

List Visual Arts Center

About the List Visual Arts Center

The List Visual Arts Center, MIT's contemporary art museum, collects, commissions, and presents rigorous, provocative, and artist-centric projects that engage MIT and the global art community. The List Visual Arts Center is a creative laboratory that provides artists with a space to freely experiment and push existing boundaries. The List Center presents exhibitions in its galleries, including a program of evolving site-specific work by emerging artists known as List Projects, as well as a broad range of educational programs, events, and scholarly publications. The List Center maintains several art collections across campus including: MIT's Campus Lending Collection, which lends approximately 1,000 works of art to MIT faculty; we commission new works through the MIT Percent-for-Art program, we manage and conserve the Public Art Collection of more than 60 site-specific public artworks throughout the campus; and we oversee the Student Lending Collection, which lends approximately 600 works of art annually to MIT undergraduate and graduate students.

Highlights

Renewing our Strategic Plan

This spring, we hired strategist Kelly Sherman to lead a refreshed strategic planning process as the List Center approaches our fortieth year in 2025. To sharpen this process we've asked key members of our community to serve on the strategic plan committee including: Artists Sonia Almeida, Kapwani Kiwanga, and Sreshta Rit Premnath; local arts leader Camilo Alvarez, and former MIT student Joseph Faraguna. List Center Advisory Committee members Audrey Foster, Matt Saunders, and David Solo are also serving on the committee.

Presenting a Major Group Exhibition: Symbionts

In Fall 2022, the List Center presented *Symbionts: Contemporary Artists and the Biosphere*, a major group exhibition that took place across all three galleries and featured over a dozen international artists whose work invited viewers to reexamine their relationships to the planet's biosphere through the lens of symbiosis, or "with living." Co-curated by MIT art historian Caroline A. Jones, and List Center curators Natalie Bell and Selby Nimrod, *Symbionts* proposed a new generation of practitioners within bioart who explore what it means to be interdependent or collaborative, ceding individual human control of an artwork in recognition of our more-than-human relations.

The exhibition was accompanied by an illustrated catalog-reader designed by Omnivore and published by MIT Press, which features new essay commissions and selected key texts from a range of voices: artists, art historians, theorists, botanists, biologists, geoscientists, geneticists, Indigenous ecologists and others. Additional texts on each artist, authored by the exhibition curators, round out the publication, alongside an edited roundtable conversation on the themes of symbiosis, reciprocity, and Indigenous epistemologies, and a robust glossary of terms.

The exhibition received critical coverage in major outlets including Artforum, Art in America, ArtReview, ArtPapers, 4Columns, The Boston Globe, WBUR, among many others.



Opening Reception: Symbionts: Contemporary Artists and the Biosphere at MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, 2022.

Increased Attendance

The List Center welcomed 27,000 visitors into our galleries. In FY2019 (the most recent year prior to our Covid closure), we welcomed 23,000 visitors.

Bloomberg Connects

We joined over 200 cultural institutions from around the world on the Bloomberg Connects mobile application. This was a major project that has made information about our Public Art Collection and all recent exhibitions accessible to the global audiences who engage with this app. We introduced new content including audio guides for each of our exhibitions which are also accessible through the app.

Current Goals

Curatorial

- Utilize our three gallery spaces by presenting outstanding contemporary art exhibitions.
- Manage the MIT's art collection including: the Student Lending Art Collection, the Campus Loan Art Collection, and the Public Art Collection.
- Preserve, conserve, and re-site works from the permanent collection.

Programming

- Engage and partner with the MIT community through more in-depth work with professors and departmental collaborations prioritizing MIT students as audience along with continued development of Graduate Student Talks and the MIT Student Tour Guide Program.
- Expand audiences by hosting cross-disciplinary and collaborative public programs.

Administrative and Finance

- Initiate strategic plan to cover 2023–2028 which will include ideation around celebrations to mark the List Center’s 40th Anniversary in 2025.
- Expand the Advisory Committee and improve long-range planning efforts.
- Join with MIT in the Institute’s efforts to combat hidden bias and discrimination. Offer our expertise by serving on the provost’s ad hoc committee while continuing anti-bias training for staff.
- Promote the List Center’s website as a rich digital resource and archive of past exhibitions, ensuring that the List Center serves as a resource for tracking the careers of artists after they’ve exhibited at MIT.
- Increase media presence through innovative use of social media and digital marketing.
- Maintain steady staffing levels to enhance ability to present ambitious world-class programming.
- Continue to build a strong patron program through the Director’s Circle membership and add a corporate membership program.
 - Leverage technology to better provide information about exhibitions, public programs, the Student Lending Art Program, the permanent collection, and the Percent-for-Art program.
 - Attract major new gifts of art.
 - Seek gifts for the new endowment fund for art conservation.

