

caitlin berrigan

Art that ingests / Gain at the expense of contamination / Art that exists in the bodies of the audience

Through edible sculpture, video performance and participatory actions, Caitlin Berrigan initiates dialogue about the unnerving spaces of biopolitics and culture. She facilitates a circuit of transactions among people and material things in which the audience and the artwork become indistinguishable. Symbolically charged materials—such as milk, marshmallows, viruses and bodily organs and images—are put into tension with intimacy, humor and disgust. This delicately provocative tactic sparks dissonance in the audience’s visceral and cognitive experience of her work, allowing multivalent readings and responses. In producing anxiety and revealing layers of ambiguous emotions, Berrigan’s artwork opens a space of potential to confront uncertainty within the context of social issues.

Common threads in her work include embodied knowledges and making space to air our complicated antagonisms and co-evolutions with pathogens. *Viral Confections* are edible chocolates shaped into the protein structure of the hepatitis C virus. Desire to eat the enticing chocolates is mixed with repulsion for the infectious virus. This unnerving dialectic has proved to be an exciting and approachable way to ignite discussion and create awareness about an extremely prevalent and underrepresented disease. *Boobalicious* is an ice cream social with kulfi-flavored ice cream made from human breast milk, provoking visceral responses that reveal our cultural conditioning to reproductive technologies, the abject, the pleasurable, and the taboo. *Traces* is a renewable sculpture of the artist’s own disembodied kidney, cast in frozen spit. Every two hours a new frozen organ is put on display, only to melt and drip away. The artist carefully traced the topography of her internal organ from a 3D MRI in order to materialize its form outside of her body.

Berrigan has presented her work internationally, including at the Whitney Museum’s Initial Public Offerings, Storefront for Art & Architecture, Gallery 400 Chicago, Anthology Film Archives and the Center for Contemporary Art Tel Aviv. She has been an invited speaker at the New Museum, Harvard Medical School, and the Max Planck Institute. Berrigan received an Agnes Gund fellowship to attend the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture (2008) and was an artist in residence at PROGRAM in Berlin (2009) and the Bioarts Initiative at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (2007). She holds a Master’s in visual art from MIT (2009) and a B.A. in art history and production from Hampshire College (2004). Raised in Mendocino, California, she has lived in Massachusetts, New York City and Paris. She currently lives in Berlin.

education

- 2009** Master's of Science, Visual Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA
2004 B.A. Art History & Art Production, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA

residencies

- 2010** Vermont Studio Center, Clowes Foundation Fellowship, Johnson, VT
2009 PROGRAM, Berlin, Germany
2008 Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME
2007 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Center for Biotechnology & Bioart, Troy, NY

selected grants & awards

- 2008** Agnes Gund Fellowship, Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture
Schlossman Research Fellowship, M.I.T. Architecture Department
Harold & Arlene Schnitzer Prize in the Visual Arts, M.I.T. Council for the Arts & Student Art Association
2007 Collaborative public artwork commission with Beam Camp, Moultonborough, NH

selected exhibitions & events

e - exhibition | *s* - screening | *p* - performance | *w* - event/workshop

- 2010** *e* Maribel Lopez Gallery, "Avalanche," group exhibition, Berlin, Germany
s Queen Elizabeth Theatre, "Culture Shock: Video Interventions," curated by Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, BC
2009 *e* Mills Gallery, "And Things of That Nature," curated by José Luis Blondet, Boston, MA
e p Program Gallery, "Herring Under a Fur Coat," curated by Carson Chan, Berlin, Germany
p Scheltema Complex, "And the Cow Jumps Over the Moon," collaboration with Boo Chapple, Leiden, Netherlands
2008 *w* Whitney Museum of American Art, Initial Public Offerings, talk & commissioned edition, New York, NY
e p Gallery 400, "Biological Agents," with Natalie Jeremijenko & Brandon Ballengée, Chicago, IL
e Sea and Space Gallery, "The Audacity of Desperation," curated by Steven Lam, Los Angeles, CA
2007 *e* Storefront for Art & Architecture, "Lost and Found City," curated by Bard Curatorial Studies, New York, NY
e p SIGGRAPH, San Diego, CA
e Dumbo Arts Center, Art Under the Bridge Festival, Brooklyn, NY
e National Museum of Women in the Arts, 20th Anniversary Festival of Media Arts, Washington, D.C.
2006 *s* Hammer Museum of Art, 10th Biennial L.A. Freewaves Festival, Los Angeles, CA
p Conflux Festival for Psychogeography, curated by Christina Ray, Brooklyn, NY
2005 *s* Anthology Film Archives, NewFilmMakers Series, New York, NY
e Stuttgarter Filmwinter 18th annual New Media Festival, Stuttgart, Germany
s Corriente Hipermediática Experimental Latinoamericana, program curated by Anne Bray, Buenos Aires, Argentina

lectures

- 2009** PROGRAM, "Unresolved Anxieties & Other Political Tactics," Berlin, Germany
SymbioticA, University of Western Australia, "Contamination & Incorporation," Perth, Australia
2008 New Museum & Rhizome, "Media art in the age of cloning, transgenics & genomics," curated by Régine Debatty
Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, "Improvising Glycoproteins: A case study in artistic virology," Berlin, Germany
Harvard Medical School, BioArt Seminar Lecture Series, Boston, MA

selected media & press

- Younger Than Jesus: The Artist Directory*, to accompany the New Museum "Generational" exhibition, 2009 (Catalogue)
Art Interview: Ana Finel Honigman. "Video Did What?" 19 August 2009 (Review)
Big RED & Shiny, Megan Driscoll. "And Things of That Nature" 8 June 2009 (Online Review)
new design: Fox-Hill & Bennett, "Design Analytics Explained," issue 63, 2008 (Article)
Confronting Mortality with Art & Science, ed. Pollier-Green, Van de Velde, Pollier, 2008 (Catalogue)
Time Out Chicago: Amy Shroeder. "Biological Agents," November 2008 (Review)
MAKE Magazine: Douglas Repetto. "Art Work: Life Models," May 2008 (Feature)
Condé Nast Portfolio: Callen Bair. "Liver you might like," January 23, 24 & 26, 2008 (Online Review)
Metroland: Nadine Wasserman. "Our Viruses, Ourselves," 8 November 2007 (Feature)
Time Out New York: Nina Christensen. "Common Senses," September 27, 2007 (Feature)
Globe and Mail: Simon Houpt. "A city tour that's ahead by its nose," October 1, 2007 (Feature)
boingboing.net, 2007 (Online Feature)
We Make Money Not Art, 2007 (Online Feature)