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CCA Wattis Institute's 2023–2024 research season is inspired by the work of artist Anicka Yi

The yearlong research season, *Anicka Yi is on our mind*, begins in September with an exciting lineup of free events, lectures, screenings, and programming with Anicka Yi's visionary work as the centerpiece

San Francisco, CA—Tuesday, September 26, 2023—Artist Anicka Yi is the subject of the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts' 2023–2024 research season, *Anicka Yi is on our mind*.

Through the season, which runs from September 2023 through July 2024, a robust series of programs, lectures, and special events will be centered on the question that drives the institution's core mission: What and how can we learn from artists today?

Each year, the Wattis hosts a research season that explores the contemporary moment through the lens of one artist's work. Instead of an exhibition, this series creates a collective conversation around a broad set of themes and subjects relating to the work of a single artist.

This year, the work of artist Anicka Yi serves as a lens to think about our contemporary moment. A series of open questions map out a broad thematic territory for a year-long schedule of public programs: reading groups, lectures, performances, screenings, and other events explore artists and ideas that emerge as related or as relevant in productive ways.

Born in Seoul, South Korea, raised in the U.S., and currently based in New York City, Yi is a highly acclaimed contemporary artist known for her groundbreaking installations, sculptures, and immersive experiences that challenge traditional notions of art. Yi's art is rooted in her fascination with ephemeral and intangible elements. She employs unconventional mediums like bacteria, scents, and various organic materials that question the monumentality of art. Yi's work blurs the boundaries between the natural and the artificial, inviting viewers to contemplate the relationship between humanity, artificial intelligence and the natural world.

“An artist must trust that fleeting hints from the surrounding world will spark radical leaps of intuition. I have said before that the artist's role is to protect uncertainty

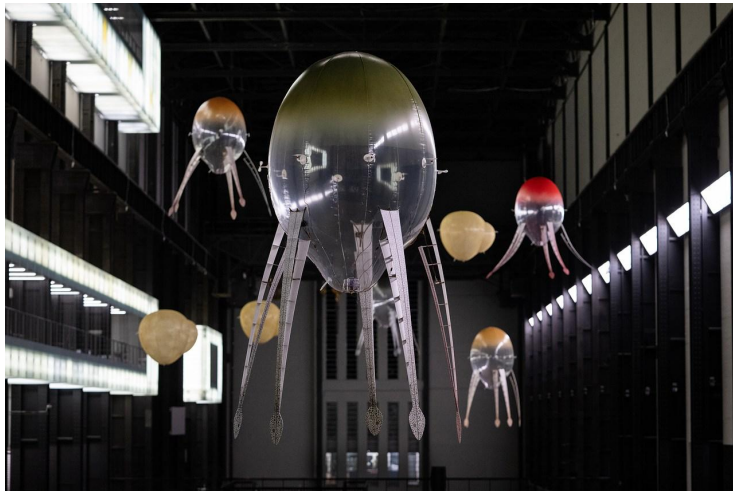
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and there is so much left uncovered in my work, unknown even to me. I am excited to see where Wattis researchers' own leaps of intuition will lead.” — Anicka Yi



Installation view of *Anicka Yi: In Love With The World*, Hyundai Commission, Tate Modern, London, 2021.

Yi's work grapples with themes relevant to our present moment such as: ramifications of a global pandemic, pending climate emergency, doom-and-gloom cycle of the news, artificial intelligence, and the coexistence between humans and machines. From that perspective, the Wattis will ask questions through research, events, and published writing, including: *Is collaboration anti-capitalist? Is feminism contagious? Is there a consciousness without a body? How can we build social trust? Do non-humans have agency? What would it feel like to share the world with machines that could live in the wild and evolve on their own? How is the impermanence of life reflected in art? Can art be a form of inoculation?*

Programs and Events

[All upcoming events](#) are free and open to the public. Many of the Wattis Institute's lectures, screenings, and talks will be available to view in the [Wattis Library](#) shortly after each event.

A Lecture by Lumi Tan on Anicka Yi

Wednesday, September 27

6 pm

Free

Kicking off the year-long research season is a lecture on Anicka Yi by Lumi Tan on [September 27](#) that focuses on how Yi's evocative use of language affords a better understanding of temporalities, materials, and ecological systems and how she pursues language as a mutable tool to build empathy between practitioners in different disciplines. By emphasizing a pursuit of the communicative abilities of non-verbal language within her work, Yi's collaborative linguistic vocabulary does not seek to define terms but continually pries them open.

Conversation: Anicka Yi and Cathy Park Hong

Thursday, October 26

6 pm

Free

On [October 26](#), Anicka Yi herself engages in an informal conversation with writer and friend, [Cathy Park Hong](#), to chat about topics present in both their work. Migration serves as an overall rubric for the evening, inspiring tentacular thinking around time, immigrant backgrounds, and the human question. Anicka will touch briefly on her current project around the Great Kelp Migration, and Cathy will talk about her current book project. They will also reflect on recent impactful trips to South Korea.