Exhibitions

Student Lending Art Program Exhibition and Lottery
Hayden and Reference Gallery
August 30–September 18, 2022

List Projects 25: Azza El Siddique
Bakalar Gallery
June 30–September 4, 2022

Symbionts: Contemporary Artists and the Biosphere
Hayden, Reference, and Bakalar Galleries
October 21, 2022–February 26, 2023

List Projects 26: Alison Nguyen
 Bakalar Gallery
 February 23–June 25, 2023

Sung Tieu: Civic Floor
 Hayden Gallery
 April 4–July 16, 2023

Lex Brown: Carnelian
 Reference Gallery
 April 4–July 16, 2023



Exhibition view: Sung Tieu: Civic Floor, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, 2023. Photo: Dario Lasagni

List Artists in the News / Recent Accomplishments

Given that we typically work with an artist at the beginning of their careers, we are always interested in tracking the work of artists who have been exhibited in our galleries as they continue to present their work around the world.

- Tavares Strachan was awarded a Macarthur Genius Award.
- Current List Artist Sung Tieu had a solo presentation at Art Basel in Miami Beach during November–December 2022.
- Candice Lin who was a featured artist in the group exhibition Symbionts: Contemporary Artists and the Biosphere recently was selected as a finalist to design a Memorial to the 1871 Chinese Massacre in Los Angeles.
- Andrew Norman who exhibited a List Project in 2021–2022 had a two-week screening of his video installation Workers Leaving the Googleplex at the MOMA in New York.
- Past exhibiting artists Christine Sun Kim, Candice Lin, and Farah Al Qasimi, have been selected to exhibit work in the 14th Gwangju Biennale in 2023.

- Lex Brown had two of her films *The Glass Eye* and *Communication* featured in an e-flux group screening in 2023.
- Azza El Siddique who exhibited a List Project in 2022 was a finalist for the Hermitage Greenfield Prize in 2023.
- Matthew Angelo Harrison who had a solo exhibition at the List Center in 2022 is part of the group exhibition *Message From Our Planet: Digital Art From The Thoma Collection* at the Grand Rapids Art Museum.
- Past exhibiting artist Alfredo Jaar had his book *Alfredo Jaar: Lament of the Images* featured in the exhibition *Visual Literacy: A Critical Library*, which compiles a selection of books, curated by Rica Cerbarano on show at BASE Milano as part of PhotoVogue Festival 2022.
- Following his solo exhibition *The Explanatory Void* at the List Center in 2022, Raymond Boisjoly's photographs will be exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2023 as part of the show *We Are Story: The Canada Now Photography Acquisition*.
- Crystal Z Campbell who was part of the group exhibition *Symbionts: Contemporary Artists and the Biosphere* has a current exhibition *Lines of Sight* in the Memorial Art Gallery at the University of Rochester.
- Previous exhibiting List Artists Carolyn Lazard and Candice Lin both participated in the second chapter of the group exhibition series *signals...folds and splits* hosted by e-flux.
- Sreshta Rit Premnath who had a solo exhibition *Grave/Grove* in 2022-2023 is a featured artist in the recent exhibition season *Limitless Growth, Limited World* at the ICA in San Diego.

Programs and Student Outreach

Offering points of engagement for in-person and remote audiences with the full standards of accessibility that MIT and our office are committed to has proven to require significant additional effort. To facilitate this, we hired an additional staff member to join our team as our Public Programs Coordinator. As we continue to explore engagement with these different audiences, our outreach to MIT staff, students, and faculty remains central to our programmatic mission. With the additional staff person we were able to triple the amount of programs we offered through the past fiscal year, with a higher focus on in-gallery programming

Tours and Student Guides

- Two student guides, Aviva Intveld and Audrey Gatta graduated after a four year tenure of being active student guides at the List Center
- Two new student guides completed training for the upcoming academic year, with two guides returning
- We increased the amount of guided tours we could offer by 25%
- Audio guided tours for exhibitions were newly added to the Bloomberg connects app



List Visual Arts Center student guides, Aviva B Intveld and Audrey B Gatt took their graduation photos inside Sol Lewitt's Bars of Color within Squares, located inside building 6. Both felt it was a favorite part of leading campus art tours during their time at the List Center.

