

# SEAN KELLY

"Pulled by the roots," *Domus*, July 27, 2015.

## domus



Recently, Karlsruhe has undergone a large-scale construction project to relocate its tram system underground.

During this time, Karlsruhe's citizens have seen their sidewalks disrupted and intersections re-routed; large cranes have become a dominant figure in the cityscape. Leandro Erlich's installation *Pulled by the Roots* transforms the role of cranes from functional implements of construction into the purveyors of illusion and delight. What we have considered an "eyesore" is suddenly beautiful.



Leandro Erlich, *Pulled by the roots*, 2015. ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany. Photo © Leandro Erlich Studio

The metamorphosis of the everyday into the extraordinary allows us to see the world around us with fresh curiosity. This project vindicates the architectural elegance of cranes, while reminding us that we can never truly know an object, that possibility will always trump constraint.

This summer, Karlsruhe celebrates the 300th anniversary of the city's founding. *Pulled by the Roots* is a literally uplifting reminder of the power of progress and of our creative potential.

In the modern era, we are tempted to see human innovation as inorganic and divorced from the natural world. The speed of technology and the increasingly virtual dimension in which many of us we live only encourages this tendency to separate our inventions from the earth that sustains us. The installation *Pulled up by the Roots* highlights this tension.



Leandro Erlich, Pulled by the roots, 2015. ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany. Photo © Leandro Erlich Studio

As living beings on an ever-changing planet, we can never be apart from the organic world; the architecture that we create is part and parcel of our environment. At the same time, this piece works to remind us that underneath the tons of metal and concrete of our cities, a vital organic presence remains.

As we consider our impact on the natural world, climate change and the fate of the oceans, this piece reminds us that human culture and nature are intimately linked.



Leandro Erlich, Pulled by the roots, 2015. ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany. Photo © ONUK, courtesy ZKM

until September 27, 2015

**Leandro Erlich**

**Pulled by the roots**

ZKM

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