

Hennessy

HENNESSY TEAMS WITH THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED MEDIA ARTIST AND DIRECTOR REFIK ANADOL TO REVEAL THE EMOTION BEHIND HENNESSY V.S.O.P PRIVILÈGE

In 2021, Hennessy V.S.O.P Privilège boldly recasts its savoir-faire in an unexpected new dimension.

In a groundbreaking collaboration, Hennessy welcomed the pioneer and acclaimed media artist and director Refik Anadol to its historic seat in Cognac, France, to observe the Tasting Committee at work. It marked the first time in the Maison's history that an artist was allowed to capture that time-honored ritual real-time via neuroscientific research methods, and to use the collected data in collaboration with machine intelligence to create an unprecedented work of art.

In keeping with Hennessy tradition, the Los Angeles-based artist received *carte blanche* to create a contemporary masterpiece celebrating the iconic V.S.O.P Privilège blend. Upon touring the Hennessy estate and Founder's Cellar, he became fascinated by the contrast between Hennessy's tradition of transmitting savoir-faire, generation after generation, as compared to the new frontiers of artificial intelligence.

Enduring mastery and new modes of expression came together in an extraordinary convergence. In an experiment borrowed from another realm, the Hennessy Tasting Committee consented to "open up their minds" to a completely unconventional experiment. Outfitted in high-tech equipment, Master Blender Renaud Fillioux de Gironde and his colleagues allowed Refik Anadol to track their emotions in real time, capturing their experience, sensations, and appreciations of eaux-de-vie.

"In our craft, we are constantly classifying, describing, and trying to find exactly the right words to convey our impressions and experiences," said Renaud Fillioux de Gironde, Hennessy's 8th-generation Master Blender. *"We were all very intrigued to see what elements technology might bring to light."*

During the traditional 11am meeting, a rare and specialized electroencephalogram (EEG) typically reserved for laboratory research was used to capture sensorial data as each participating Tasting Committee member evaluated a selection of eaux-de-vie destined for Hennessy V.S.O.P Privilège. Freshly equipped with sensors, the committee followed a ritual that has remained unchanged for generations. Past and present merged in what Refik Anadol describes as "a near-future experience, in real time."

"Emotion lives in the senses, on the skin, in the heart, and in the mind — and with this hyper-sensitive equipment, we are able to trace everything, down to the movement of the glass," Refik Anadol explains. *"You can see heritage and savoir-faire become visible and observe how the material actually becomes the wisdom."*

Back in his California studio, Refik Anadol and his team filtered the true data — two centuries' worth of living memory — through sophisticated analytics, transforming the data set into pigments and light. What emerged, the artist says, was a completely harmonious dialogue, an "architecture of memory" that was remarkably consistent across subjects at a specific point in time.

"With help from machine intelligence, we embarked on a journey through gene memories and dreams. Neuro-scientifically, the Tasting Committee is the source of memory, dreaming about the future," he says.

The result is a masterpiece three-dimensional data sculpture: *Sense of Heritage*, an immersive audio-visual installation, which will be revealed as of May in key locations.

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THE 2021 HENNESSY V.S.O.P PRIVILEGE LIMITED EDITION CARAFE

Using 3D data mapping, Refik Anadol interpreted and transcribed the Tasting Committee's emotions into the color, shapes, reliefs and textures that appear on the 2021 Hennessy V.S.O.P Privilège Limited Edition. What was once an invisible sensory experience has suddenly become tangible: the power of balance appears in a harmonious and poetic surface design. Data becomes art in a visual metaphor for a blend; like the cognac itself, *Sense of Heritage* is designed to be appreciated on an individual, sensorial level.

To augment this journey, Refik Anadol designed an "Infinity Room" for projecting images of the data he collected in Cognac. This completely immersive art experience will be revealed in selected locations worldwide. A sharable digital platform will also be unveiled via a QR code on the bottle and through an interactive retail experience, designed by the artist. Lastly, Hennessy is proud to unveil a cocktail especially designed to accompany the reveal of *Sense of Heritage* by Refik Anadol.

ABOUT HENNESSY V.S.O.P PRIVILEGE

The Hennessy V.S.O.P blend is the expression of eight generations of Master Blenders know-how. To perpetuate the legacy of the original Hennessy V.S.O.P Privilège, Hennessy Master Blenders have constantly sought to create a completely harmonious blend: it is the definitive expression of a perfectly balanced cognac. Based on a selection of firmly structured eaux-de-vie, aged largely in partially used barrels in order to take on subtle levels of oak tannins, this highly characterful cognac reveals balanced aromas of fresh vanilla, cinnamon and toasty notes, all coming together with a seamless perfection.

ABOUT REFIK ANADOL

Refik Anadol (b. 1985, Istanbul, Turkey) is a media artist, director and pioneer in the aesthetics of data and machine intelligence. His body of work locates creativity at the intersection of humans and machines. In taking the data that flows around us as the primary material and the neural network of a computerized mind as a collaborator, Anadol paints with a thinking brush, offering us radical visualizations of our digitized memories and expanding the possibilities of architecture, narrative, and the body in motion. Anadol's site-specific AI data sculptures, live audio/visual performances, and immersive installations take many forms, while encouraging us to rethink our engagement with the physical world, its temporal and spatial dimensions, and the creative potential of machines.

ABOUT HENNESSY

The leader in Cognac, the Maison Hennessy has shined around the world with its exceptional know-how for more than 250 years. Built on founder Richard Hennessy's spirit of conquest, the brand is present in more than 160 countries. Based in the heart of the Charente region, Hennessy is also a steadfast pillar of the regional economy. The Maison's success and longevity are rooted in the excellence of its cognacs, each of which is born of a unique process of transmission of know-how from generation to generation. The first spirits house to be certified ISO 14001, Hennessy unites its capacity for innovation and the support of all of its partners to protect this exceptional area. As a crown jewel of the LVMH Group, Hennessy is a major contributor to French international trade, with 99% of production sold in export, and a worldwide ambassador for the French art de vivre.