Campus and Public Programming Highlights

Graduate Student Talks

- We focused on expanding the Graduate Student Talks as a hybrid program. Each in-gallery lecture presented by a current MIT graduate student is recorded and available through our video archive on our website.
- This expands the 'resume' package for graduate students, as they gain public speaking experience. The hybrid component allows for friends and family that are not local to attend.
- We increased the number of graduate student talks during FY22 by 20%
- Increased in-person attendance by 45%

Independent Activities Period Programming

- We presented a three-part film screening series with documentaries about artists who are included in MIT's Public Art Collection.
- Connected the MIT Community to the art on their campus.
- 40% increased attendance from previous years

Exhibition Public Programs and Engagement

- We increased the number of exhibition-related programs offered by 32%
- We saw an 88% increase in audience attendance for programs
- Increased attendance thanks largely to offering hybrid program options which allowed us to maintain our connections to our global audiences.

Artist-Led Programs

This past fiscal year we worked with artists to create durational experiences with a focus on using expanded practices of contemporary art as a means to understand, give voice to, and process the world around us.

- In the summer of 2022, we presented our second year of artist-designed programs that could be engaged with from anywhere in the world.
- This fiscal year ended with On The Table presenting six artist-designed ‘menus’ to respond to what is ‘on the table’ when it comes to sharing a meal today.
- One of the ‘menus’ was activated during back to school events with students in September.
- We learned that at least six faculty members from universities in the Boston-area utilized this project in their coursework curriculum.

Max Wasserman Forum

The 2023 Max Wasserman Forum: Altered Access brought together artists, educators, and curators to discuss current disability discourse within the arts and museum institutions.

This year’s Wasserman Forum consisted of two days of hybrid programming including a virtual keynote address, and three hybrid panel discussions. Additionally, as a parallel program, the List Center hosted Liza Sylvestre and Christopher Jones to conduct a participatory workshop.

Speakers included: Panteha Abareshi, Owólabi Aboyade, Emily Barker, Taraneh Fazeli, Kevin Gotkin, Sara Hendren, Christopher Jones and Liza Sylvestre, Noëmi Lakmaier, Yo-Yo Lin, Park McArthur, Cannach MacBride, Carmen Papalia, Finnegan Shannon.

Due to the nature of this subject matter, options for remote engagement were crucial to this year’s Forum. Additionally, with the List Center’s mission of being “artist centric” much of the conversation was driven by artists as they expressed their concerns about visibility and intersectionality within arts institutions.

We welcomed 101 in-person attendees and 620 virtual attendees.



2023 Max Wasserman Forum: Altered Access at MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, 2023. Photo: Mel Taing

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This past year, the List Visual Arts Center continued to build on DEI practices within our own staff while also joining along with institute-wide initiatives.

- Audio transcripts – Continuing previous years practices of providing transcripts for programming and artist interviews, in the fall of 2021 we expanded this practice for video artworks.
- Alt-Text for digital images – Continuation of embedding this as a job responsibilities for all staff that contribute imagery for digital publication on behalf of the List Center now are given alt-text. This lives on all social media platforms, website images for exhibitions and programs, and our mobile platform for public art.
- Public Programs - All online programs were accompanied by a live transcriptionist during live presentation, and all recorded programs were sent out for post-production transcripts prior to posting on website, as we returned to onsite programming, all lecture-based programs were accompanied by CART services.
- General – With the launch of the newly designed website, we were able to better highlight the List Center accessible practices and update to current offerings, and note access services available for programs and exhibitions more clearly for visitors planning to attend the List Center.
- Visual Descriptive Audio Tour - New engagement for exhibitions, offering both visual descriptions as well as contextual information as a new access tool in galleries.
- Staff Training - With new staff coming on there is a commitment to onboarding DEI training via a 16 week course offered through Cultural Equity Learning Community. And ongoing specific to exhibitions access offerings
- Wasserman Forum 2023 - Altered Access allowed for discourse around current topics of accessibility within the arts.

Permanent Collection

The collection includes Public Art, the Student Lending Art Collection, and the Campus Loan Art Program.

Ongoing and Future Percent-for-Art Projects

Percent-for-Art commissions are ongoing for four building projects. Artists have been invited; the commissions and contracts are underway and will soon be publicly announced.

The commissions for the redesigned ground floor of the Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences (EAPS) building and the new Schwarzman College of Computing (SCC) building will be installed sometime in the fall of 2023. The EAPS building will include three bodies of work to be installed outside in the courtyard as well as inside in the lobby and the SCC building will be an interior work of art to be sited on the main stairwell landing.

