



MEDIA CONTACT

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The Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts receives \$20,000 National Endowment for the Arts Grant for the exhibition *Drum Listens to Heart*

The fall 2022 exhibition explores the percussive as an aesthetic and political concept through a multi-part international group exhibition and performance series

San Francisco, CA—Thursday, June 10, 2021—The Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts has been approved by the National Endowment for the Arts for a \$20,000 award from the Grants for Arts Projects program to support its 2022 exhibition, *Drum Listens to Heart*, which explores “the percussive” as an aesthetic and political concept. The Wattis Institute’s project is among the more than 1,100 projects from across America that were selected during this round of Grants for Arts Projects funding.

“As the country and the arts sector begin to imagine returning to a post-pandemic world, the National Endowment for the Arts is proud to announce funding that will help arts organizations such as the Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts reengage fully with partners and audiences,” said NEA Acting Chairman Ann Eilers. “Although the arts have sustained many during the pandemic, the chance to gather with one another and share arts experiences is its own necessity and pleasure.”

“The NEA’s support will help us emerge from this challenging period by giving us the tools to produce an ambitious exhibition that connects American artists with others from all over the world,” said Anthony Huberman, director and chief curator of the Wattis Institute and curator of the exhibition. “While it is mainly associated with music, the notion of the percussive cuts across a rich range of cultural and political forms and brings together the language of protest with that of military control, emerges as a tool for celebration but also for oppression, and, in a most basic sense, relates to the beating of all of our hearts.”

The exhibition moves beyond the framework of music and outlines a broader “percussive field” as a model for art and politics. Inspired by the fragmented but cumulative structure of a percussive polyrhythm, the exhibition is divided into four consecutive parts or “beats,” each shown one after the other in the same central gallery space, allowing layers to accumulate and cross-pollinate. Over the course of five months, as the exhibition progresses, *Drum Listens to Heart* also includes a dynamic performance series, and the entire exhibition and performance series will be the subject of a newly commissioned film by Bay Area-based artist Alison O’Daniel.

Some confirmed artists include Marcos Ávila Forero, Lutz Bacher, Raven Chacon, Em’kal Eyongakpa, Milford Graves, Guadalupe Maravilla, Harold

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Mendez, The Otolith Group, Lucy Raven, Michael E. Smith, and Johanna Unzueta Rivas, among others.

For more information on the projects included in the Arts Endowment grant announcement, visit [arts.gov/news](https://www.arts.gov/news).

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 *Jeffrey Gibson: Nothing Is Eternal*; *Lydia Ourahmane: صرخة شمسية 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*; and *Adam Linder: Full Service* (which traveled to Mudam Luxembourg). A recent group exhibition, *Mechanisms*, traveled to Secession in Vienna in an expanded form entitled *Other Mechanisms*.

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 2020–2021 season is dedicated to the poet, artist, and activist Cecilia Vicuña; past seasons featured Joan Jonas, Andrea Fraser, David Hammons, Seth Price, Dodie Bellamy, and Trinh T. Minh-ha.

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 develops a new body of work or research. Recent participants include Raven Chacon (2020–2021), Hồng-An Trương (2019–2020), Abbas Akhavan (2018–2019), contemporary (2017–2018), Melanie Gilligan (2016–2017), Carissa Rodriguez (2015–2016), and Nairy Baghramian (2014–2015). For more information, visit [wattis.org](https://www.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 11 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,

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CCA is [one of the 10 most diverse colleges in the U.S.](#) This 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, Facebook, 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. For more information, visit [cca.edu](#).

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