

MIT List Visual Arts Center

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Anicka Yi: 6,070,430K of Digital Spit

May 22–July 26, 2015

Opening Reception: May 21, 5:30–8 PM

Reception Events

**Conversation between artists Anicka Yi and Eva Kot'átková,
and curators Henriette Huldich and Alise Upitis**

April, 2015 (Cambridge, MA) Anicka Yi (b.1971, Seoul, Korea) has floated a cow's stomach in hair gel inside a transparent Longchamp handbag; encased tempura-fried flowers and chrome dumbbells in Plexiglas; and created a perfume portrait of Fusako Shigenobu, the female founder of the Japanese Red Army. In combining seemingly permanent and perishable materials, Yi's work reorders the cultural forces that privilege containment over leakage, clarity over ambiguity, and vision above all other senses.

6,070,430K of Digital Spit, Yi's exhibition for the MIT List Visual Arts Center, takes as its starting point the ambiguous meaning of taste as both bodily sense and aesthetic discernment. Foregrounding the artist's ongoing project *The Flavor Genome*, Yi examines how "flavors"—visual, olfactory, gustatory, auditory—can form sense memories and spur longing, although their cultural and economic value is subject to global consumerism and a hierarchy of aesthetics.

The visual center of Yi's sculptural installation is a brightly illuminated Plexiglas pond, eight feet in diameter, filled with gallons of hair gel embedded with cosmetic contact lenses, while a menthol scent permeates the gallery. This sight and smell for Yi recalls the dish Pond, a plate of molecular gastronomy she once consumed at elBulli, the famous but now defunct restaurant. In the darkened periphery of the gallery, a series of laboratory stands and clamps support sheets of kombucha "leather"—a cellulose growth cultivated from the bacterial cultures in kombucha tea—onto which she projects degraded digital footage of simple-celled organisms. Playing on ideas of good and bad taste throughout, her installation includes a soundtrack of Soft Cell's 1981 song "Sex Dwarf," from which Yi has deleted its controversial lyrics.



As a 2014-15 Visiting Artist at MIT, Yi worked with researchers in synthetic biology and the art and science of light. Seth Riskin, an expert in holography at MIT, collaborated with Yi on illuminating her sculptural installation for the List Center. Yi also collaborated with synthetic biologist and MIT postdoctoral fellow Tal Danino to cultivate bacteria taken from 100 of Yi's female friends, colleagues, and associates, the odor of which Yi replicated for her recent exhibition *Anicka Yi: You Can Call Me F* at The Kitchen in New York.

Catalog

In conjunction with Yi's exhibition, the List Center has produced the artist's first catalog, *6,070,430K of Digital Spit*. The book includes an exchange between Caroline A. Jones (Professor of Art History, MIT) and Yi on scent, ethnicity, and symbiotic microorganisms; an essay on networks and extravisual means by Johanna Burton (Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement at the New Museum, New York); and an essay by the editor and exhibition curator Alise Uptis on the irreducible ambiguity of Yi's work.

Anicka Yi (b. 1971, Seoul, Korea) lives and works in New York City. She studies at Hunter College-CUNY. Recent and forthcoming solo exhibitions include Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland; The Kitchen, New York; Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio; 47 Canal, New York; Lars Friedrich, Berlin; and Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich.

Anicka Yi: 6,070,430K of Digital Spit is curated by Alise Uptis, Assistant Curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center.

Anicka Yi is a 2014-15 Visiting Artist at MIT, presented by the MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST) and the MIT List Visual Arts Center.

Anicka Yi: 6,070,430K of Digital Spit is supported by the Council for the Arts at MIT, the Office of the Associate Provost at MIT, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the MIT List Visual Arts Center Advisory Committee, the Friends of the List, and 47 Canal, New York.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Public Reception and Conversation with the Artist

Thursday, May 21, 5:30-8 PM

5:30 PM Conversation between artists Eva Kot'átková and Anicka Yi, and curators Henriette Huldish and Alise Uptis
Bartos Theater, E15 Lower Level.

6 PM Reception
Upper Atrium and galleries

Curator's Tour



Thursday, July 9, 6 PM

ABOUT THE MIT LIST VISUAL ARTS CENTER

Located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the List Visual Arts Center is a creative laboratory that provides artists with a space to freely experiment and push existing boundaries. As the contemporary art museum at MIT, the List presents a dynamic program of six to nine special exhibitions in its galleries annually, a program of evolving site-specific work by emerging artists known as the List Projects, as well as a broad range of educational programs, events, and scholarly publications. Beyond the full slate of special exhibitions and projects it presents each year, the List also maintains and adds to MIT's permanent collection; commissions new works through the MIT Percent-for-Art program, a collection of more than 50 site-specific artworks throughout the campus; and oversees the Student Loan Art Program, which lends more than 500 works of art annually to MIT undergraduate and graduate students.

Originally named the Hayden Gallery, MIT established this center for the visual arts in 1950 to provide a dedicated structure upon which to build the university's existing relationship to the arts. It was renamed the List Visual Arts Center in 1985 in recognition of a gift from Vera and Albert List, and relocated to its current, expanded location in the Wiesner Building on the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which was designed by MIT alumnus I. M. Pei (B.S. Architecture, 1940) and Partners Architects.

For more information, visit: <http://listart.mit.edu>

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