

# LET'S GET DIGITAL!

NFT e nuove realtà  
dell'arte digitale

Firenze  
Palazzo Strozzi  
Strozzina

18.05  
31.07  
2022

## PRESS RELEASE

***Let's Get Digital represents one of the first and most important exhibitions exploring the NFT revolution ever produced by a cultural institution in Italy***

From 18 May to 31 July 2022 the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi will present ***Let's Get Digital!*** a new exhibition bringing the NFT art revolution and the new borderline between the real and the digital to the Strozzina undercroft and the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi, featuring works by international artists including **Refik Anadol, Anyma, Daniel Arsham, Beeple, Krista Kim and Andrés Reisinger**.

Promoted and organised by the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi and the Fondazione Hillary Merkus Recordati, and curated by Arturo Galansino (Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, Director General) and Serena Tabacchi (Director MoCDA, Museum of Contemporary Digital Art), the exhibition takes visitors on a journey through **digital installations** and **multimedia experiences** created by artists who express the new technologies and possibilities of crypto art based on the success of NFTs - certificates of digital authenticity that are redefining the very concept of a work of art's uniqueness and value. *Let's Get Digital!* explores a **movement in the grip of evolution and transformation** which many consider to be only the starting point for an increasingly rapid intermingling of aesthetics and new technologies, a revolution for the world of art as a whole, digital or otherwise.

Standing for *Non-Fungible Token*, an NFT is a video, an image or any form of digital content that is certified (or "minted") via a **blockchain**. This technology encrypts the files and records them in an archive which ensures that a file can be seen by all but owned only by one individual or, to use the correct term, by one 'wallet' (an anonymous address identifying the owner). NFTs have offered not only artists but creatives from the worlds of fashion, music, sport, and gaming to explore new dimensions in the interaction between the real and the digital. In this new digital world based on cryptocurrencies, NFTs are populating the so-called **metaverse**, virtual worlds whose borders stretch into the tangible, conventional world but with new paradigms for social interaction. Assigning value to digital works which by their very nature are open to duplication, this **new way of creating and collecting art** has fueled an alternative market that is independent of the traditional art market, but above all, has permitted the development of new pathways and opportunities for artists' production and for public enjoyment, in a novel concept of interconnection on a global level.

## **THE EXHIBITION**

The exhibition kicks off with a new site-specific installation designed for Palazzo Strozzi's courtyard by **Refik Anadol** (Turkey, 1985) in a reimagined relationship between digital and physical architecture through a hypnotic, multisensory experience for the visitor. In this dynamic work, artificial intelligence algorithms create illusionistic visions that challenge our notion of reality. The exhibition continues in the undercroft of the Renaissance palace, known as the 'Strozzina' which is dedicated to exhibiting contemporary art in the heart of Florence. The Strozzina rooms will each be dedicated to a series of immersive works and installations created by the various artists involved.

The exhibition will feature works by **Beeple** (Mike Winkelmann, USA, 1981), who will be showing a broad selection of his iconic works in which he merges politics, pop culture and irreverent references to today's world set in dystopic or post-apocalyptic scenarios; **Daniel Arsham** (USA, 1980), whose work breathes new

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life into the debate on the very notion of sculpture by creating time loops in which the material and immaterial nature of his creations come together in a ceaseless process of transformation and destruction in perpetual motion; and **Krista Kim** (United Kingdom, Canada), who urges us with her distinctive minimalist style to enter a world made of impossible reflections and geometries, an immersive space consisting of images that are both dystopic and reassuring at the same time. They are joined in the exhibition by other artists such as **Andrés Reisinger** (Argentina, 1990), who will be showing *Arcadia*, a project he produced in conjunction with poetess Arch Hades and composer RAC, in which poetry, sound and image merge in a meditative experience that prompts us to reflect on our daily routine and on the way we use social media; and **Anyma** (Matteo Millari and Alessio De Vecchi, Italy), a collective that experiments with its work and its live concerts at the point where music and visual performance intersect, and that will be enriching the exhibition with a site-specific physical and visual landscape for one of the Strozzina's rooms, accompanied by a special performance that will tie in with the exhibition's opening on Tuesday 17 May.

