

## 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

***Nairy Baghramian: Fluffing the Pillows***  
***(Moorings, Gurneys, Silos, Mops, News Rack, Railing)***

**May 9–July 14, 2013**

**Opening Reception:**  
**Wednesday, May 8, 5:30-8PM**

**April, 2013 (Cambridge, MA)**—The MIT List Visual Arts Center presents *Nairy Baghramian: Fluffing the Pillows (Moorings, Gurneys, Silos, Mops News Rack, Railing)* an exhibition by Iranian born, Berlin-based artist Nairy Baghramian. Baghramian uses disparate tropes and motifs drawn from a variety of sources—from interior design to physiology—in her investigation of sculptural form. With a keen sense of traditional sculptural concerns such as material and volume, her work plays on the supposed distinctions between decoration and function, industrial and handmade, commodity and art object. Her work has also centered on the political and social relations implied by objects and the site of display, in particular on the exhibition space as a type of interior, where affect and experience increasingly conflict with luxury and leisure.

For this commissioned installation, Baghramian abstracts materials and forms derived from utilitarian and maritime objects, drawing out the formal and creative processes that define notions of the ‘sculptural.’ The exhibition centers on groups of forms, such as *Silos*, *Gurneys*, and *Moorings*, each sited in relation to the museum’s architecture. Her *Silos* share their name with a container or structure used to store bulk or industrial materials. These seemingly soft yet solid forms, like those used to hold or transport materials, are created out of sailing fabric, rubber, and pleather. Made from chrome-plated poles, *Gurneys*—a term to describe wheeled stretchers—are used to support the formless sacks. Baghramian’s *Moorings* are named after objects that are used to moor, or secure, boats in place at port. Cast in aluminum, their shape is derived from the large hooks that crane operators use to lift commercial cargo containers. A news rack displays a glossy publication, Baghramian’s exhibition catalog, disguised as an upscale boating magazine. The artist brings these forms and their complex associations—boating and sailing, trade and cargo, the labor of industry, service, and stevedores—into the museum as a means to investigate gendered notions of labor and craft.

#### **About the Artist**

Nairy Baghramian was born in Isfahan, Iran in 1971, and has lived and worked in Berlin since 1984. Her work has been shown in numerous internationally recognized solo and group exhibitions, including recent solo exhibitions at the Sculpture Center, Long Island City, NY (2013); Galerie Buchholz, Köln (2012); Contemporary Art Gallery Vancouver (2012); Neuer Aachener Kunstverein (2008); Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (2008); and Kunsthalle Basel (2006). Baghramian had a two-person show with Phyllida Barlow at Sepentine Gallery, London (2010), and her work was in *Illuminations*, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennial (2011); Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art (2011); *Temporary Stedelijk 2*, Stedelijk Museum (2011); Berlin Biennial (2008); and Sculpture Project

Münster (2007). In 2012, she was awarded the Hector Kunstpreis, which included an artist publication and exhibition at the Kunsthalle Manheim.

*Nairy Baghramian: Fluffing the Pillows (Moorings, Gurneys, Silos, Mops News Rack, Railing)* is curated by List Center curator João Ribas.

Support for this exhibition has been generously provided by Julian and Barbara Cherubini, the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Boston, 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 that 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 6-9 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 over 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 managing 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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**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.