

F o r I m m e d i a t e R e l e a s e

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MIT List Visual Arts Center

Amalia Pica
February 8–April 7, 2013

Opening Reception:
Thursday, February 7, 5:30-8PM

Reception Event:

**A conversation with Amalia Pica, João Ribas, Curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center;
and Julie Rodrigues Widholm, Pamela Alper Associate Curator at MCA Chicago**

5:30pm in Bartos Theatre

January, 2013 (Cambridge, MA)—The MIT List Visual Arts Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago present *Amalia Pica*, the artist's first major solo museum exhibition in the United States. The exhibition provides an in-depth look at the last ten years of this London-based, Argentinian artist's work and includes films, drawings, sculptures, installations, and performances.

Using materials such as photocopies, light bulbs, drinking glasses, and cardboard, Amalia Pica (b. 1978, Argentina) confronts the failures, gaps, and slippages of communication. The act of delivering and receiving a verbal or nonverbal message, and the various forms that communicative exchange may take, are central to her work. In *Babble Blabber, Chatter, Gibber, Jabber, Patter, Prattle, Rattle, Yammer, Yada yada yada yada* (2010) Pica spells out the work's title using semaphore flags. In *Acoustic Radar in Cardboard* (2010/12) Pica reimagines an acoustic locator, the outmoded precursor to radar, to "make an image about listening, rather than making a functioning device".

Other works in the exhibition reflect fleeting moments of shared experience, often incorporating the signifiers of celebration and communal gatherings with fiesta lights, party bunting, and confetti. Throughout the exhibition participants will enact *Strangers* (2008), a work where two people who have never met before hold a string of bunting for hours at a time in the exhibition space.

During the run of the exhibition Pica's nomadic sculpture *I am Tower of Hamlets, as I am in Tower of Hamlets, just like a lot of other people are* (2011) will be lent to members of the MIT campus community who've signed up to take care of the sculpture for one week, then passing it on to the next host. Participants fill out a lending card, which serves as a record of the sculpture's travels.

(For the List Center's presentation of this work the title will change to reflect the community interaction and location of the artwork.)

Born during Argentina's dictatorship and so-called "Dirty War"—a seven year campaign against suspected dissidents and subversives— Pica has long been interested in the relationship between form and politics, and between history and representation. In *Venn Diagrams (Under the Spotlight)* (2011) the artist addresses this period in Argentina when modern mathematics was banned from school programs. Filmed in Montevideo, Uruguay, *On Education* (2008) shows Pica wearing the uniform of both schoolteachers and students in Argentina, whitewashing an equestrian monument. A common riddle asks the color of a general's white horse, the name of the general—from Napoleon to San Martín—changing depending on where the riddle is posed. Along with the mythologizing of history, Pica looks to civic participation and the social forms that allow people to speak. *Stage (as seen on Afghan Star)* (2011) alludes to the Afghan television program for aspiring pop stars; for many voting for their favorite, the show offered a rare public forum for the expression of individual opinion. Pica reflects on how speech is a protected right in some regions of the world, while still a privilege in many others. Surveying the artist's sculpture, performance, installation, video, and drawing produced over nearly a decade, the exhibition is itself conceived as a conversation among Pica's works across various mediums.

About the Artist

Amalia Pica received a BA from the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes P.P. in Buenos Aires in 2003 and attended graduate school at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam. Pica has had solo exhibitions at Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen (2012), Marc Foxx Gallery, Los Angeles, and Chisenhale Gallery, London (both 2011), and Malmö Konsthall (2010), to name a few. Her work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions such as *The Ungovernables* at the New Museum (2012), *Silence* at the Menil Collection (2012), *Map Marathon* at the Serpentine Gallery (2010), *Word Event* at the Kunsthalle Basel (2008), and *Drawing Typologies* at the Stedelijk Museum (2007). One of the most promising artists of her generation, she is a recipient of a CIFO grant from the Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, a finalist for the Future Generation Art Prize from the Pinchuk Foundation, and recently completed an artist residency at the prestigious Headlands Center for the Arts outside of San Francisco.

Amalia Pica is co-organized by the MIT List Visual Arts Center, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. The exhibition was co-curated by João Ribas, Curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center, and Julie Rodrigues Widholm, Pamela Alper Associate Curator at MCA Chicago. The exhibition opens at the MIT List Visual Arts Center and will be on view at the MCA Chicago April 27–August 11, 2013. For more information about the Museum of Contemporary Art presentation of this exhibit: <http://www.mcachicago.org/exhibitions/next/all/304>

In conjunction with the exhibition The MIT List Visual Arts Center and the MCA Chicago have produced an illustrated 124-page scholarly catalogue that includes an interview between exhibition curators and Amalia Pica, a bibliography and exhibition history of the artist, and images of her work. The publication also includes essays on Pica's work written by Tirdad Zolghadr, a writer and curator who teaches at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, NY, and Ana Teixeira Pinto, lecturer at Humboldt University (Berlin) and *Mousse Magazine* contributor.

Support for the exhibition presented at the MIT List Visual Arts Center has been generously provided by the Barbara Lee Family Foundation, the Council for the Arts at MIT, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Office of the Associate Provost at MIT, the MIT List Visual Arts Center Advisory Committee, and the Friends of the List.



About the MIT List Visual Arts Center

In 1950 MIT established the Hayden Gallery which was located in the Charles Hayden Memorial Library. The gallery served as a venue for a program of changing exhibitions. In 1985 the Hayden Gallery was renamed the List Visual Arts Center in recognition of a gift from Vera and Albert List that relocated the gallery to its current location on the ground floor of the Wiesner Building which was designed by MIT alumnus I.M. Pei (B.S. Architecture, 1940), and Partners Architects.

Over the years the MIT List Visual Arts Center has become highly respected as one of the most significant university art galleries in the country for its innovative, provocative, and scholarly exhibitions and publications. Just as MIT pushes at the frontiers of scientific inquiry, it is the mission of the List Visual Arts Center to explore challenging, intellectually inquisitive, contemporary art making in all media. In addition to presenting 4-6 exhibitions annually, the List Center presents a broad range of education programs in conjunction with its exhibition programming. The Center maintains and adds to MIT's permanent collection of 3,500 artworks that includes dozens of publicly sited sculptures and hundreds of paintings, prints, photographs, drawings and sculptures located throughout MIT's campus. The List Center is also responsible for commissioning new works for the MIT Public Art Collection through the MIT Percent-for-Art program, and organizing and administering the Student Loan Art Program, which lends over 500 works of art annually to MIT undergraduate and graduate students.

Directions: The MIT List Visual Arts Center is located in the Wiesner Building, 20 Ames Street, at the eastern edge of the MIT campus. It is in close proximity to Kendall Square, Memorial Drive, and the Longfellow Bridge.

By T, take the Red Line to the Kendall/MIT stop, follow Main Street west to Ames Street, turn left, and walk one block to the crosswalk. The MIT List Visual Arts Center, housed in a building identifiable by its white gridded exterior, will be on your left. Signage is on the building.

By car, coming across the Longfellow Bridge or from Memorial Drive, follow signs for Kendall Square. Limited metered parking is available on Ames Street. A parking garage is located at the Cambridge Center complex (entrance on Ames between Main and Broadway). Paid public parking is also available at the Marriott Hotel on Broadway.

Gallery Hours: Tues-Wed: 12-6PM; Thurs: 12-8PM; Fri-Sun: 12-6PM; closed Mondays and major holidays.

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<https://twitter.com/MITListCenter>

Additional Information: 617.253.4680 or <http://listart.mit.edu>

All exhibitions and programming at the MIT List Visual Arts Center are free and open to the public.