"Confirming its aspiration to **bring together the avant-garde and tradition, research and popularisation**, Palazzo Strozzi has developed a project that is unique to Italy's cultural scene," said Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi Director General **Arturo Galansino**, adding: "*Let's Get Digital!* is one of the first and most important exhibitions exploring the NFT revolution ever produced by a cultural institution in our country. It sets out to offer insight to as broad an audience as possible into works and issues that are radically changing the way in which we interact with art and with the digital world as a whole. Part of the *Palazzo Strozzi Future Art* programme developed with the Fondazione Hillary Merkus Recordati, the exhibition is one more piece in the mosaic of **experimentation and vision of the art of the present and future**, offering a growing number of new opportunities for artistic production and interaction with the public".

"*Let's Get Digital!* sets out to offer a broad insight into the most recent development in digital art now universally recognised by the contemporary system," said **Serena Tabacchi**, adding: "**Decentralisation, blockchains and NFTs have certified and disseminated the work of countless artists who could not be considered in that capacity until no more than a few years ago.** This grassroots movement has shone the spotlight of fame on artists whose work, until only a few months ago, was appreciated exclusively through social media communities. Sharing a determination to express themselves with the tools they feel to be most congenial to their temperament, with the latest digital technologies, they have rapidly entered the ecosystem of contemporary culture. Some of the undisputed leading lights in this sector at the global level are involved in the exhibition. Just as Palazzo Strozzi has hitherto hosted masters of the past and of the contemporary world, so today it is opening up to experimentation and to research. **The art of the future meets the digital world as its preferred material for expressive creativity.** An endless flow of possibilities awaits us. The best has yet to come."

"I am especially proud to be part of this ambitious Fondazione Strozzi project capable of **conjugating art with the digital world** and its inexorable progress as it plays an increasingly prominent role in our daily lives" – commented Fondazione Hillary Merkus Recordati President **Andy Bianchedi** – "The Foundation which I chair aims to represent a substantial **platform for supporting talent and to foster every kind of contemporary creativity.** This exhibition meets those goals to perfection".

The exhibition, promoted and organised by the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi and the Fondazione Hillary Merkus Recordati, is part of the *Palazzo Strozzi Future Art* programme. Supporters: Fondazione CR Firenze, Comune di Firenze, Regione Toscana, Camera di Commercio di Firenze, Intesa Sanpaolo, Palazzo Strozzi Partners' Committee.

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## FACT SHEET

**TITLE:** Let's Get Digital!

**DATE:** 18 may – 31 july 2022

**VENUE:** Palazzo Strozzi

**EXHIBITION CURATED BY:** Arturo Galansino (Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi Director General, Florence) and Serena Tabacchi (Director of MoCDA, Museum of Contemporary Digital Art)

**PROMOTED AND ORGANISED BY:** Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi and Fondazione Hillary Merkus Recordati as part of the *Palazzo Strozzi Future Art programme*

**PARTNERS:** Fondazione CR Firenze, Comune di Firenze, Regione Toscana, Camera di Commercio di Firenze, Intesa Sanpaolo, Palazzo Strozzi Partners' Committee.

### **OPENING HOURS:**

Daily 10.00-20.00, Thursdays until 23.00 (Last admission one hour before closing)

### **TICKETS:**

€ 10 full; € 5 young under 18 (Thursday from 18.00 for under 30)

€ 15 joint ticket shows *Donatello, the Renaissance and Let's Get Digital!*

### **INFO:**

[www.palazzostrozzi.org](http://www.palazzostrozzi.org) / T. +39.055.2645155

### **PRESS OFFICE**

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## PHOTO SHEET

<p><b>Refik Anadol</b> <i>Machine Hallucinations - Renaissance Dreams (2022)</i> Site specific installation for the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi AI Data Sculpture, Video loop LED wall, cm 900 x 600 Courtesy RAS - Refik Anadol Studio</p>	
<p><b>Anyma (Matteo Millari and Alessio De Vecchi),</b> <i>Eva 0, 2021</i> Computer Generated Images (NFT) Courtesy the artists and private collections</p>	
<p><b>Anyma (Matteo Millari and Alessio De Vecchi)</b> <i>Angel 1, 2022</i> Computer Generated Images (NFT) Courtesy the artists and private collections</p>	

