability and identity.

Materiality and transformation reveal themselves in broken ceramics made whole again (Bouke de Vries) or in the fractal surfaces of Nabil Nahas, who anchors the collection with cosmic geometry and Mediterranean light. Elegance runs through all of them, but it is also challenged by play: Ryan Gander turns ordinary objects into puzzles and provocations, inviting guests to reflect while dining.

Craftsmanship is everywhere — in the way a bouquet can hold political memory (Kapwani Kiwanga), in Nahas's meticulous layers, or in the digital precision of Yoshirotten's "365 Suns."

Placed in AKI, these works do not just hang on walls — they shape atmosphere. A guest might come for the cuisine, but they leave with something more: the sense of being part of a cultural moment in the heart of London.

Curated by Polina Surina





## Artists & Works



Ryan Gander, awarded OBE, is one of Britain's most playful conceptual artists. His works, in Tate, MoMA, and Stedelijk, often transform ordinary objects into puzzles, inviting curiosity and dialogue.

Work in AKI — A Machine To Send You Somewhere Else (2025)  
An interactive machine that prints random coordinates for guests. Each slip of paper suggests an imagined or real location, turning a casual encounter into a journey. In AKI, it represents the spirit of chance and dialogue, essential to the restaurant's identity.

**Remember: art here is play, chance, and personal journey.**







A Machine To Send You Somewhere Else (2025)





Tokyo-based artist and art director Yoshirotten, founder of YAR studio, is known for merging radical graphic design with immersive installations. His projects include Future Nature (Tokyo, 2018), SUN (Japan National Stadium, 2023), and Radial Graphics Bio (Ginza Graphic Gallery, 2024). He has collaborated with Hermès, Nike, and McLaren.

**Work in AKI — Menhir 2 (2025)**

An interactive installation exploring the human relationship to nature, technology, and the spiritual. Inspired by prehistoric menhirs, the work uses a light sensor to transform ambient light into waves of colour, rendering the invisible visible. Like a modern petroglyph, it creates a meditative rhythm of impermanence and connection across time and cosmos.

**Remember: a modern stone of light, linking ancient mystery with today's digital sensitivity.**







Menhir 2 (2025)





**Daniel  
Knorr**  
b. 1968, Romania/  
Germany

Daniel Knorr is internationally recognized for his conceptual interventions. He represented Romania at the Venice Biennale 2005 (European Influenza), participated in Documenta 14 (2017), and is collected by MoMA, Pompidou, and Tate Modern. His works often use ephemeral or politically charged materials to reflect on power and history.

Work in AKI — Gold Flag CS 039 (2022)  
From the Golden Pillows series. A flag usually represents a nation, corporation, or activist cause. Here, frozen in gold, it also refers to the destructive exploitation of natural resources. Unlike a flag in motion, Knorr's work is permanently still, a memorial to beauty and its sacrifice. Installed in AKI's former bank building, it resonates with histories of capital and power while echoing Andy Warhol's golden icons.

**Remember: a balance between authority and fragility.**







Gold Flag CS 039 (2022)



