

**26 ARTISTS SPIN RESEARCH INTO ART**  
**ILLUMINATION:**  
**21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY INTERACTIONS WITH ART + SCIENCE + TECHNOLOGY**

**February 8-May 3, 2020**

December 17, 2019- SAN DIEGO - Visitors to the San Diego Art Institute (SDAI) in Balboa Park can expect a new approach to the 78 year-old institution. For starters, general admission will be **free of charge** for one year, thanks to a generous grant from the Legler Benbough Foundation. Following a trend set by many major institutions including MOCA, Los Angeles, this new policy will help SDAI focus on audience development and making regional art accessible to all.

Another shift in focus will be a major effort to establish itself as a hub for innovation based on the belief that innovation and change are an intrinsic part of the artistic process and make the field stronger and more understandable. SDAI is committed to intersecting, connecting and elevating artists, scientists and technologists that are building our tomorrow throughout Southern California and Northern Baja.

SDAI is addressing this right out of the gate in the New Year by presenting *ILLUMINATION: 21st Century Interactions with Art + Science + Technology*, February 8-May 3, 2020. This will be a regional showcase featuring the groundbreaking work of San Diego's resident art, science, and technology communities that uses the arts to humanize, interpret and add relevance to challenging research.

According to Executive Director **Jacqueline Silverman**, "*illumination* is positioned squarely at the intersection of art, science, and technology, and uses these interconnected fields to boost public understanding of contemporary issues and explore solutions, both real and imagined."

"Contemporary research can be bold and astonishing – and also incompressible to anyone outside specific fields of study," she added. "The difficulty in conveying the relevance and application of scientific and technical research creates a need for artistic individuals who can interpret, apply, and humanize research. These individuals provide a form, substance, and clarity that is otherwise elusive or altogether missing. These are specialists who spin research into art."

In presenting an exhibition on timely issues, *ILLUMINATION* appeals to a large and diverse audience, one that goes well beyond traditional museum attendees and includes strong STEAM-based interest for young people and adults.

Under the creative leadership of guest curator **Chi Essary**, with additional direction provided by SDAI's curatorial staff, SDAI has brought together some of the top artists, scientists, and

technologists in our region, who, working collaboratively, create the basis for illuminating the complex and often daunting issues of climate change, global health and sustainability to evoke greater clarity, connection, and hope. Artists were asked to create metaphors, images and installations in response to their experience and collaborations with the science community.

A few examples of what you can expect :

### **ILLUMINATION HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Regional Showcase** – *ILLUMINATION* functions as a showcase for the groundbreaking work of San Diego’s resident art, science, and technology communities.
- **Impressive Collaborations** – **Sixteen** outstanding regional artists are producing work after teaming up with scientists and technologists from **seven** major institutions: **La Jolla Institute of Immunology, Qualcomm Institute/CalIT2, Salk Institute, Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, The Scripps Research Institute, and UCSD.**
- **Solo Perspectives** – **Ten** other multimedia artists are bringing individual perspectives and personal points of view to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges.
- **Innovative Displays** – New technology to facilitate understanding will be on full display, including the results of work done in the sonic and robotic labs at Qualcomm Institute/CalIT2.
- **Extreme Relevance** – Concerns are organized into clusters dealing with major 21st century issues: climate change and sustainability, global health, and the impact of technology in our lives.

### **Curator Bio** (photo available)

**CHI ESSARY** is an artist, writer and photographer who promotes and explores the intersection of art, science and the public. She curates cross-disciplinary exhibitions that bring artists together with other fields of creative inquiry such as contemporary literature and science, as she is a firm believer that “the best gift to humanity is bringing people together.” In 2017 she curated “Extra-Ordinary Collusion,” pairing almost 50 scientists and artists for a massive cross-disciplinary exhibition encouraging further exchange in San Diego’s rich artistic and scientific communities. She also curated several lofts for an immersive art take-over called SENSORIUM which was featured on the NatGeo Channel. A board member of Vanguard Culture since 2014, Chi has applied her talents as a photographer and writer in her artist studio visit series: **Poetic License**. In 2019 she was selected to reorganize and curate the **San Diego Art Prize**.

### **Exhibition Details**

Opening Reception, February 8, 6-8 PM (ticketed/\$5 admission non-hosted bar)

Public Exhibition Dates, February 9- May 3, 2020

Admission: Free

Fee for special programs listed at [www.sandiego-art.org](http://www.sandiego-art.org)

### **About SDAI**

First organized in 1941, the San Diego Art Institute (SDAI) has evolved into San Diego’s premier contemporary art center focusing on regional art and artists from Southern California and Northern Baja.

The non-profit organization actively supports established and rising talent, builds audiences for regional contemporary art and makes cultural equity and social justice a priority in all that it does. Located within an 8,000 square foot space in Balboa Park adjacent to the Mingei Museum, SDAI serves nearly 100,000 artists, youth and visitors annually. As the only contemporary art institution in Balboa Park, SDAI is a catalyst for advancing important regional art and artists and serves as a platform for the artistic visions and voices of our times. Discover San Diego Art Institute at 1439 El Prado, San Diego, CA.

**Media Contact**

Toni Robin

TR/PR Public Relations

[tr@trprsandiego.com](mailto:tr@trprsandiego.com)

858.483.3918

**High resolution photos available upon request**

**Photo attached:** *Shining Palimpsest*, artist Young Joon Kwak, photo by Andreas Tagger.