Film Screening: *Critical Dictionary of Southeast Asia*

Thursday, November 9

6 pm Doors | 6:30 pm Screening

Free

On [November 9](#), the Wattis will host the film screening *CDOSEA (Critical Dictionary of Southeast Asia)* where artist Ho Tzu Nyen proposes 26 terms (one per each letter of the Latin alphabet) that ask the question: what constitutes the unity of Southeast Asia? Each term is a concept, a motif, or a biography, that reflects on a region that is not defined by a singular language, religion, or political power. *CDOSEA* is a multi-format work of infinite duration that draws from a database composed of videos, texts, music, and online images.



Installation view of Anicka Yi's *Biologizing the Machine (tentacular trouble)* at the 58th Biennale di Venezia, "May You Live In Interesting Times," Venice, 2019.

Anicka Yi is on our mind is curated by Jeanne Gerrity and Diego Villalobos, with assistance from Paulina Félix Cunillé. [Read more](#) about the Wattis's 2023–2024 research season.

About CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts

Founded in 1998 at California College of the Arts in San Francisco and located a few blocks from its campus, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts is a nonprofit exhibition venue and research institute dedicated to contemporary art and ideas. As an exhibition space, it commissions and shows new work by emerging and established artists from around the world. Recent solo exhibitions include *Ana Jotta: Never the Less*; *Caitlin Cherry: The Regolith Was Boiling*; *Drum Listens to Heart*; *Hervé Guibert: This and More*; *Josh Faught: Look Across the Water Into the Darkness, Look for the Fog*; *Mirra Helen: Leaves 1992 2022*; *Maia Cruz Palileo: Long Kwento*; *Raven Chacon: Radio Coyote*; *Jeffrey Gibson: Nothing is Eternal*; *Lydia Ourahmane: شمسية صرخة Solar Cry*; *Cinthia Marcelle: A morta*; *Vincent Fecteau*; *Abbas Akhavan: cast for a folly*; *Akosua Adoma Owusu: Welcome to the Jungle (which traveled to the Contemporary Arts Center of New Orleans)*; *Diamond Stingily: Doing the Best I Can*; *Rosha Yaghmai: Miraclegrow*; *Adam Linder: Full Service (which traveled to Mudam Luxembourg)*; *Ken Lum: What's Old is Old for a Dog*; *Henrik Olesen: The Walk*.

As a research institute, the Wattis dedicates an entire year to reflect on the work of a single artist, which informs a regular series of public programs and publications involving the field's most prominent artists and thinkers. The 2023–2024 season is dedicated to artist Anicka Yi; past seasons featured Lorraine O'Grady, Cecilia Vicuña, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Dodie Bellamy, Joan Jonas, Andrea Fraser, David Hammons, Seth Price.

The Wattis also hosts an annual Capp Street Artist-in-Residence, one of the earliest and longest-running artist-in-residence programs in the country, founded in 1983 by Ann Hatch as Capp Street Project, and incorporated into the Wattis Institute in 1998. Each year, an artist comes to live and work in San Francisco for a semester, teaches a graduate seminar at CCA, and presents an exhibition. Recent participants include Helen Mirra (2021–2022), Raven Chacon (2023–2021), Hồng-Ân Trương (2019–2020), Abbas Akhavan (2018–2019), contemporary (2017–2018), Melanie Gilligan (2016–2017), Carissa Rodriguez (2015–2016), Nairy Baghramian (2014–2015), Claire Fontaine (2013–2014). For more information, visit wattis.org.

About California College of the Arts

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) educates students to shape culture and society through the practice and critical study of art, architecture, design, and writing. Benefitting from its San Francisco Bay Area location, the college prepares students for lifelong creative work by cultivating innovation, community engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

CCA offers a rich curriculum of 22 undergraduate and 10 graduate programs in art, design, architecture, and writing taught by a faculty of expert practitioners. Attracting promising students

from across the nation and around the world, CCA is among the 25 most diverse colleges in the U.S. Last year, U.S. News & World Report ranked CCA as one of the top 10 graduate schools for fine arts in the country.

Graduates are highly sought after by companies such as Pixar/Disney, Apple, Intel, Meta, Gensler, Google, IDEO, Autodesk, Mattel, and Nike, and many have launched their own successful businesses. Alumni and faculty are often recognized with the highest honors in their fields, including Academy Awards, AIGA Medals, Fulbright Scholarships, Guggenheim Fellowships, MacArthur Fellowships, National Medal of Arts, and the Rome Prize, among others.

CCA is creating a new, expanded college campus at its current site in San Francisco, spearheaded by the architectural firm Studio Gang. The new campus design will be a model of sustainable construction and practice; will unite the college's programs in art, crafts, design, architecture, and writing in one location to create new adjacencies and interactions; and will provide more student housing than ever before.

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