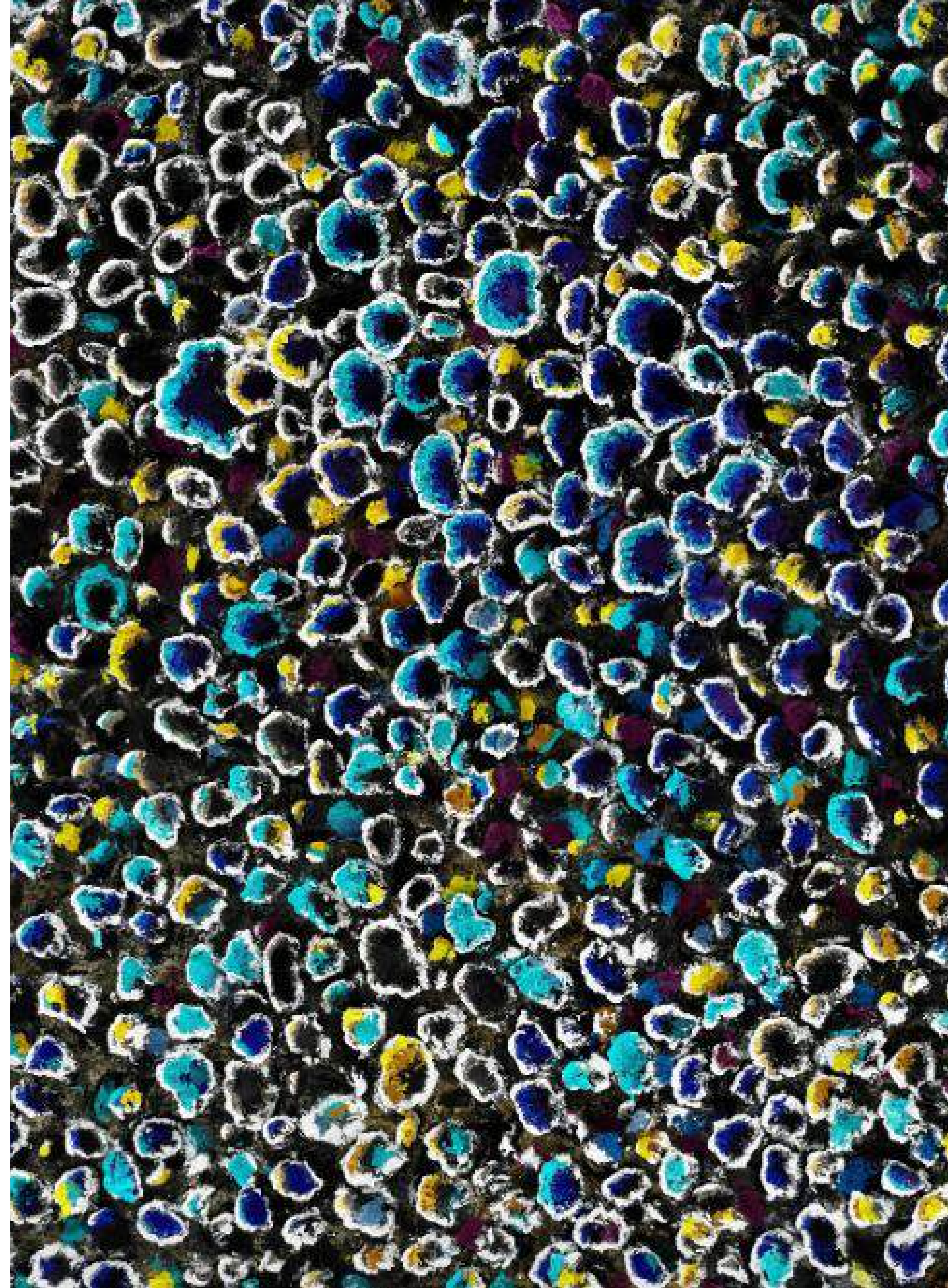


**Nabil  
Nahas**  
b. 1949, Lebanon/  
USA

Nabil Nahas is one of the most significant Lebanese-American painters, known for merging Islamic geometry, fractals, and Mediterranean flora into vibrant visual constellations. His works are held in the Metropolitan Museum, MoMA, Tate, and the British Museum, and he will represent Lebanon at the Venice Biennale 2026.

Work in AKI — Untitled (2023)  
Created in acrylic and pumice, the painting resembles coral reefs and celestial galaxies at once. Its textured surface opens a space between geology and cosmology, reflecting both Mediterranean roots and universal geometry. As the anchor work in the AKI Collection, it links the restaurant to a wider cultural conversation on heritage, nature, and abstraction ..

**Remember: cosmic geometry rooted in Mediterranean light.**







Untitled (2023)



