

Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Misa Jeffereis, Associate Curator, with support from Grace Early, Exhibitions Assistant.

This exhibition is generously supported in part by Nancy and Kenneth Kranzberg, Ann R. Ruwitch and John Fox Arnold, Jeanne C. and Rex A. Sinquefield, and Whitaker Foundation. *Mound Vehicles* is commissioned with support by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Kukje Art & Culture Foundation, and Choi Jeong Yoon.

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Activation of *Mound Vehicles*

Saturday, September 6, 12:00 pm

Additional activations of *Mound Vehicles* will take place on First Fridays at CAM during the run of the exhibition: October 3, November 7, December 5, January 2, and February 6 at 8:00 pm.

Special thanks to activation facilitators Mee Jey, Marina Peng, Chanel Thomas, Rodrick Whetstone, and Gray Wilde.

Learn More

Visit our website for more information about *Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland*, including an **audio guide** from the curator.



Haegue Yang, 2025. Photo: Kevin Todora. Courtesy Nasher Sculpture Center.

Since the mid-1990s, **Haegue Yang** (b. 1971, Seoul, South Korea) has lived and worked in Seoul and Berlin and currently teaches at her alma mater, the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. In 2018, Yang won the Wolfgang Hahn Prize at Ludwig Museum in Cologne and in 2022 was awarded the 13th Benesse Prize during the Singapore Biennale. Yang's work is represented in prominent institutional and private collections all over the world, including the Guggenheim New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate Modern, London; and Mori Art Museum, Tokyo. A prolific artist, Yang has been the subject of many solo shows and projects at the aforementioned institutions and others, including the New Museum, New York (2010); SMK – National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen (2022); Pinacoteca de São Paulo (2023); and Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2025). Her work has also featured in numerous international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale (2009), where her work was selected for the South Korean Pavilion; Sharjah Biennial 12 (2015); the Biennale of Sydney (2018); Istanbul Biennial (2019); the Singapore Biennale (2022); and most recently the Lahore Biennale (2024). Yang's survey show *Leap Year*, touring from Hayward Gallery, London, was recently on view at Kunsthal in Rotterdam and travels to Migros Museum, Zurich in September 2025.

Gallery Guide

Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

September 5, 2025–February 8, 2026



Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland



Haegue Yang, *Dress Vehicle – Yin Yang*, 2012. Aluminum venetian blinds, powder-coated aluminum frame, powder-coated handles, casters, magnets, knitting yarn, bells, elastic cord, 221 × 310 × 310 cm. Collection M+, Hong Kong. Installation view of *Haegue Yang: Ajar* at La Douane, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, France, 2012. Photo: Florian Kleinfenn.

Quasi-Heartland is a solo exhibition by internationally renowned artist Haegue Yang. Based in both Seoul and Berlin since the mid-1990s, Yang is known for her versatile material languages. Her oeuvre ranges from room-scaled installations and performative sculptures, to paper collages and staged performances as well as her juxtapositions of sensory elements and inclusion of ready-mades right next to craft. In this way, her works escape conventional categorization based on media. While a major new commission, *Mound Vehicles*, takes center stage in *Quasi-Heartland*, a selection of sculptures and installations showcase a broad picture

of Yang's adventurous practice over the last three decades. Through her multi-faceted installations, Yang dissociates everyday objects and materials—like venetian blinds, metal bells, artificial straw, and plastic twine—from their traditional, mundane roles to recast them in multi-component sculptures or sensory experiences. She uses scent, sound, light, and tactility to communicate ideas in a primordial way. Yang engages the disciplines of art history, political biography, and folk culture to reimagine recurrent themes of quasi-migration such as artistic exile, postcolonial diasporas, and social mobility.



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is free!

Across the Museum’s lobby and galleries, *Quasi-Heartland* puts forth a dialectic of contrasts—aerial and grounded, organic and manmade, ancient and modern, minimalist and figurative—while simultaneously embracing a sense of deliberate in-betweenness implied by the word “quasi” in the exhibition title. In the lobby, ominous, serpentine sculptures descend freely from the ceiling, while their human-scaled freestanding counterparts are contained in the fenced-in front gallery. In the neighboring gallery, a new sculpture addressing the mounds of Cahokia, *Mound Vehicles*, grounds visitors with kite-like paper-birchwood creatures flying overhead. Throughout the exhibition, Yang’s work reminds visitors of the dynamic ways in which things coexist.

Umbra Creatures by Rockhole, 2017–18

Umbra Creatures by Rockhole is an ambitious sculptural ensemble in seven parts and one of Yang’s most complex sculptural projects to date. The work evokes shadow creatures found in various cultures and folkloric mythologies. Influenced by her personal history and transnational perspective, *Umbra Creatures* reflects Yang’s preoccupation with cultural hybridity through a combination of divergent weaving techniques, quasi-organic materials, and folk subjects.



Umbra Creatures by Rockhole, 2017–18. Courtesy kurimanzutto, Mexico City / New York. Installation view of *Haegue Yang: Double Soul*, SMK – National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen, 2022. Photo: Anders Sune Berg.

Some are suspended from the ceiling and appear like giant serpents or sea animals boasting voluminous and hairy tentacled bodies, while others are freestanding sculptures on casters with bushy, hairy, woven, or metallic surfaces. *Umbra Creatures* incubates two previously autonomous series: *Sonic Sculptures* (2013–present), a body of work drawing on the ritualistic use of metal rattles, and *The Intermediates* (2015–present), which addresses weaving as a universal folk technique and is also reminiscent of the East Asian custom of wrapping trees with straw in winter. Evoking ancient weaving crafts which flourished in agricultural societies,

Umbra Creatures employs black synthetic twine with subtle shine, freeing the material from its folk connotations and creating an enigmatic and captivating presence.