Commissions for the new Music Building (an outdoor sculpture) and the new School of Architecture and Planning at the Metropolitan Warehouse (an interior work) will be installed in 2024 and 2025, respectively.

Campus Loan Art Program

The List Center installed 150 artworks for faculty and staff participating in our campus loan art program and moved an additional 168 pieces this year to accommodate office relocations or renovation projects. Currently there are 1,646 artworks sited in various locations on MIT's campus.

Student Lending Art Program Collection

The List Center added 22 artworks to the Student Lending Art Collection this year with support from the Friends of Boston Art, Sara-Ann and Robert Sanders, Karen and Greg Arenson, the John Taylor Endowment, the Alan May Endowment, the List Visual Arts Center Advisory Committee, and gifts of art.

The 2022–2023 Student Lending Art Program resumed full capacity and featured 589 artworks in the exhibition. We continued to offer undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to sign-up remotely as an effort to improve accessibility.



Installation view, 2022 Student Lending Art Program Exhibition. Photo by Chloe Tomasetta

Public Art Collection Works Conserved

Cai-Guo Qiang, (Ring Stone, 2010, granite and seven Japanese Black Pine trees): annual maintenance, Bartlett Tree Experts, monthly pest treatments; Hanselman Landscape & Gardens, semi-annual pruning

Anish Kapoor, (Non-Object (Plane), 2010, stainless steel): Karen Wolff, bi-monthly annual maintenance

Robert Engman, (Untitled, 1968, painted aluminum): Karen Wolff, bi-monthly annual maintenance

Beverly Pepper, (Trinity (Formerly Dunes I), 1971, Cor-ten steel): Daedalus, semi-annual maintenance

Olafur Eliasson, (Northwest Passage, 2018, stainless steel, LED lights, diffusers): semi-annual maintenance, Front Line, Inc., October 2022 and May 2023

Jean Robert Ipoustéguy, (Cénotaphe, 1957, steel): Daedalus, July 2022

Lyman Kipp, (Auro, 1965, bronze): Daedalus, July 2022

Matt Johnson, (Untitled (Swan) 2016, bent train track): Daedalus, August 2022

Elizabeth Murray, (Cast-a-way, 1992, oil on canvas): Gianfranco Pocobene, July 2022

Agnieszka Kurant, (The End of Signature, 2021, neon): Let There Be Neon, July 2022

Matthew Ritchie, (Games of Chance and Skill, 2002, mixed media installation): Williamstown Conservation Center, August 2022

Frank Stella, (Heads or Tails, 1988, acrylic and enamel): annual maintenance, Williamstown Conservation Center, August 2022

Agnieszka Kurant, (The End of Signature, 2022, LED): Parallel Development and Skyline Access, January 2023

Frank Stella, (Loohooloo, 1994, room-size installation, acrylic): annual maintenance, Williamstown Conservation Center, January 2023

Leo Villareal, (Light Matrix (MIT), 2016, LEDs, custom software, electrical hardware): Parallel Development, January 2023

Alexander Calder (Intermediate Model for La Grande Voile [The Big Sail], 1965, painted steel): Daedalus, February 2023

Scott Burton (Settee, Bench, and Balustrade, 1985, concrete and painted steel): Daedalus, February 2023

J. Meejin Yoon (Sean Collier Memorial, 2015, Granite): Efflorescence cleaning, Stuart Dean, March 2023; Oil splatter cleaning, Daedalus, April 2023

Antony Gormley, (Chord, 2016, 905 stainless steel elements of varying section sizes and 541 stainless steel balls): annual maintenance, Front Line, Inc., May 2023

David Bakalar, (TV Man or Five-Piece Cube with Strange Hole, 1993, Mountain rose granite): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Henry Moore, (Three-Piece Reclining Figure, Draped, 1976 bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Henry Moore, (Working Model for Reclining Figure (Lincoln Center), 1963, bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Jacques Lipchitz, (Bather, 1923-25, bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Jacques Lipchitz, (Hagar in the Desert, 1957, bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Jacques Lipchitz, (Sacrifice III, 1949-1957, bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Jacques Lipchitz, (Birth of the Muses, 1944-1950, bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Ursula von Rydingsvard (*Scientia*, 2016, bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Pablo Picasso (*Figure Découpée (Cut-Out Figure)*, 1975, cast concrete with aggregate interior): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Dimitri Hadzi, (*Elmo-MIT*, 1963, bronze): annual maintenance, Daedalus, June 2023

