

MIT List Visual Arts Center

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The MIT List Visual Arts Center

presents

Gwenneth Boelens: At Odds

Reference Gallery

February 17–April 16, 2017

Opening Reception: Thursday, February 16, 6–8 PM

(January 25, 2017) Cambridge, MA—Gwenneth Boelens's sculptural and photographic work is concerned with perception, memory, and time. The artist's show at the List Center, her first solo museum exhibition, features a group of recently produced large-scale photograms. Originally trained as a photographer, in the past Boelens has used the antiquated wet plate collodion process for creating life-size glass negatives which are then displayed in sculptural installations. The process of immediate exposure to light after the chemicals are distributed onto the large glass plates shifts the focus from the image to the in-between state of the negative, the space in the image, and the performative gesture, which are concerns threading throughout her work as a whole.

Boelens's recent large-scale photograms are made over an extended exposure period during which the light source is obstructed by bodies that move and carry different objects—or "shields." These works embody a polarity that is steeped in the present: a dual sense of opposition and shelter, of exclusion and inclusion. This duality is fixed in time and inscribed onto the photosensitive paper, a dynamic that is echoed by other works in the exhibition, such as a group of hand-pressed clay tablets, which evoke gestures of piercing and propping.

The artist's approach attempting to translate processes of time and thought into material form is carried forward in two new works made for the exhibition. Boelens uses electroconductive and reflective fibers to weave a "liar's cloth", inspired by a West African pattern of the same name. For a large hanging textile work, which will divide the gallery space, fibers were extracted from the woven material meticulously. The process of unraveling by hand is further emphasized by the use of a forensic chemical revealing the fingerprints of the weaver on the material. The exhibition also includes *Riveted*, an audio sculpture using



the sound of a clap as its source. The resulting 8-hour revolving rhythm evokes a recurring signal or counting mechanism, resonating with the markings of time embedded in the other sculptural works in the show.

Gwenneth Boelens (b. 1980 in Soest, NL) lives and works in Amsterdam. Boelens's work has been exhibited at Ludwig Forum, Aachen, Germany; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; ACCA, Melbourne, and others. She attended the Koninklijke Academie voor Beeldende Kunsten, Den Haag, Netherlands, and the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam.

Gwenneth Boelens: At Odds is curated by Henriette Huldish, Curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center. Exhibitions at the List Center are made possible with the support of Jane & Neil Pappalardo, Cynthia & John Reed and Terry & Rick Stone. This program is supported as part of the Dutch Culture USA program by the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York. Support for *Gwenneth Boelens: At Odds* is also provided by the Mondriaan Fund.

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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 the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the List Center presents a dynamic program of six to nine special exhibitions in its galleries annually, a program of exhibitions by emerging artists known as the List Projects, as well as a broad range of educational programs, events, and publications. The List also maintains and adds to MIT's permanent art 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 600 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 Institute'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 MIT, which was designed by MIT alumnus I.M. Pei (B.S. Architecture 1940) and Partners Architects.

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