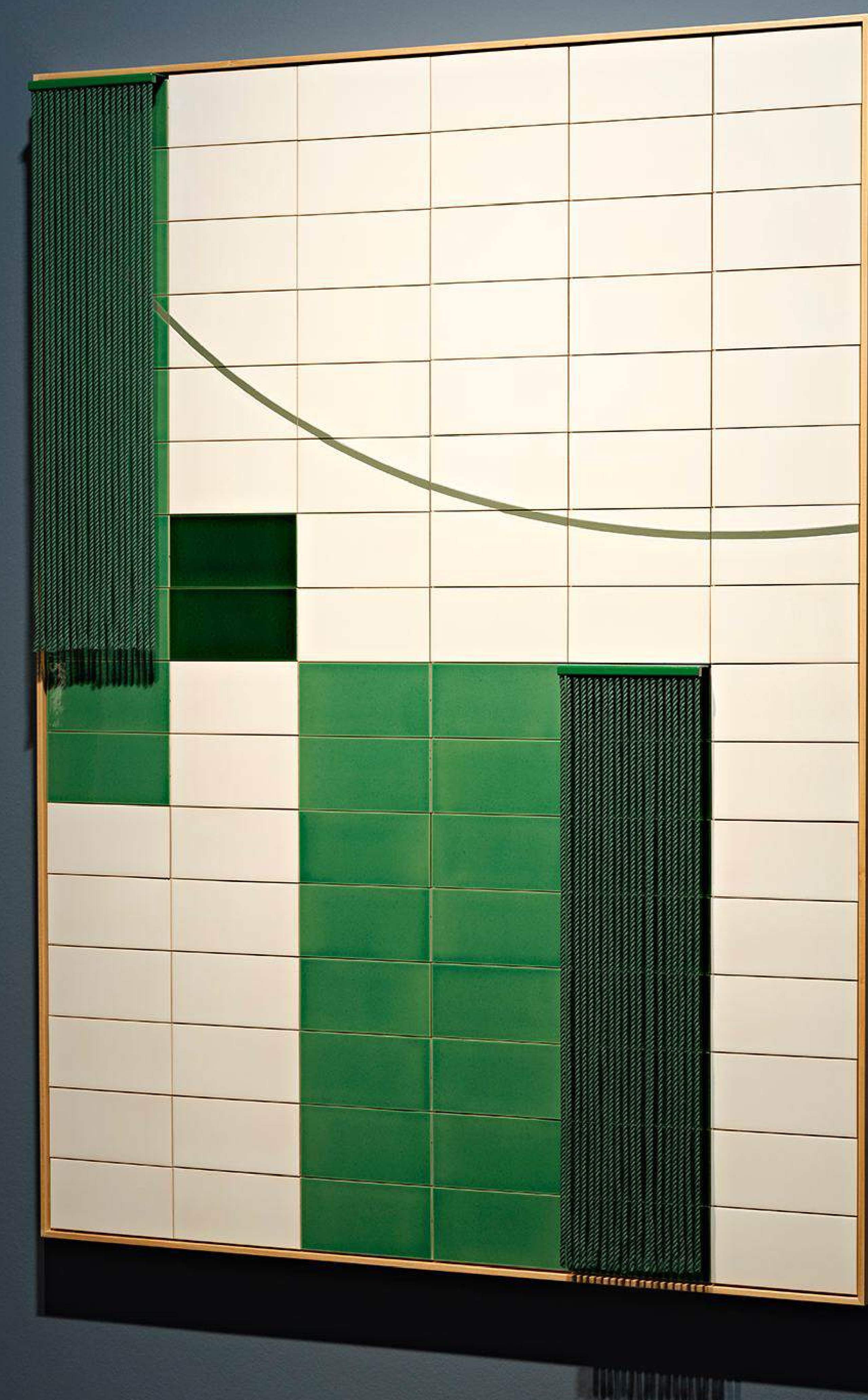


**Kapwani  
Kiwanga**  
b. 1978, Canada/  
France

Winner of the Joan Miró Prize (2025), Kapwani Kiwanga represented Canada at the Venice Biennale 2024 (Trinket). Her works are in the Tate, Centre Pompidou, and Guggenheim, and she is known for transforming everyday materials into reflections on colonial histories and power structures.

Work in AKI — Canopy (2023)  
A bouquet-like sculpture made from ceramics and textiles.  
At first glance decorative, it encodes complex political narratives, revealing how cultural memory and resistance can be preserved in fragile forms. In AKI, it is both a gesture of elegance and a reminder of hidden histories.

**Remember: a bouquet that remembers what nations try to forget**







Canopy (2023)





**Bouke  
de Vries**  
b. 1960,  
Netherlands/UK

London-based Dutch artist Bouke de Vries began his career as a ceramics conservator before turning to art. His works, found in the V&A, Stedelijk, and Design Museum, embody the Japanese philosophy of kintsugi — the beauty of repair and transformation.

Work in AKI — Commission Guan Yin (2025)  
Specially created for AKI, this sculpture of Guan Yin is assembled from porcelain fragments. A hidden dragonfly — symbol of lightness and transformation — invites guests to discover detail within the broken. By turning fragments into a new icon, the work reflects how repair can surpass the original in beauty.

**Remember: the broken can become even more beautiful than the whole.**







**Aziza  
Kadyri**  
b. 1990,  
Uzbekistan

Aziza Kadyri works with textiles, heritage, and digital media, combining handcraft with AI technologies. She represented Uzbekistan at the Venice Biennale 2024 and was featured at the Bukhara Biennale 2025, where she explored memory, repair, and cultural hybridity.

