

**Olafur Eliasson and Nick Mauss selected to create two
New Percent-for-Art projects for MIT's campus**

**New commissions follow double in funding for the
Institute's Percent-for-Art Program to \$500,000**

Cambridge, MA – November 16, 2017 -- The MIT List Visual Arts Center announces that Olafur Eliasson and Nick Mauss have been commissioned under its Percent-for-Art Program to create two new public art works for MIT that will be completed and unveiled in fall 2018. Created in 1968, the Percent-for-Art Program allots a percentage of funds to commission or purchase art for each new major renovation or building development initiative. The cap on a project, which recently doubled, allows for an allocation of up to \$500,000 per project. Over the last fifty years the Institute's Percent-for-Art Program has driven the growth and expansion of MIT's campus public art collection, resulting in over 60 artworks, by artists including Dan Graham, Sol LeWitt, Matthew Ritchie, and Sarah Sze for MIT's 23,000 member community and 150,700 annual campus visitors to enjoy. MIT's public art is even more accessible for visitors through the launch of a GPS-enabled app featuring self-guided tour routes supplemented by interviews with selected artists and architects.

"As MIT's public art collection continues to expand throughout our buildings and public spaces on campus, we are excited to commission these new site specific works by Eliasson and Mauss which will create more opportunities for our students, faculty, and visitors to engage with art in new ways, outside of traditional museum or gallery settings," said the List Center's director Paul Ha. "The Percent-for-Art Program, which was launched almost 50 years ago, was conceived to reflect the Institute's vision for how art, science, and technology can intersect to inspire experimentation and discovery. This year, with the double in funding of up to \$500,000 for each commission, we are empowered to continue growing the greatest public art collection in the country and encouraging creativity to permeate our everyday lives."

**Olafur Eliasson
MIT.nano (Building 12)**

Northwest Passage, Olafur Eliasson's commissioned work will be situated at the entrance and breezeway of MIT's new sprawling 200,000 square foot nano building, (Building 12), a state of the art production and research complex devoted to nanoscience and nanotechnology which is slated for completion in 2018. The facility will support the activities of 2,000 MIT researchers by modernizing MIT's research capacity to deepen the collaboration between all departments building on recent advances and innovations in science and technology driven by nano-scale experimentation.



Northwest Passage, spanning 123 feet, and comprised of 20 polished stainless-steel panels, each of a different size and abstract shape, will be installed on the ceiling of the space floating above visitors. These mirrored forms base their silhouette and configuration on the pattern of free-floating ice, the product of thinning ice coverage, found in the Northwest Passage between North America and the Arctic Circle. Semicircular steel bands, embedded with LED lights, loop below the mirrored planes intersecting sections of the artwork. The mirrors will cast impressions below to building visitors and those passing by, while engaging with the glass walls that mark the edge of the corridor.

This project draws inspiration from the dramatic thinning of the ice coverage in the Parry Channel of the Northwest Passage—a historically impassable frozen route through the Arctic Ocean linking the Pacific to the Atlantic. As of the summer of 2007, the effects of climate change has allowed vessels to sail the passage without requiring an icebreaker, an event that scientists predict will become more and more common with the continued effects of global warming.

Nick Mauss

The Ralph Landau Chemical Building (Bldg. 66)

Nick Mauss was selected to create a site-specific installation for I.M. Pei's Landau building in conjunction with a recently completed interior renovation project. The Ralph Landau Chemical Building (Bldg. 66, 1976) home to MIT's Department of Chemical Engineering, is one of several buildings designed by Pei for the southeast corner of the central campus of MIT.

Following a study of Pei's architectural design, and the materials and color scheme for the building, Mauss proposed to install a series of large-scale majolica murals throughout the five floors of the building, recalling the use of ceramic murals in 20th century brutalist architecture, from Le Corbusier to Oscar Niemeyer. Exploiting and exaggerating the unpredictability of the ceramic painting process, Mauss draws out surprising chemical reactions and color effects through the firing process and manipulates the material to create passages akin to watercolor and ink-painting. Mauss' murals are large compositions of floating and disjointed figuration seemingly submerged in color and pattern, and will be offset by the building's expanses of pressed-concrete walls. The works of varying scale will be installed throughout the central stairwells, as well as on the landings of each of the five floors of the newly renovated building. Mauss has also rehabilitated Pei's original built-in concrete planters, installing Pothos to cascade down over the balconies and visually connect the air-space of the two atria in Building 66.

In describing the project Mauss states, "By installing a cycle of ceramic murals like a series of echoes throughout the concrete atria, on all five floors, I hope to animate the viewers' encounters with the vigorous architecture of Building 66—its sense of visual ricochet—and to suggest a heightened sense of attention to the experience of moving through, and pausing in, this complex building." The ceramics will be produced at Bottega Gatti in Faenza, an historical Majolica atelier founded in 1928, renowned for its collaborations with visual artists since the Italian Futurists.