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**Anyma** (Matteo Millari and Alessio De Vecchi)  
*The First Breath* (2022)  
Computer Generated Images (NFT)  
Courtesy the artists and private collections



**Daniel Arsham**  
*Eroding and Reforming Bust of Rome (One Year)*,  
2021  
NFT single-channel video with sound  
Courtesy the artist  
RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree  
Casoni



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**Beeple (Mike Winkelmann)**

*ALIVE #2/3, 2021*

Video files (NFT)

Collection Jehan Chu

Courtesy the artist



BEEPLE: EVERYDAYS  
**ALIVE**

ARTIST'S NOTES:

DAY  
**#5042**

02.18.21

WRITING DATE: 2021  
COLLECTION: SPRING COLLECTION 2021  
ORIGINAL RESOLUTION: 3000 x 3000  
TOOLS USED: Cinema 4D, Corona Render, Photoshop  
FILE SIZE: 1,234,567 bytes



**Beeple (Mike Winkelmann)**

*Everydays: BULL RUN, 2020*

Video files (NFT)

RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree

Casoni

Courtesy the artist



BEEPLE: EVERYDAYS  
**BULL RUN**

ARTIST'S NOTES:  
#HODL

DAY  
**#4951**

11.19.20

COLLECTION: 2020 COLLECTION  
ORIGINAL RESOLUTION: 2000 x 2000  
TOOLS USED: Cinema 4D, Corona Render, Photoshop  
FILE SIZE: 7,585,212 bytes



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## Beeple (Mike Winkelmann)

Everyday: *INFECTED CULTURE DAY*, 2020

Video files (NFT)

RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree Casoni

Courtesy the artist



BEEPLE: EVERYDAYS  
**INFECTED CULTURE** DAY  
**#4728**  
04.10.20  
ARTIST'S NOTES:  
1999 first edition shadowless  
holographic charizard #4  
COLLECTION: 2020 COLLECTOR:  
ORIGINAL RESOLUTION: 2000 x 2000  
TOOLS USED: Cinema 4D, Octane Render, Photoshop  
FILE SIZE: 4.452.988 bytes



## Beeple (Mike Winkelmann)

Everydays: *GIGACHAD*, 2021

Video files (NFT)

RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree Casoni

Courtesy the artist



BEEPLE: EVERYDAYS  
**GIGACHAD** DAY  
**#5028**  
02-04-21  
ARTIST'S NOTES:

MINTED DATE: 17/08  
COLLECTION: SPRING COLLECTION 2021  
ORIGINAL RESOLUTION: 3000 x 4000  
TOOLS USED: Cinema 4D, Octane Render, Photoshop  
FILE SIZE: 4.108.320 bytes



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## Krista Kim

*Mars House*, 2020

3D files (NFT)

Music: Jeff Schroeder

Courtesy Krista Kim Studio

Collection AOI Vault



## Andrés Reisinger

*Arcadia* (2021)

A collaborative work by

Andrés Reisinger, Arch Hades e RAC

Video with sound (NFT), 9'48"

Designers: Sebastian Baptista, Carlos Neda, Javier Bianchi

Courtesy the artist

RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree Casoni



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## EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH

*Let's Get Digital!* brings the NFT art revolution and the new borderline between the real and the digital to Palazzo Strozzi with the work of such international artists as Refik Anadol, Anyma, Daniel Arsham, Beeple, Krista Kim and Andrés Reisinger. The exhibition takes visitors on a journey through digital installations and multimedia experiences created by artists who express the new multi-faceted exploration of Cryptoart, a movement that is redefining the very concept of an artwork's uniqueness and value thanks to the use of the blockchain technology and the NFTs.

