

TIME

A Sculpture Featuring the Flag of Saudi Arabia Will Be Removed From Ground Zero



A sculpture with the flag of Saudi Arabia, part of an exhibit called 'Candy Nations' is pictured outside next to the Oculus, one of the buildings that replaced the original World Trade Center in New York City on Jan. 14, 2019. Johannes Eisele—AFP/Getty Images

By **Eli Meixler**
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A sculpture that features the flag of Saudi Arabia will be removed from Ground Zero in New York following outcry from 9/11 victim's groups, the BBC reports.

Fifteen of the 19 Sept. 11 hijackers were Saudi nationals, though the Gulf kingdom has repeatedly denied involvement in the 2001 tragedy that claimed nearly 3,000 lives.

The artwork, called *Candy Nations*, comprises a series of oversized sweets wrapped in flags of the G20 nations, including Argentina, France, South Korea and Saudi Arabia. French artist Laurence Jenkell said she created the work in 2011 “to celebrate mankind” and “pay tribute to People of the entire world.”

It has toured 25 countries around the world, and arrived at the former World Trade Center site last month. The exhibit intended to run until Feb. 28, according to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

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Jenkell said she was aware of the “justified sensitivities” around the Ground Zero site, but ultimately decided against excluding the Saudi sculpture from the show.

“There is no way I can do such a thing as the flag of Saudi Arabia is entirely part of the G20 just like any other candy flag of this *Candy Nations* show,” she said in a statement.

The sculpture will reportedly be reinstalled this week at John F. Kennedy International Airport in Queens, a decision hailed by an association of 9/11 victims’ families as “the right action.”

“The sculpture’s presence at this site, depicting the [Saudi Arabian] flag, is an outrageous affront to the 9/11 community and all other Americans who

seek justice for the attacks on our nation on September 11, 2001,” the group said in a statement reported by the New York *Daily News*.

“Surely the sculpture should be nowhere near the site of this mass murder.”

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