

Haseeb Ahmed (USA, 1985)

www.haseebahmed.com

Haseeb Ahmed is a research-based artist. Originally from the US, he now lives and works in Brussels. He produces objects, site-specific installations, films, and writes for various publications. Often working collaboratively Haseeb integrates methodologies from the hard sciences into his art production. Currently he works with the von Karman Institute for Fluid Dynamics (VKI) in Brussels for his project, The Wind Egg Trilogy.

The Wind Egg Trilogy project blends art and aeronautics, myth and technology, to create new narratives for the present. He wants to connect the arts, sciences and narratives.

Ahmed has been a lecturer at the Zurich University of the Arts, Royal Academy of the Art in The Hague, and Sint Lucas Antwerp School of Art and Design. Ahmed received his PhD in practice-based arts in at the University of Antwerp and Saint Lucas Antwerp School of Art and his Masters from the MIT Program in Art, Culture and Technology (2010). He has a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Ahmed has been a resident at the Jan van Eyck Academie in Maastricht (NL) and the Skowhegan School of Sculpture and painting (US) among others. His work has been exhibited internationally including the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (US), The Gothenburg International Biennial of Contemporary Art (SE), the Museum Barengasse Zurich (CH), and De Appel in Amsterdam (NL).

He is represented by Harlan Levey Projects in Brussels.

ABOUT THE WORK

‘Wind Avatar’ (2019)

155.0 x 65.0 x 170.5cm

Custom made Wind Tunnel, Wind, Smoke, Laser, Wood,

Haseeb Ahmed worked on his Wind Avatar between 2015 and 2019, connecting scientific principles with artistic vision and technical craftsmanship. His research was supported by Dr. Beatrice de Gelder and Brain and the Emotion Laboratory at the University of Maastricht (NL). The construction of the installation was made possible with the help of Harlan Levey Projects (BE), Olivier Chazot and Ertan Umit of the von Karman Institute for Fluid Dynamics in Brussels (BE) and the EU STARTS Vertigo Residency. The Wind Avatar was presented at the ADM Gallery, Singapore where it was selected for the Global Digital Art Prize (GDAP) in 2019.

The Wind Avatar represents all of the worlds possible winds. A programmable robotic gimbal adjusts a delta wing. Smoke is being blown into a wind tunnel. And the system responds on incoming data in real time. Doing so code-writer and programmer Pieter Heremans helped Haseeb to visualise an otherwise invisible phenomena. Smoke and a laser sheet work together to create turning vortexes, turbulence patterns and complex wave formations. Changing the angle of the delta wing renders different recognisable facial expressions. The wind patterns remind us of repetitious tribal patterns, ancient art, totem pole animals and spirit powers. The wind seems to become human. Humans seem fluid like waves. In a way this installation is an incredible metaphor. It clearly shows actions and interactions, like approaching each other and / or avoiding each other, fluids going up and down. This installation is a highlight of programmable complexity without losing a very peculiar sensitive poetically.