*Let's Get Digital!* explores a movement in the grip of evolution and transformation which many consider to be the starting point for an increasingly rapid intermingling of aesthetics and new technologies, a revolution for the world of art as a whole, whether digital or otherwise. Assigning value to digital works which by their very nature are open to duplication, this new way of creating, enjoying, and collecting art has fueled an alternative market that is independent to the traditional one. Yet the true revolution consists in opening up unprecedented opportunities for creating and enjoying art in a decentralized, participatory manner, in a new form of global interconnection.

*Let's Get Digital!* sets out to forge a link between the physical and the digital, between the history of contemporary art and the ultra-contemporary art of the web 3.0. The works on display represent an extremely diversified international art movement that we should address without prejudice.

### **Refik Anadol (Turkey, 1985)**

*Machine Hallucinations - Renaissance Dreams (2022)*

Site specific installation for the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi

AI Data Sculpture, Video loop - LED wall, cm 900 x 600

Courtesy RAS - Refik Anadol Studio

Refik Anadol's *Machine Hallucination – Renaissance Dreams*, the first digital work of art ever to be produced for the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi, is designed as a dynamic, immersive work specifically devised to interact with its location. Turkish by birth but Californian by adoption, Refik Anadol is one of the most influential figures in the panorama of contemporary digital art, best known for his creative use of various forms of artificial intelligence which he applies to different kinds of sources and databases. His installation for Palazzo Strozzi, a monumental video wall 9 mt high, offers visitors a multisensory experience through hypnotic sounds and images that challenge our notion of reality. Dynamic, constantly evolving forms in vibrant colours offer themselves as a "hallucinating" digital interpretation of Italian Renaissance art, setting out from a specific dataset of thousands of paintings produced between the 14th and 17th centuries. Through the use of artificial intelligence, in this instance machine learning, the artist processes this vast set of data to visualise the way the paintings might look when seen collectively in the mind of a machine. Thus, Anadol creates a short-circuit between past and future, between art history and new technologies, to question our common perception and suggest new points of view for our knowledge of the past.

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## **Anyma (Italy)**

Site-specific installation including the following works: *Eva 0* (2021), *Simbiosi* (2022), *Angel 1* (2022), *Consciousness* (2022), *The First Breath* (2022); Computer Generated Images (NFT) - Courtesy the artists and private collections

Anyma, a project based on the multidisciplinary collaboration between Matteo Milleri and Alessio De Vecchi, has designed an immersive and sensory combining various different works and content. Known chiefly for having founded such musical projects as *Tale of Us* and *Afterlife*, Milleri joined with De Vecchi, Chief Curator of *SuperRare*, to create an experience lying at the intersection between music and visual art in which the digital extends into a tangible space in order to reach out to the sensitivity of the observer, who is involved in a landscape of works and of hybrid, timeless atmospheres. The works on display are part of a cycle of performances that Anyma presents in various locations around the world at live, artistic, and interactive events, *Afterlife*. Characterized by a strong bond linking nature and technology, the union between synthetic and organic elements is fused with unexpected harmony, generating new forms of conscious life.

## **Beeple (USA, 1981)**

*Everydays – Raw #43/100*, *Everydays INTO THE ETHER*, *INFECTED CULTURE DAY*, *BULL RUN*, *GIGACHAD*, *HEY*  
RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree Casoni

*Everydays ALIVE #2/3* - Collection Jehan Chu

2020-2021; Video files (NFT) - Courtesy the artist

Mike Winkelmann, known as Beeple, is one of the world's best-known living artists thanks to his digital collage entitled *Everydays: The First 5000 Days* with which he rose to success as one of the highest-paid artists in the world, second only to David Hockney and Jeff Koons. Born in Wisconsin in 1981, he studied information technology and developed a passion for digital art while still a young lad, going on to become one of the leading digital creators on the web. For years he worked as a graphic designer and animator, publishing most of his work directly on his own social media. In 2007 Beeple decided to devote his energies on a daily basis to the creation of digital works, thus kicking off what is still today his endlessly evolving work. On we find the two interacting themes on which the artist's work rests. On the one hand, there is irreverent satire with no safety net in which Beeple recounts the world of "crypto" by laying bare the feelings that drive the often incongruous and instinctive actions of an irrational market based on speculation. Another series of works, on the other hand, sees the artist devoting his creativity to the depiction of gloomy post-apocalyptic scenarios, imaginary products of the excesses of capitalist society.