18.87 m², 2000/2020, red chalk, site-specific dimensions. Courtesy the artist.
21.33 m³, 2000/2020, red cotton thread, site-specific dimensions. Courtesy the artist. Installation view of *Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern*, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD) Manila, Philippines, 2020. Photo: At Maculangan/Pioneer Studios.

88.73 m³, 2000/2025

41.67 m², 2002/2025

88.73 m³ and *41.67 m²* are made of cotton thread and chalk powder respectively. Seemingly formal and minimalistic, the works feature linear compositions in a void and on the walls with two different but familiar materials: one has associations with a domestic space, and the other, a construction site. The premise of the works is simple. For *88.73 m³*, the lengths of ordinary red cotton thread are stretched horizontally—in exact intervals of 10 centimeters—across an architectural opening, while delicate traces of precise chalk lines are continued on the surrounding gallery walls for *41.67 m²*. The titles vary at each presentation, always indicating the engaged surface or enclosed volume.

While referring to Minimalist traditions, yet deliberately deviating from them through the exact offness of tilting in one degree, Yang lures us to the realm of “quasi.” The concept of the work, reflected in the variations in the titles, feels both physical and conceptual—involving our senses and also engaging us socially. Installed across the opening of this gallery, *88.73 m³* prevents visitor access by containing Yang’s sculptures in an enclosure which amplifies their anthropomorphic quality. The chunky, sculptural shapes and volumes of the works installed in a relatively tight space build an intriguing sense of contrast to the delicate and vulnerable quality of the lines in thread and chalk, creating an intentional juxtaposition between the minimalistic and anthropomorphic.

Mound Vehicles, 2025

Mound Vehicles exemplifies Yang’s sculptural focus on vehicles. Featuring non-traditional elements like handles and casters, Yang’s vehicles evoke performativities. Venetian blinds, Yang’s signature material, are removed from their conventional function as window coverings to render a layered physical structure of a vehicle. *Mound Vehicles* is a four-part sculpture that engages the St. Louis region’s precolonial history and the Mississippi River landscape. The work is inspired by CAM’s proximity to Cahokia, the site of large-scale earthen constructions made by Native Americans in the 9th century near the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. The mounds served as burial sites as well as platforms for ceremonial buildings, temples, and residences.

Mound Vehicles references Cahokia in its form, taking the shape of a mound in four component parts. The green blinds are associated with the grass that covers most of the extant mounds, while the blue blinds serve as a representation of the nearby Mississippi River or subterranean water. Outfitted with brown, branch-like handlebars and casters, the sculpture is designed to be activated and brought to life by facilitators. The live choreography deepens our connection to the work and the space it inhabits, ultimately paying respect to ancient civilizations.



Mound Vehicles, 2025. Aluminum venetian blinds, powder-coated aluminum frame, powder-coated handles, casters. 4 parts; 112 × 272 × 222 cm each. Commissioned by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, courtesy the artist.

Reflecting Yang’s fascination with multiple dimensions of movement—physical, emotional, and sociopolitical—the piece features a modular structure that can be continuously rearranged into new forms. As its parts move through the space, they generate ever-shifting configurations that evoke pilgrimage, procession, and ceremonial gathering.

Mound Vehicles will be activated as part of CAM’s opening weekend and each First Friday during the run of the exhibition. Local facilitators will enact a series of choreographed movements to mobilize the sculpture. A schedule is available in the back of this gallery guide.



Haegue Yang, *Airborne Paper Creatures – Flutterers*, 2025. Birch plywood, wood stain, stainless steel components, *hanji*, *washi*, origami paper, marbled paper, honeycomb paper balls, beads, metal bells, plastic crown flowers, *parandy*, Punjabi earrings and ornaments, stainless steel chains, split rings, steel wire ropes, swivels. 3 parts; 55 × 32 × 24 cm, 93 × 60 × 60 cm, 121 × 56 × 65 cm. Courtesy the artist. © Haegue Yang.

Airborne Paper Creatures – Triple Synecology, 2025

Airborne Paper Creatures is a new development within Yang’s sculptural production, referencing centuries-old paper kite-making traditions that have flourished throughout Asia. The works comprise *hanji*—Korean mulberry paper—and birch plywood, adorned with fabric ornaments and metal goat bells from Lahore, Pakistan, as well as a variety of beads and marbling papers. Some contain *parandy*, traditional Punjabi hair ornaments made of multicolored silk threads and decorative tassels. The three groups of *Airborne Paper Creatures* resemble abstracted figures of birds, marine life, and insects—alluding to their characteristic features, such as feathers, fins, and antennae. Each group is named after their respective actions: *Flutterers* (birds), *Swimmers* (marine life), and *Crawlers* (insects). The secondary title of the series, *Triple Synecology*, refers to the study of interactions between species that share a habitat.

This new series of small-scaled and lightweight sculptures reflects the artist’s desire to produce in a manner that is physically “lean.” Another recent inclination is an exploration of the immaterial quality of natural elements, such as air movement and aerodynamics. *Airborne Paper Creatures* call attention to the felt and heard environment. The flow of air and the sounds of the bells on the kites are prompted by the intermittent movement of visitors just beneath.