Work in AKI — Procession / Descent (2025)  
The work explores migration, renewal, and the shifting nature of identity through the figure of a female shapeshifter drawn from East Asian and Central Asian myths. Vintage fabrics from Japan and Uzbekistan are reworked with AI-generated patterns, weaving together memory, handcraft, and digital experimentation.

By inhabiting a transitional space, the piece becomes a metaphor for constant movement and transformation.

**Remember: identity as fabric — layered, fragile, always in motion**







Procession / Descent (2025)





A Spanish artist and graduate of the Royal College of Art, Albano Hernández participated in Frieze Sculpture 2024. His practice often explores painting as a spatial and material anatomy.

Work in AKI — White Composition (2025)  
Created from materials collected directly in AKI, this site-specific work embodies sustainability and presence. By reassembling fragments of the restaurant itself, Hernández transforms space into painting, making the restaurant both subject and object of the work.

**Remember: the anatomy of AKI itself — the restaurant embodied on canvas**







White Composition (2025)



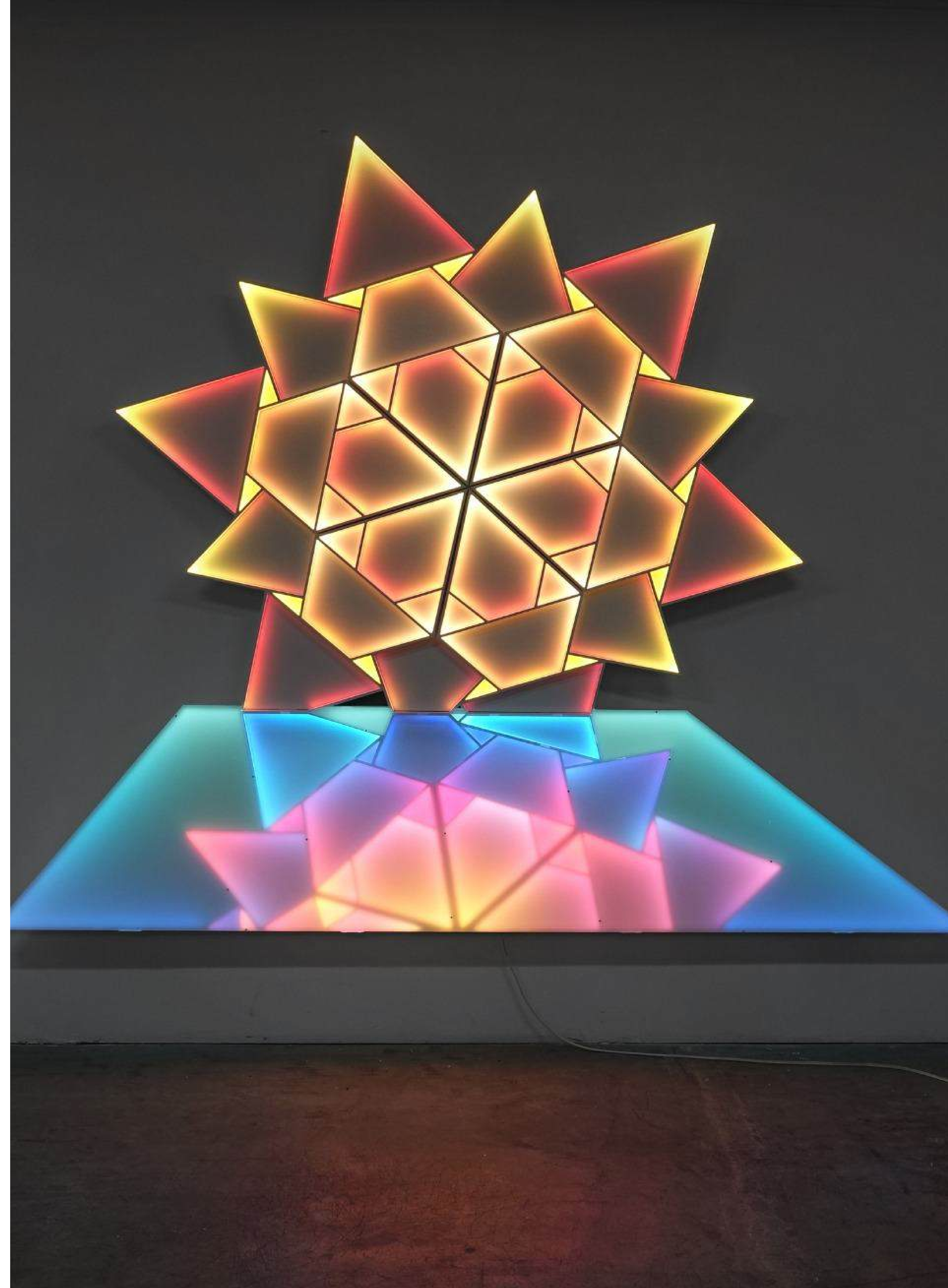


**James  
Clar**  
b. 1979, USA/  
Philippines

James Clar works with light as a sculptural medium to explore technology and perception. He has exhibited at Art Dubai (2022), By Force of Nature (Silverlens, New York, 2023), and institutions across New York, Manila, and Dubai. His works are held in collections across Asia, Europe, and the USA.

Work in AKI — Origami Sunrise (2025)  
A light installation simulating the colours of sunrise. Through a cycle of illumination, the work captures both the fragility and permanence of natural rhythms. In AKI, it transforms the atmosphere into a moment of meditative awe.

**Remember: light as sculpture, rhythm, and language.**





## Process

The AKI Collection was the result of a long curatorial process and a shared vision with Debagroup and its CEO Robert Debono. From the outset, the goal was clear: AKI should be more than a fine dining space — it should become a cultural destination in central London.

The selection began broadly, with a longlist of nearly 100 artists — names from major biennales, institutions, and museum collections. This list was narrowed down to about 20, through dialogue with galleries and partners, and finally refined to the 9 artists whose work most deeply resonated with the philosophy of the space, the values of the owners, and the architecture of the building itself.





## The context of the restaurant shaped the collection:

- The history of the building as a former bank inspired Daniel Knorr's Golden Flag, part of his Golden Pillows series, evoking both capital and fragility.