## **Krista Kim (Canada)**

*Mars House* (2020)

3D files (NFT); Music: Jeff Schroeder

Courtesy Krista Kim Studio - Collection AOI Vault

Krista Kim's house on Mars is the first "crypto house" to have been conceived as a design that can be implemented both in the metaverse and in the real world. Devised during the first period of the pandemic, in a moment of meditation and isolation, this space has the appearance of a play of impossible reflections and lights rendered in a strongly minimalist style typical of the artist's work. Kim creates this house with a view to a world that can be enjoyed in the metaverse both on VR and in AR, to create our own houses in an

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extension of reality. Built in a futuristic world set in an extraterrestrial landscape, Krista Kim's house is the expression of a utopic world but at the same time it becomes a reassuring and reflexive venue, a nest in which to seek refuge and to place our future hope of life.

**Andrés Reisinger** (Argentina, 1990)

*Arcadia* (2021)

**A collaborative work by Andrés Reisinger, Arch Hades e RAC**

Video with sound (NFT), 9'48"

Designers: Sebastian Baptista, Carlos Neda, Javier Bianchi

Courtesy the artist - RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree Casoni

*Arcadia* is a short film by Andrés Reisinger devised in cooperation with the English poetess Arch Hades and with musician and producer RAC. Poetry, sound and images merge to breathe life into a reflexive experience on the condition of 21st century man. The film, shown here on three channels, is divided into five chapters (*Welcome to the Current, Simulacrum, House of Cards, Silence, Chorus*), each of which pays tribute to philosophers, artists and poets who have influenced the thought, psychology and culture of our time, including Voltaire, William Wordsworth, Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Oscar Wilde, Robert Frost, Jean-Paul Sartre, Marshall McLuhan, Albert Camus, Jean Baudrillard, Roger Scruton e Alain de Botton.

*Arcadia* urges us to reflect on the condition of solitude, anxiety and alienation that man experiences in this modern world based on a consumer-driven system in which everything can be replicated and where technology and the mass media plunge us into a ceaseless whirlwind of information. Using a language that combines sublime delicacy with a sense of aesthetics in an existentialist perspective, the work lays claim to certain fundamental principles of mankind as freedom and authenticity, with a view to emancipation in the direction of a richer and more aware lifestyle.

**Daniel Arsham** (USA, 1980)

*Eroding and Reforming Bust of Rome (One Year)* (2021)

Single-channel video with sound sound [NFT]

Courtesy the artist - RFC Collection - Pablo Rodriguez-Fraile & Desiree Casoni

Daniel Arsham combines figurative art, architecture and performance art in his research to develop a dialogue with the technological potential of the blockchain in a reflection on the concept of sculpture, its fragility and its deceptive sense of eternity. In *Eroding and Reforming Bust of Rome (One Year)*, a digital sculpture inspired by a bust from the Borghese Collection now in the Musée du Louvre perpetually self-destructs and re-forms in what appears to us to be the cycle of the four seasons of the year. While marble was used by the great masters of the past to model and to capture a gesture in accordance with a notion of alleged eternity, Arsham uses NFTs to create a work that changes over time with a sense of dynamic perpetuity. In his exhibitions, he generally show NFTs alongside real and three-dimensional sculptures. Created in a virtual environment developed in collaboration with the Six N. Five studio, the series to which the work belongs achieves a complete erosion of all sculptures over the coming 1,000 years. Observing the work online over time, we realize that the shape of the bust changes with the seasons, that it follows the atmospheric cycles' natural progress. At the exhibition three different videos will be shown consecutively, each one dedicated to the month in which it is showing: May, June and July.

