

A Works in the Works Presentation by Dr. David Lee
Exhibits: Prescriptive, Performative and Pathogenic

On Tuesday, February 15th, the Humanities Department presented the first in person Works in the Works talk in two years. Disgraced patrons and toppled statues were some of the sensational responses to the display of art in Professor David Lee's survey of exhibitions during the Covid-19 pandemic. In an age of social reckoning and economic uncertainty, communication issues in museums are at a critical juncture and have motivated a review of issues pertaining to institutional perception and reception. Professor Lee explored the concept of prescriptive exhibitions as venues that range from socially-prescribed displays that address the social, economic and environmental factors of a central theme like "The Amazing You" exhibit at the Tampa Museum of Science and Industry to art-based interventions, such as Nan Goldin's recent protest against Sackler family funding at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City. He proposed the complex messaging of different types of exhibitions could be examined through two additional conceptual frameworks for investigation, a performative and pathogenic lens. Professor Lee recommended the examination of medical-related displays, such as the United Nations' series of traveling health exhibitions, would offer historical context to study the multi-faceted communication dynamics of exhibitions.

Professor Sandra Cheng