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Press Release: “The pHen Artist Collective: ADAPTIVE HUES & CIRCULAR FUTURES”
at BioBAT Art Space

CHEMISTRY AND CABBAGE INSPIRE A STUNNING VISION OF SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Please join us for a biodesign inspired exhibition and the launch of pHen, an innovative, open source 3D printed pen that aims to revolutionize the multi-million dollar art materials industry.

pHen ARTIST COLLECTIVE
Boldizsár Csongor Nagy, Nora Gulya,
Szonja Somogyvari

CURATED BY
BioBAT Art Space

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
BioBAT Inc., Moholy-Nagy University, Biodesign Challenge, American Hungarian Library and Historical Society, Hungarian House, New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), Brooklyn Army Terminal (BAT)

EXHIBITION DATES
June 14, 2025 - February 21, 2026

OPENING RECEPTION
Saturday, June 14th, 3 -5 pm

VENUE
BioBAT Art Space,
Brooklyn Army Terminal, Building A, Ground Floor
140 58th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11220

GALLERY HOURS
Saturdays 12 – 5 PM
& by appointment at info@biobatartspace.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2025

BROOKLYN, NY – BioBAT Art Space, Biodesign Challenge and Hungary’s Maholy-Nagy University of Art and Design are thrilled to present: *ADAPTIVE HUES & CIRCULAR FUTURES*, opening Saturday, June 14th, from 3 - 5 pm.

Colorful inks and quality art pens are a crucial driver of human expression and invention. Color enhances art, design, and creative activities from kindergartens to professional studios. But our love of color comes at a cost. Conventional markers can pose health hazards due to heavy metals, VOCs, and solvents. In addition, most, if not all markers on the market today are disposable with an estimated 400 million markers, and over a billion pens, winding up in American landfills every year.

The pHen Artist Collective, a group of three graduate students from Budapest have designed a solution to this problem: a re-fillable, 3D printed, open source pen for artists which allows users to produce multiple colors from a single pigment source... all in just one pen.

The “pHen” is a refillable marker-style drawing tool that you can 3D print at home. Through innovative engineering, the pHen allows the user to customize colors by adjusting the pH balance of fruit and vegetable-derived inks contained within the pen. In this way, one single pen creates a range of colors reducing the need for multiple markers.

The student’s remarkable creative vision will be on display at BioBAT Art Space with an eye-catching 6000 sq ft celebration of science, color, design and engineering. The exhibition runs June 14, 2025 to February 21, 2026 and features dynamic installations, art works and workshops.

Beginning pHen users can use pH responsive fruit-based inks, while more advanced artists with scientific knowledge, can use vegetable-derived bacteria inks. The pHen isn’t just a writing or drawing tool; it is a catalyst for curiosity and imagination that connects users of all ages to science and nature through creativity.

The pHen project was originally conceived for the 2024 Biodesign Challenge, an annual NYC-based sustainable design competition attracting over 60 student teams from 20 countries. The pHen Artist Collective was awarded the Outstanding Art Prize for their design and the aesthetic potential of their concept. This prize, sponsored by BioBAT Art Space, includes a year-long mentorship with BioBAT’s team of artists and scientists and culminates with an exhibition in the BioBAT gallery.

“Winning the Outstanding Art Prize at Biodesign Challenge and having the opportunity to work with the BioBAT team this past year has been beyond extraordinary for us. This experience will have a life-changing impact on our professional lives.”
– The pHen Artist Collective.

“The pHen team immediately caught our attention at Biodesign Challenge and have continued to impress us. Not only have they designed a revolutionary object, their concepts for the exhibition are beyond compare. The show is an art-science celebration.”
– Elena Soterakis, Executive Director, BioBAT Art Space.

The *ADAPTIVE HUES & CIRCULAR FUTURES* exhibition is an aesthetic experience and science lesson. The show invites audiences into an immersive world of color while encouraging you to consider bringing microbial and vegetable pigments to everyday use. The installation runs June 14, 2025 - February 21, 2026.

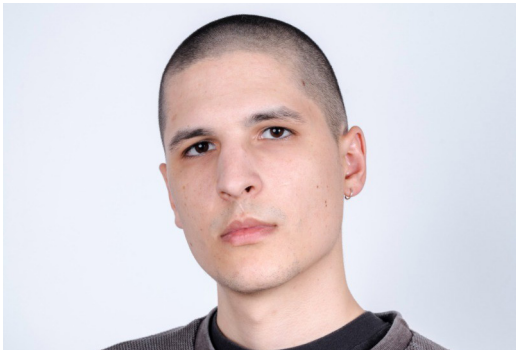
THE COLOR LAB: FROM THE KITCHEN TO CANVAS WITH pHen – SATURDAY, JUNE 8TH, 2:00–4:30 P.M.