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION

by exhibition curators Arturo Galansino and Serena Tabacchi

When the NFT associated with the work *Everydays: The First 5000 Days*, created by Mike Winkelmann, aka Beeple, was sold for 69.3 million dollars by Christie's at an auction in 2021, thrusting an almost unknown figure into third place on the list of the most expensive living artists, behind David Hockney and Jeff Koons, it attracted the attention of the whole art world. A world that is now looking with great curiosity, and a degree of concern, at the new frontiers of digital art.

The NFT phenomenon is recent, and one that has undergone a marked acceleration during the period of the pandemic. It has not yet expressed its full potential, but the market has reacted to it immediately, with the more important auction houses and galleries making such transactions part of their daily activity. At the same time the most prestigious museums and best-known "physical" artists, from Urs Fischer to Damien Hirst, are showing an interest in this world.

The intention behind *Let's Get Digital!* is to forge a link between the physical and the digital, between the history of contemporary art and the ultra-contemporary development of the web 3.0. The idea of an exhibition on such a recent phenomenon arises from the specific nature of Palazzo Strozzi's program as a venue, characterized by a mingling of old, modern, and contemporary and by a strategy of contamination and interrelation between the arts. So with this project Palazzo Strozzi is turning its gaze on the latest tendencies of the 21st century, on the new frontier of digital art; always, however, with the aim of staging an exhibition able to unite research, accessibility and innovation, in an effort to make a new theme comprehensible to the general public. The desire is to reaffirm Palazzo Strozzi's role as a platform for experimentation, a place in which to examine the most recent trends in art and culture, of which the world of NFTs is one of the most topical. We wanted to put on an exhibition that no other institution had thought of yet, in the manner that characterizes this venue, on a theme not yet viewed from a historical perspective—it has only been attracting widespread attention for little over a year—and thus without the distance and critical framework with which exhibitions are usually organized.

Cryptoart and physical works should not be seen as being in opposition to one another, but complementary. NFTs are a new product, not an alternative one, and the acronym for Non Fungible Token has now become part of our daily language: not just art but also fashion, music, sport and above all the gaming industry are creating NFTs every day. They all live in a virtual parallel world that operates at a markedly greater speed than the one determined by the logic of the tangible world. In this new digital universe based, at the economic level, on cryptocurrencies, NFTs populate metaverses, virtual parallel worlds whose boundaries extend as far as the real one, but with new paradigms of social interaction. In giving a value to digital works that by their very nature are easy to duplicate, this new mode of creating, enjoying and collecting art has fed an alternative market to the traditional one, but above all it has opened up unprecedented directions and possibilities for the production of artists and its appreciation by the public, in a new idea of interconnection at a global level.

The intention of the exhibition is to look at a topical theme and present some of the most important examples of this new world, and the works on show are representative of a worldwide experience, of an extremely dynamic sphere which we need to approach without prejudices.

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Nell'ambito del progetto  
Within the project  
"Palazzo Strozzi Future Art"

# LET'S GET DIGITAL!

NFT e nuove realtà  
dell'arte digitale

Firenze  
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18.05  
31.07  
2022

The choice of artists has not been easy, precisely because the movement is continually evolving given the immediacy of digital communication, we are dealing with very different approaches that are experimenting with a very wide variety of creative modes. The selection includes some of the best-known exponents of cryptoart and at the same time sets out to offer a cross-section that reflects the heterogeneous nature of the movement. For this reason, along with the aforementioned digital superstar Beeple, we have included Refik Anadol, celebrated for his ability to stimulate the public through monumental installations that unite sensoriality and scientific research, the Anyma and Andrés Reisinger collective, a collaboration which experiments with different creative themes and worlds, such as music and poetry, and other artists whose work has allowed us to reflect in an interdisciplinary way on the relationship of architecture and sculpture to the digital dimension, like Daniel Arsham or Krista Kim, one of the few women to have made an impact on this world up to now.

The point in common of this selection is the fact of the works being NFTs, linked to the blockchain technology, but the intention is to explore and present the variety and the innumerable aesthetic and creative possibilities offered by this new artistic universe. This kind of work is not made solely for the screens of our cellphones but is the fruit of research carried out by artists who are experimenting with different, immersive and multisensorial modes of installation.