Lyman Kipp, (*Auro*, 1965, bronze): Daedalus, July 2022, June 2023

Permanent Collection Works Conserved

Tim Rollins, (*The Temptation of St. Anthony*, 1989): Stanhope Framers, July 2022

Richard Bosman, (*Man Overboard*, 1981): Stanhope Framers, July 2022

Charles Hewitt, (*Illuminations VII*, 1992): Stanhope Framers, November 2022

Jack Pierson, (*Pat's Place*, 2004): Stanhope Framers, November 2022

Katsura Funakoshi, (*The Guest of Winter*, 1993): Stanhope Framers, November 2022

Luc Tuymans, (*Giscard*, 2004): Stanhope Framers, November 2022

Cerith Wyn Evans, (*Brasilia 01.09.04*, 2006): Stanhope Framers, November 2022

Barbara Morgan ("*Letter to the World*" - Duet with Merce Cunningham, 1940): Stanhope Framers: March 2023

Marketing and Development

Marketing and development was centered around new public programs, engaging with the MIT community and the development of our new brand and website.

We have had continued success in growing all social media platforms and now have over 21,000 followers on Instagram, 17,000 followers on Facebook, and 7,500 on Twitter. We've been successful in growing our global audiences by promoting both in-person and remote events.

List Center exhibitions and artists received press in the following outlets: 4Columns, Art in America, Artforum, Art & Market, Art Papers, Ocula, and WBUR.

The List Center produced media content including artist interviews and artist talks with Azza El Siddique, Agnieszka Kurant, K. Anthony Jones, Park McArthur, and Sung Tieu. We continued recording Graduate Student Talks and now have grown to ten recorded talks in our video gallery.

We maintained distribution of the newly redesigned Public Art Map to the MIT Visitor Center, Human Resources, MIT Admissions, Atlas Center, MIT Office of the Arts, and other sites on campus to promote and publicize MIT's Public Art and Architecture Collection.

Administrative Highlights

Staffing

- Elyse Cusick joined staff in April 2023 as the financial assistant.
- Gwyneth Jackman joined in May 2023 as the marketing associate.
- Bonnie Bothwick and Scott Schaeffer joined the Gallery Staff in March 2023.
- We are currently hiring two open positions as our Exhibitions Registrar Ariana Weber and Education Programming Assistant Elizabeth Ponce have both accepted new positions.

Finances/Funding

We raised \$750,000 from 80 donors and foundations in support of the List Center. Looking ahead to FY2024, we hope to be in a growth cycle where we increase our membership and have opportunities to engage in person with our key supporters. While we've been open for all of FY2023, we haven't seen a return to pre-covid levels for member engagement just yet.

Personnel Information

Director Paul Ha serves as the board chair for the The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Art, New York, NY. He also served as a board member for the following organizations and institutions: Madison Square Park Conservancy, World Chess Hall of Fame, The Fabric Workshop and Museum, and Creative Arts Council. He served as an advisor to the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, where the ICA Boston presented a solo exhibition by Simone Leigh for the US Pavilion. He served as a committee member for the Ad Hoc Committee on Arts, Culture and DEI and MIT. He was an external advisor to the Graduate Thesis Committee at the SMFA at Tufts, Tufts University, Medford, MA.

Curator Natalie Bell contributed artist essays to forthcoming collections publications for Harvard Art Museums and Rollins College as well as curatorial essays to Rhona Bittner (New York: Rizzoli) and Rit Premnath: Grave/Grove.

Campus and Public Program Manager, Emily Garner served as a portfolio reviewer of student work at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design for the Art Education division. Additionally, Garner led the National Art Education Association Preservice division annual workshop, and is a member of the Forum for Leadership in Art Museum Education.

Communications and Development Manager Jameson Johnson served as reviewer at Boston University's MFA program. She spoke with classes at MassArt and SMFA.

Assistant Curator Selby Nimrod served as a visiting critic for the Yale University School of Art MFA Thesis Review in the sculpture department's 2023 graduates. She was also on the Review committee for SMFA Tufts graduate students.

Advisory Committee

The List Center Advisory Committee—composed of MIT alumni, artists, and collectors—met twice during the 2022-2023 season. Currently, there are 22 active members including three ex-officio members: Philip S. Khoury, Paul C. Ha, and Leila W. Kinney.

Audrey Foster took on her new appointment as Advisory Committee Chair in the spring of 2021 and continues to serve as an exemplary leader.

In FY2024, we are expecting five members to roll off due to term limits, so we are actively seeking new members.

Paul C. Ha

Director, List Visual Arts Center