

MIT List Center

Jackie Ferrara

Composed of greenstone and slate, Jackie Ferrara's Floor was commissioned as part of the MIT Percent-for-Art. Made in 1996, it extends over the atrium of the Tang Center's lobby and then upstairs to the balcony and corridor. Ferrara's interest in architectural forms originated in a sculpture she made early in her career, horizontal lumber slats stacked and nailed together. Former List Public Art Curator, Patricia Fuller.

She always composed with modular elements. She also resists using any kind of rigorous mathematical logic within this modular system and builds in eccentrically curving and swelling elements and openings as she builds up the form. By the '70s, the sculptures made this way began suggesting archaic architectural forms, pyramids, pylons, ziggurats, and were becoming almost architectural in scale.

They also began to resemble public spaces, courtyards, plazas, and arcades.

Her public sculptures tend to become public spaces, whether they're three-dimensional or two-dimensional. It's meant to be experienced in motion. It's really something that you walk through and that you have a cumulative experience of, and then you can turn around and have the experience in the opposite direction. Jackie Ferrara is so interested in articulating public space and using architectural forms that it's often hard to find the place where the two separate. The architecture gains, and the art gains.