

ODD-KIN is pleased to present DEAD OR DORMANT, an exhibition of work by Boston-based artist Lucy Kim, on view May 7 through July 8, 2023.

When I can't tell if something is dead or dormant, say a tree or a groundhog, it's because appearance has failed; life and death are looking alike. I'll need to go beyond cursory observation, let time pass, smell it, wait for the subtle rise, and fall of breath, prod it, check the roots, or feel the temperature and texture. The utterly basic polarity of life and death appearing in a way that confounds sight makes me wonder how much of the knowledge I gain from vision is indeed reliable, despite my instinct to believe it.

The mediums of painting and photography have always been intertwined for me because my primary interest is in how we see what we see. I find the process of visually representing, and the prevalent notion that seeing is knowing, endlessly mysterious. I feel especially activated when confronted with a sight that fluctuates between the familiar and foreign: a perceived distortion. The foreign is recognized in relation to what is imagined to be natural.

The works gathered here come from two bodies of work made from very different processes and materials. One is made with live genetically modified bacteria that produce eumelanin, the black and brown pigment largely responsible for human skin, hair, and eye color, and signifies race. I screen-print live cells in the form of an image directly onto paper, and over several days, the image becomes visible as the cells make melanin. But the cells are also reproducing and evolving, which distorts the image in unexpected ways. Depicted using this process are vanilla plants under research for agricultural production in the US; jade carved to look like grapes; and my lovely spouse in deep sleep.

In my sculptural paintings, I paint onto resin casts of various surfaces, including people. This work layers different ways that visual information presents itself - from sculptural relief to painted illusion - to create a calibrated dissonance. Many years ago, I began inserting low-relief casts into my paintings as I was contending with photography's domineering authority over visual culture. But rather than use photography directly, I opted to use mold-making and casting as its extremely tactile, full-contact surrogate. The paintings here are from my Homomorphy series, which display two cast forms that superficially appear similar in shape but have no structural relationship to one another: fish/ bats, braids/fish bones. Together with the melanin works, I can test basic visual tools, like contrast and stereotypes, in new material ways to momentarily denaturalize the social constructs guiding our visual life. - **Lucy Kim, 2023**

Lucy Kim (b.1978) received her BFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design (2001), and her MFA in Painting and Printmaking from the Yale School of Art (2007). She is based in Cambridge, MA.

Recent exhibitions of her work were held at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; Broad Institute, Cambridge, MA; Institute of Fine Arts



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at New York University, New York, NY; deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; Tufts University Art Gallery, Medford, MA; Tang Teaching Museum at Skidmore, Saratoga Springs, NY; Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY; Galerie Pact, Paris, France; Lundgren Gallery, Mallorca, Spain; Lisa Cooley, New York, NY; Fused/Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Lyles and King, New York, NY among others.

In addition to the Creative Capital Award, Kim is a recipient of the 2019 Mass Cultural Council Grant, 2017 ICA Boston James and Audrey Foster Prize, 2014 Artadia Award, MacDowell Fellowship, Hermitage Fellowship, and Ellen Battell Stoeckel Fellowship. From 2018 to 2021, she was an artist-in-residence at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard.

Reviews and features on Kim's work have been published in *The New Yorker*, *Juxtapoz*, *Bomb Magazine*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Art Papers*, *ARTNews*, and *Artforum*, among others. Her work is in the collections of the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, Kadist Foundation, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the New York Public Library. Kim serves on the Board of Directors of Artadia.