With this exhibition Palazzo Strozzi aims to straightaway get a grip, together with its heterogeneous public, on a revolution that is unsettling our lives.

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## THE WORLD IN FRONT OF US

by Andy Bianchedi

(President of Fondazione Hillary Merkus Recordati)

After the extraordinary event of *JR* that united, during the most difficult phase of the pandemic, minds and hearts all over the world through the unstoppable force of the social networks, and *Alter Eva*, which gave voice to the most elevated feelings of women, I am proud, as president of the Fondazione Hillary Merkus Recordati, to kick off *Let's Get Digital!*, a leap into our future in a complex universe that races ahead and keeps changing without a pause.

A project that, for the first time in Italy, brings to an institutional setting like that of Palazzo Strozzi the themes of the revolution in art represented by NFTs and of the new frontiers between real and digital; themes explored through the works of artists from around the world who are exponents of this movement, such as Refik Anadol, Anyma, Daniel Arsham, Beeple, Krista Kim and Andrés Reisinger.

The exhibition presents a range of digital installations and multimedia experiences, taking a timely and attentive look at a rapidly evolving and changing trend that constitutes just the starting point of a genuine revolution for the entire world of art, and not just the digital.

The innovative values that are expressed here speak of a new idea of the "originality" of digital art with a different view of possession and sharing and, at the same time, with the emergence of unprecedented possibilities for production by artists and its enjoyment by the public, in an increasingly modern dimension of interconnection at the global level.

The many artists presented in the exhibition propose different strategies of dialogue between aesthetics and technology, with distinct ideas of development and meaning: sensorial/experiential immersion of the public, irony/satire on the contemporary world, philosophical reflection on the concept of reality, intermediality (union of the different arts).

So I can say that the dreams and desires of my mother Hillary, to whom is dedicated the foundation that—along with the Fondazione Strozzi and within the framework of the project *Palazzo Strozzi Future Art*—has promoted and organized the event, have led to the attainment of a significant objective: initiating a strategic and lasting project founded on respect for talent, on a passion for all forms of art and on the safeguarding of the most intense sensibilities and of inclusivity, as well as on my *commitment* to "give back" something to others.

We live in a cosmos made up of visions, of sparks, of gazes into the future without dogma or limitations. It all depends on us, on talent, on the capacity to support it at any latitude for the good of all, for an exchange between New Humanism and New Technologies, so that creativity is never held back. Our dreams, our desires should be turned into colors, sounds and images so that it will still be possible to believe that tomorrow, our own and that of our children, can represent an untouchable value. This is just one of the principles that, in the brightest memory of my mother and her love of art and of Florence, I will continue to defend with all my strength.

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## GLOSSARY

### **Digital Art**

The term digital art refers to works of created or presented using digital technologies. The first examples date back to the 1960s, but the practice has evolved in parallel with the development of technology and the creation of software dedicated to the creation and enjoyment of works of art. Over the decades digital graphics in particular have developed massively and at great speed, going from 2D to 3D and on to augmented and virtual reality in a context of ever greater interaction with the audience. In recent years digital has acquired a new artistic and market values thanks to the rise of the Cryptoart movement.

### **Cryptoart**

Cryptoart (also known as cryptographic art) is an art movement devoted to the creation of digital works of art linked to blockchain technology which makes it possible to own, transfer and sell a work of art in a cryptographically secure and verifiable manner. In 2017 the first blockchain systems also became accessible to a whole new generation of artists close to the tech world who instantly intuited their potential, experimenting the creation works of art based on digital illustration and programming.

