

ANDREW KREPS GALLERY

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Halil Altindere

Space Refugee

January 7 – February 11, 2017

Opening Reception: Saturday, January 7, 6 – 8pm

Andrew Kreps Gallery is pleased to announce *Space Refugee*, an exhibition by Halil Altindere.

First exhibited at the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k) in 2016, the project takes an ironic distance from the current refugee crisis, positioning outer space as a haven for those displaced. At the installation's core is a film focusing on the first Syrian Cosmonaut Muhammed Ahmed Faris, who went on a seven day journey to the Soviet space station Mir in 1987. Further portrayed in a social realist style, the exhibition and film track Faris from USSR hero, to supporter of the democratic opposition to Assad, to his current life as a refugee in Turkey. Presented within an architectural environment conceived for its exhibition in the gallery, the film combines factual interviews with NASA scientists, air and space law specialists, and architects about their fictional visions of life on Mars. Accompanied by a virtual reality video, the project quickly expands to a questioning of the plausibility of human life, and a proposal for a refugee colony, in space. Ending with the words "We will build space and I will go with them to Mars, where we will find safety and freedom. Where is freedom on earth? There is no dignity for humans on earth," the work becomes simultaneously hyperbolic and realistic, critiquing xenophobic rhetoric, while remaining hopeful for the emancipation from oppression.

Since the 1990s, Halil Altindere has worked as an artist, curator, and publisher, leading a generation of practitioners working in opposition to repressive and nationalist developments in Turkey. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at n.b.k., Berlin, 2016, MoMA PS1, New York, 2015, and Kunstpalais Erlangen, Germany, 2015, among others. In addition, Altindere has participated in the 9th Berlin Biennale, 2016, the 31st Bienal de Sao Paulo, 2014, the 13th Istanbul Biennial, 2013, Documenta 12, Kassel, 2012, as well as Manifesta 10, and the Gwangju, Sharjah, Kiev, and Cetinje Biennials. Since the mid-90s Altindere's works have been exhibited in major museums, which include Maxxi, Rome, Centre Pompidou, Paris, ZKM, Karlsruhe, MAK, Vienna, The Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Moscow, MaMbo, Bologna, Istanbul Modern, Istanbul, CCBB, Rio de Janeiro, Petach Tikva Museum of Art, Israel, and ACC, Gwangju, among others.