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**BOSTON
CENTER
FOR THE ARTS**



Mimi Bai and Amanda Contrada Dissect a Culture of Camouflage

Mimi Bai: HIDE AND SEE, the newest exhibition in the 1:1 Exhibition Series at Boston Center for the Arts (BCA), opens with a Public Opening Reception on December 16.

Important Dates

Public Reception: Friday, December 16, 2022 | 6–9pm | BCA Mills Gallery

Artists in Conversation: Saturday, January 28, 2023 | 2pm | Pao Arts Center, Chinatown

Film Screening with Live Score: Saturday, February 4, 2023 | 4pm | BCA Plaza Theatre

On view: December 16, 2022–February 18, 2023

BOSTON, MA—Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) is pleased to announce the December 16 opening of *Mimi Bai: HIDE AND SEE*, the sixth exhibition in the *1:1 Exhibition Series* presented in the BCA Mills Gallery. Curated by Amanda Contrada, *HIDE AND SEE* is a solo exhibition of work by artist Mimi Bai. Born in Xi'an, China, and based in Brooklyn, NY, Bai contemplates camouflage as a metaphor for assimilation, as a labor-intensive process, and as a methodology for survival and communication that selectively conceals and reveals.

Camouflage involves making oneself invisible or hyper-visible, sometimes simultaneously. Bai draws parallels between this process and her experience of assimilation as an immigrant.



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Abstracting fragments of her personal and familial history into patterns and forms, Bai has developed her own iconography that she employs throughout the works in the exhibition. She contextualizes this personal history within a historical and political framework that traces how capitalism and settler colonialism demand self-effacement in exchange for opportunity and a sense of safety.

Bai marks the unrecognized labor of assimilation using clay, ink, and string, as well as the encumbered movements of her body captured on camera. These repetitive and taxing actions make physical the often invisible and immaterial exertions required to “blend in” to one’s environment. Working across drawing, sculpture, and film, Bai re-imagines and enacts alternative perspectives on survival, adaptation, improvisation, and creative possibility that resonate across cultures and generations.

HIDE AND SEE is the latest in the *BCA 1:1 Exhibition Series*, a series of collaborative projects between one curator and one artist. The Public Reception for *HIDE AND SEE* from 6–9pm on December 16, will be part of more BCA programming that day and beyond. BCA will also be hosting a smaller exhibition, *Project Room No. 3* with BCA Studio Resident Nathan Heilman within the Mills Gallery and an Open House in the Artist Studios Building next door.

On January 28, join NYC-based artist Mimi Bai for an intercity conversation with Boston-based artists Gohar Dashti and Ngoc-Tran Vu at Pao Arts Center. Drawing from different regions of the Asian diaspora, each artist utilizes varying conceptual approaches to explore themes of migration, home, and community through their work. Their overlapping and contrasting practices in video, photography, mixed media and public art raise anthropological and sociological questions around assimilation in new geographies.

On February 4, 2023, Contrada and Bai will host a film screening of Bai’s experimental narrative film *HIDE AND SEE*, which features a live score performed by the film’s composer Zain Alam. *HIDE AND SEE* is a collaboration between Sam B. Jones and Mimi Bai that activates Bai’s clay and textile sculptures as shrouds for two ghostly figures. The two pursue and evade one another across time and space using camouflage and bushcraft techniques — while the film shifts between black and white and color, alternately concealing or revealing the ghosts within their environment.

About the Artist: Mimi Bai

Mimi Bai is a visual artist born in Xi’an, China, and based in Brooklyn, NY. Working across sculpture, drawing, installation, and film, her work examines camouflage, labor, assimilation, and survival as both a lived reality and fantasy. Bai has presented work at Artists Space, A.I.R. Gallery, BRIC, Project for Empty Space, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Her films have screened at Rooftop Films, the Rockaway Film Festival, and the Maryland Film Festival. Bai was a SIP Fellow at the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop as well as a NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow for Interdisciplinary Work and a recipient of two Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grants. She has been an Artist-in-Residence at organizations including the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, the Saltonstall Foundation, and the Santa Fe Art Institute. Bai was a participant in the Whitney Independent Study Program and is a graduate of Alfred University (MFA, Sculpture) and Wesleyan University (BA, Sociology).

Website: <https://mimibiyaobai.com/>



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About The Curator: Amanda Contrada

Amanda Contrada is a Brooklyn-based curator, producer, and project manager working in art and music. She has produced exhibitions including *Rammellzee: Racing for Thunder* and Bjarne Melgaard's *The Casual Pleasure of Disappointment* at Red Bull Arts New York as well as curating and overseeing contemporary art performances and installations at cultural events such as Material Art Fair and MUTEK.

Website: <https://www.amandacontrada.com/>

About Boston Center for the Arts:

Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) supports working artists to create, perform, and exhibit new works; develops new audiences; and connects the arts to community, and has for over five decades engaged the creative community for public good. While the organization's physical residence is in the historic South End, BCA touches every part of Boston's cultural ecosystem. A leading force in the city's cultural community, BCA has supported thousands of individual artists, small organizations, and performing arts companies, who add depth and dimension to the Boston arts ethos. Through residencies and programming, BCA serves as an epicenter for an expanding cohort of artists working across all disciplines, and has catalyzed careers by providing fertile ground for experimentation and artistic risk-taking.

To learn more about Boston Center for the Arts, visit www.bostonarts.org

More information:

Exhibition details: <https://bostonarts.org/experiences/exhibitions/mimi-bai-hide-and-see/>

Film Screening: <https://bostonarts.org/event/film-screening-mimi-bai-hide-and-see/>

Images for Use:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19O5ixhzeqD1hAwkcTyXS_bXNCXXH_YTT?usp=sharing

About the *1:1 Exhibition Series* at BCA: <https://bostonarts.org/1-1-exhibition-series/>

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