### **Blockchain**

A blockchain is a digital data record documenting changes of ownership of digital items among different players. This record has the specific characteristic of being shared and unchangeable. The data is grouped into "blocks" connected in chronological order and distributed in a decentralized archive. Specific feature is that the record cannot be modified, only expanded. Once created, blocks can no longer be altered or eliminated but they can be added to each time a transaction takes place. This technology was first introduced in 2008 as an IT structure underpinning the Bitcoin cryptocurrency by an anonymous inventor (or group of inventors) going by the pseudonym of Satoshi Nakamoto. The most commonly used blockchains include Ethereum, still one of the most widespread in the art world. The exponential growth of interest in this new technology has triggered strong criticism as to its sustainability, given its high energy consumption. New, greener chains have recently seen the light of day, including Polygon, Algorand and Tezos whose energy footprint is over 90% less than that of Ethereum of the Bitcoin.

### **NFT**

An NFT (an acronym for Non-Fungible Token) is a digital certificate testifying to the characteristics, originality, and single ownership of a physical or digital asset, registered in unalterable cryptographic records based on blockchain technology. An item certified with an NFT is original and non-interchangeable: it is not a duplicate or a reproduction. Thus, an NFT is a tool for tracing the ownership of digital files. Whoever buys one is not buying the copyright to the item but a certificate allowing him or her to prove its ownership. The first artwork ever recorded on a blockchain was *Quantum*, created in 2014 by the artist Kevin McCoy who chose to record his work as an NFT in order to make the file unique, traceable and exchangeable.

### **Wallet**

To create, keep, buy, or sell NFT's and cryptocurrencies (such as Bitcoins or Ethereum) you need a digital wallet. This is an application that is used to memorize and keep cryptocurrencies and NFTs. The wallet must be compatible with the blockchain on which the NFT has been created. The ERC-721 token on the blockchain of Ethereum is the standard one, widely used by the creators of digital artworks in single editions.

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## Minting

The act of publishing an NFT certificate on a blockchain is known as minting. Once minted, an NFT acquires specific characteristics such as uniqueness (in the sense of a single edition) or as being part of an edition based on the type of standard chosen for its creation.

## Smart Contract

Smart contracts are IT protocols that facilitate, verify, or ensure compliance with the execution of a contract. Smart contracts contain contractual clauses that follow the "if/then" function: i.e., if a given condition predetermined by the parties to the contract occurs, then an agreed action will take place. To ensure that the contract is not altered, it is recorded on blockchain technology, thus guaranteeing its integrity and security.

## Cryptocurrency

A cryptocurrency is a decentralized digital currency that uses cryptographic techniques to guarantee the security of transactions between users. Unlike traditional currencies, there are no central banks to mediate transactions and the rules with which those transactions take place are written in an open-source software that can be publicly verified. Apart from the celebrated Bitcoin and Ethereum, there are currently over 10,000 active cryptocurrencies. In response to their highly volatile market performance, there has recently been a rise in the popularity of what are known as stablecoins, such as Tether and USD Coin, cryptocurrencies whose value is pegged to the market trend of traditional currencies or Fiats.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI)** is the IT discipline that studies the development of hardware and software with specific capabilities typical of the human being (interaction with one's surroundings, learning and adaptation, reasoning and planning). AI is based on algorithms, a group of instructions that are applied in order to perform an action or to resolve a problem. AI systems are capable of performing tasks independently and of making decisions typical of human beings and thus potentially also of taking their place. In the art field that translates into the creative possibility of having a dialogue between a man and a machine in which an artificial assistant can become the co-author of a work of art.

## Metaverse

The metaverse is an interactive virtual space shared over the Internet and accessible to users via an avatar. Avatars can move freely in this three-dimensional space, interacting to each other and engaging in activities like in the real world. Physical space and the metaverse can link up through the use of a simply mobile phone or computer, or through more immersive experiences using such devices as virtual reality visors. The word metaverse was first used in a sci-fi novel entitled *Snow Crash* (1992), in which author Neal Stephenson envisaged the birth of a virtual immersive world populated by avatars. The Second Life (2003) and Minecraft (2009) platforms may be considered the first examples of the metaverse. Metaverses have been created in recent years based on blockchain technology, for example Decentraland and The Sandbox. Mark Zuckerberg has recently rebranded his company Facebook as Meta Inc, intuiting the potential development of the phenomenon in the social media.

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