

MEDIA CONTACT

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CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts presents
All This Soft Wild Buzzing

On view October 18 through December 14, 2024



Dionne Lee, *Site Unfolding*, 2023. Four-channel video installation, 20:31 minutes. Courtesy of the artist and Bibeau Krueger, New York. Images by Michael Popp.

San Francisco, CA—August 12, 2024—CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts is thrilled to present *All This Soft Wild Buzzing*, the inaugural exhibition in the new gallery space on CCA's expanded campus. Located at the heart of art-making activities, this new era for the Wattis opens up countless opportunities to engage with students, local artists, and the wider community. On view from October 18 through December 14, 2024, the exhibition features over 17 works by acclaimed artists Saif Azzuz, Teresa Baker, Chris Duncan, Nicki Green, Bessma Khalaf, Dionne Lee, Young Suh, Stephanie Syjuco, and Zekarias Musele Thompson – all of whom have strong ties to the Bay Area. The exhibition is curated by Jeanne Gerrity, deputy director and director of programs at the Wattis Institute.

All This Soft Wild Buzzing explores the relationship between artists and the natural landscape through the lens of collaboration, listening, and reciprocity. The title is drawn from the final line of a [poem](#) by Camille Dungy, where she draws parallels between the soft, protected soul of her

partner and the untouched, pre-colonial coastline of California. In a world where success is often measured by accumulation and land ownership, these artists draw attention to forgotten histories, focusing on leaving an impression instead of an impact on the environment. They hone in on details and allow nature to exist through photography, videography, sculpture, and various mixed media artworks using organic materials ranging from carved wood to ceramics to fabric imprinted by the sun, reflecting the many ways nature literally informs art. Installed in the gardens around the Wattis will be a commissioned cast bronze sculpture of a woven basket by the artist Teresa Baker, who draws inspiration from her cultural heritage as a member of the Mandan/Hidatsa tribe.

The sweeping vistas of early American landscape painting and photography expressed a prevailing desire to conquer the land, yet overlooked the presence of Indigenous communities and the powerful forces of nature. This exhibition challenges the patriarchy and individualism of that earlier narrative. Landscape is revealed as a historical construct that can be questioned: *Who owns it? Who is allowed to visit it? How can it be represented?*

“I’m thrilled to debut the Wattis’ brand new gallery and gardens with this inaugural exhibition,” says Daisy Nam, the new director and chief curator of the CCA Wattis Institute. “Jeanne Gerrity and the exhibiting artists have thought deeply about the ground that we stand on. Their works show us the reverence, meditation, and joy that the land can bring, and sets the tone for thought-provoking programming that lies ahead. I can’t wait to see the dialogues that come alive, as we engage with the students, artists, and wider Bay Area community on our new site.”

Each of the artists in *All This Soft Wild Buzzing* has strong connections to Northern California, and their work resonates with the Bay Area terrain and the people who inhabit it. These artists explore the dynamic of rural and urban areas and their relationship to nature through themes of forest fires, the carceral system, belonging, climate change, and the Land Back movement, which aims to reclaim Indigenous land and restore sovereignty.

The exhibition is made possible thanks to generous support from Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation and Anthony and Celeste Meier, and special thanks to the Wattis Leadership Circle.

About CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) educates students to shape culture and society through art, architecture, design, and writing. The college offers a rich curriculum of 22 undergraduate and 10 graduate programs taught by expert practitioners. Located in the vibrant San Francisco Bay Area, CCA uniquely prepares students for lifelong creative work by fostering social and environmental responsibility, innovation, and community engagement. Graduates are highly sought-after by companies such as Pixar, Apple, IDEO, and Google, and many launch their own successful businesses.

CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, founded in 1998 as part of the college, is a nonprofit exhibition venue and research institute focused on contemporary art and ideas. The Wattis commissions and showcases new work by emerging and established artists from around

the world. Additionally, an entire year is dedicated to explore the work of a single artist, informing public programs and publications.

Recent solo exhibitions at the Wattis include *Rodrigo Hernández: with what eyes*, *Ana Jotta: Never the Less*; *Caitlin Cherry: The Regolith Was Boiling*; *Drum Listens to Heart*; *Hervé Guibert: This and More*; *Josh Faught: Look Across the Water Into the Darkness, Look for the Fog*. The 2024–2025 season is dedicated to artist Hiwa K; past seasons featured Anicka Yi, Lorraine O’Grady, Cecilia Vicuña, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Dodie Bellamy, and Joan Jonas, among others. For more information, visit wattis.org.

In addition to the new Wattis gallery space, CCA’s expanded campus will add 82,300 square feet of space to teach, make, and present art in a continuous indoor-outdoor environment. Designed by world-renowned architecture firm Studio Gang completed this fall 2024, the new addition brings together 30 academic programs and disciplines, student housing and dining, and interdisciplinary learning. For more information, visit cca.edu.

Calendar editors, please note:

CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts presents

All This Soft Wild Buzzing

October 18 – December 14, 2024

Location: 145 Hooper Street, San Francisco, CA

Gallery hours: Wednesday–Saturday, noon–6 pm; closed Sunday to Tuesday

Admission: Free

Information: wattis.org or 415-355-9670

Social: [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/WattisArts) // [Twitter](https://twitter.com/WattisArts) // [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/WattisArts) @WattisArts