About the Artists

Olafur Eliasson (b. 1967, Copenhagen, Denmark) lives and works in Copenhagen and Berlin. Eliasson's work in sculpture, painting, photography, film, and installation have been exhibited widely throughout the world. In addition to creating works for museum and gallery settings, his practice engages the broader public sphere through architectural projects and interventions in civic space. In 1995 Eliasson founded Studio Olafur Eliasson, a Berlin-based think tank, to expand and leverage multi-disciplinary conceptualization and planning for future projects. Members in the studio include craftsmen, specialized technicians, architects, archivists, administrators, programmers, art historians, and cooks. In 2014 Eliasson was awarded MIT's Eugene McDermott Award for the Arts, in recognition of his influential artistic practice. In conjunction with the award Eliasson led a residency project that focused on his art and social business enterprise *Little Sun*, a portable, solar powered lamp which he calls "a work of art that works in life." The artist's activities on MIT's campus centered around discussions of sustainable development, community engagement, design, product engineering, and social entrepreneurship in developing economies. The residency was organized by the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT).

Nick Mauss (b. 1980, New York), lives and works in Berlin and New York. His diverse artistic practice encompasses drawing, sculpture, and performance, along with writing and curatorial projects. Mauss' oeuvre is characterized by a perpetual state of indeterminacy, grounded in thinking about drawing and painting in an expansive sense. His work uses ambiguity over definitive shapes and forms, building an elegant language of semblances that drive larger narratives.

His work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Princeton Art Museum, Princeton; and the FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims. His writing has been published in *Artforum*, *Mousse*, *Art in America*, *MAP*, *Peep-Hole*, and in books on Jochen Klein, Isa Genzken, and others. Recently he designed *Of Designing Dreams, A Celebration of Leon Bakst*, a publication accompanying the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco's exhibition on the ballet set and costume designer Leon Bakst. Mauss was a guest-professor at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Hamburg, from 2011-2012, and teaches in the MFA program at Bard College. In March 2018 Mauss will be featured in a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

About MIT's Percent-for-Art Program

MIT's Percent-for-Art Program, administered by the List Visual Arts Center, now allocates up to \$500,000 to commission art for each new major renovation or campus construction project. The policy was formally instituted in 1968, but earlier collaborations between artists and architects can be found on MIT's campus. When architect Eero Saarinen designed the MIT Chapel in 1955, sculptor Theodore Roszak designed the bell tower and sculptor Harry Bertoia designed the altar screen. In 1985, architect I.M. Pei and artists Scott Burton, Kenneth Noland, and Richard Fleischner collaborated on Percent-for-Art projects for the Wiesner building and plaza, home to the MIT List Visual Arts Center and the Media Laboratory.



Additional Percent-for-Art works include *Bars of Color Within Squares (for MIT)*, a 5,500 sq. ft. glass terrazzo floor by Sol LeWitt for the Green Center for Physics (Building 6C); Sarah Sze's *Blue Poles* a site specific sculptural installation for the front building façade of Sydney Pacific Dormitory; Jackie Ferrara's *Floor*, a greenstone and slate floor commissioned for MIT's Tang Center; *Dead Center*, a carved granite installation created by Lawrence Weiner for the courtyard of Ashdown Graduate Dormitory; outdoor sculptures by Cai Guo-Qiang, Louise Nevelson, and Tony Smith; Dan Graham's *Yin/Yang Pavilion* at Simmons Hall; Jorge Pardo's untitled ceiling for MIT's graduate residence at 224 Albany Street; and Matthew Ritchie's *Games of Chance and Skill*, a three-part map of time and space created for the Zesinger Sports and Fitness Center, among many others.

New projects completed in 2016 include Antony Gormley's five-story tall sculptural installation *CHORD* for MIT's Mathematics Department; and Leo Villareal's *Light Matrix (MIT)*, an LED light installation created for the North Vestibule entrance to the Morris and Sophie Chang Building at MIT's Sloan School of Management.

With the continued growth of the Institute's public art collection, MIT's campus has become a destination for art lovers. In order to support the growing interest in the collection from the community at large, the List Center recently launched a new MIT student led tour program and a new expanded public art map coupled with a mobile web app. You can visit <https://listart.oncell.com> for a GPS-enabled, self-guided tour of the collection.

The public art collection and exhibitions at the List Center are always free and open to the general public.

Visitors to campus can experience current and upcoming public art commissions through an updated mobile app with a redesigned public art map, available for download here:
<https://listart.oncell.com/>

Detailed maps are also available at the List Center's galleries and MIT's Visitor Center.

To schedule a group tour of the public art collection contact Emily Garner, Campus Community Outreach Coordinator, egarner@mit.edu

For more information about these and additional works on MIT's campus visit listart.mit.edu

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