Reading Response 1

Rashed AlShashai - A Concise Passage

Of all the Desert X 2020 AIUIa projects, I am drawn to “A Concise Passage” by Rashed AlShashai specifically. At first sight, the dreamy atmosphere that the installation provides in the pictures gives me the illusion that I am in a sci-fi or cyberpunk movie setting. After looking more deeply, the strong contrast between the pink light path extending from the middle of the pyramid and the natural darkness in the desert delivers an eccentric but satisfying impression to me. The neon-pink light draws my attention instantly since it is a prominent color throughout the natural environment making the scene seem very dreamy. On top of that, the extending path from the middle of the pyramid provides a sense of invitation for the audience walking into the artwork.

The project “A Concise Passage” can be installed anywhere and still makes sense to me. However, it is in the middle of the desert that levels the significance of the artwork. After digging into the reading and looking closer at the photos, I feel more impressed and convinced by the project. The connection of how plastic pallets to the history of the region and the pyramid they become after piling up to the presentation of the history successfully persuaded me that this, in the middle of the AIUIa desert, is the most suitable place to install “A Concise Passage.” Moreover, how the artist keeps playing with the concept of contrasting the elements fascinates me a lot. In the surrounding of the desert, the artist juxtaposes nature and artificials, the realistic and unreal atmospheres, the physical and spiritual meanings, the material goods and the conceptual ideas, and the ancient and the modern eras. To sum up, the project “A Concise Passage” as an installation in the desert is a successful piece of desert artwork in all aspects based on its interaction with the environment, the audience, and the meanings behind it.