- The philosophy of sustainability is embodied in Albano Hernández's White Composition, literally created from materials gathered in AKI.
- The digital future and rhythm of contemporary culture appear in works by James Clar and Yoshirotten.
- The heritage and memory of craft are reflected in textiles and ceramics by Aziza Kadyri, Kapwani Kiwanga, and Bouke de Vries.
- And finally, the spirit of play and dialogue — essential to AKI's identity as a space for encounters — is brought by Ryan Gander. His Machine to Send You Somewhere Else does not only stand in the restaurant but actively engages guests, sending them on journeys through coordinates, chance, and imagination.

Together, these works mirror not only the curator's vision but also the philosophy of the founders: that a restaurant can be a cultural ecosystem, where gastronomy, design, and art are inseparable..



**Artists in the AKI Collection have been exhibited at, or are represented in the collections of, leading museums and biennales worldwide, including:**

- Venice Biennale (multiple national pavilions: Lebanon, Uzbekistan, Canada, Romania)
- Documenta 13 & 14 (Kassel)
- Manifesta 7 (Italy)
- Biennale of Sydney
- Liverpool Biennale
- São Paulo Biennale
- Havana Biennale
- Berlin Biennale

#### **Collections & Foundations**

- Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha)
- Barjeel Art Foundation (Sharjah)
- Vehbi Koç Foundation (Istanbul)
- Perez Art Museum (Miami)
- Akzo Nobel Art Foundation (Amsterdam)

#### **Design / Contemporary Projects**

- Ginza Graphic Gallery (Tokyo)
- Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery
- 21c Museum Hotels (USA)
- Parasol Unit Foundation for the Arts (London)
- Fraport Headquarters (Frankfurt)

#### **Major Museums & Institutions**

- The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York)
- Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) (New York)
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York)
- Tate & Tate Modern (London)
- British Museum (London)
- Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) (London)
- Design Museum (London)
- Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam)
- Centre Pompidou (Paris)
- Palais de Tokyo (Paris)
- Jeu de Paume (Paris)
- Museo Reina Sofía (Madrid)
- Haus der Kunst (Munich)
- Pinakothek der Moderne (Munich)
- Lenbachhaus (Munich)
- Folkwang Museum (Essen)
- Kunsthalle Basel / Bremen / Wien / Zürich / Bern
- Nationalgalerie Berlin
- Migros Museum (Zurich)
- M HKA (Antwerp)
- Museum of Contemporary Art (Warsaw)
- SeMA – Seoul Museum of Art
- MACBA (Barcelona)
- Cam Framis Museum (Barcelona)
- New Museum (New York)
- Aspen Art Museum
- Rемаi Modern (Saskatoon)
- Glucksman Museum (Dublin)
- Pera Museum (Istanbul)





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