Experience the science behind pHen in an interactive art-making workshop live and in-person with The pHen Artist Collective on Sunday, June 8th, 2:00-4:30 p.m. at the Hungarian Cultural Institute. This program is suitable for both beginning artists and advanced practitioners. Learn to make ink from fruits and vegetables, as well from cabbage-derived bacteria! Discover how the pHen artist tool adjusts the pH chemistry of ink to create infinite colors, inspiring creativity and an ecologically sustainable vision of the future.

FEATURED ARTISTS

THE pHen ARTIST COLLECTIVE / @phen.biotool

The pHen Artist Collective is **Boldizsár Csongor Nagy**, **Nora Gulya**, and **Szonja Somogyvari**. Their vision is to bring science and nature closer to people. We are working toward a more sustainable future by developing open-source art supplies derived from nature's wonders. Our goal is to create easily accessible tools that anyone can adapt to their own needs, accelerating the transition to sustainable practices. We aim to reach as many people as possible—not just by harvesting resources but by adding a fun twist to engage even those who may not initially be interested in sustainability.



BOLDIZSÁR CSONGOR NAGY / @nagyboldi_

Boldi is a versatile visual artist engaged in a range of projects, from visual storytelling to immersive multimedia experiences. Currently pursuing a Master's in Media Design at Moholy-Nagy University of Arts and Design, he excels in problem-solving and thrives on learning, adeptly navigating diverse projects and technologies.

"I explore the intersection of technology, biology, and ethics through interactive installations and bioart. My work challenges perceptions of agency, sustainability, and artificial intelligence, creating speculative futures."

NORA GULYA / @norigulya

Graduating from the Textile Design MA program at MOME, Nora now works as a material research intern at the MOME while also developing her own projects. Her work centers on sustainability and innovation, with a focus on materials like textiles, biopolymers, and natural dyes. Passionate about the intersection of design and eco-conscious practices, she aims to push the boundaries of sustainable development and bring circular solutions to everyday life.

"I believe that blending science with design can create the solutions our world needs most. By developing novel materials and technologies and sharing knowledge openly, we can empower more people to create a positive impact."

SZONJA SOMOGYVARI / @somogyvari_szonja_somi

Szonja is a graphic designer and illustrator in her final year at Moholy-Nagy Art University Budapest. She is specializing in experimental design, biodesign, and 2D animation. Her work explores new ways of expressing graphic design, often combining illustration with unconventional materials and sustainable concepts. She is very into conceptual designs. Currently as a freelancer, she focuses on book covers, illustrations, and motion design. She thrives in collaborative environments and enjoys pushing creative boundaries through hands-on experimentation. Currently, she is working on a biodesign project as part of a team, exploring the intersection of nature and design. When not designing, she can be found painting, bookbinding, watching films or geeking out over frogs.

"My aim is to create a new alignment between graphic design and biodesign, exploring how nature can shape design to be more adaptive. I seek unexplored ways of expression, prompting audiences to rethink the present."

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

BioBAT ART SPACE

Established in 2019, this artist-run non-profit gallery is uniquely embedded within BioBAT Inc., a biotech research center at the historic Brooklyn Army Terminal in New York City. BioBAT Art Space fosters a vibrant nexus of art and science, catalyzing creative experimentation through large-scale exhibitions, artist residencies, STEAM educational programs, and cultural events.

BioBAT Art Space highlights the transformative potential of integrating art, biology, and technology. By championing interdisciplinary collaboration, BioBAT Art Space seeks to address critical global challenges, demonstrating the arts' vital role in pioneering innovative, sustainable solutions for the 21st century.

BioBAT INC.

BioBAT is a partnership between the Research Foundation for SUNY, Downstate Health Sciences University, and the New York City Economic Development Corporation. BioBAT's mission is to foster the growth of the life sciences industry and create jobs, offer research and manufacturing space to biotechnology and related companies and engage the broader community through entrepreneurship, workforce development, and educational programs.

MOHOLY-NAGY UNIVERSITY

Celebrating its 140th anniversary in 2020, MOME has always played a decisive role in the development of Hungarian design life and has been since its creation an outstanding institution of the local art and design scene. Most of our graduated students succeed to obtain major roles in their industry and the university itself serves as a professional gathering point on the international level as well. MOME maintains close relations with other educational institutions, research groups, studios, non-profit organizations and both public and private sector actors.

BIODESIGN CHALLENGE

Biodesign Challenge is an international educational program at the intersection of biotechnology, art, and design. Each year, it invites high schools and colleges from around the world to envision, create, and critique transformational applications of biotech. Biodesign Challenge participants develop innovative projects for a more sustainable future and use their creativity to design for humans, industry, and the planet.

AMERICAN HUNGARIAN LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The American Hungarian Library and Historical Society was founded in 1955 by an esteemed group of leaders of the Hungarian emigration, including John Pelenyi, Alexander St. Ivanyi, Baron Francis Neuman de Vegvary, Tibor Eckhardt, and Otto Hámos amongst others. The founders established the Society with the aim to become a home for Hungarian culture in the free world and to further interest in and knowledge of Hungarian art, history and science and their contribution to the United States.

HUNGARIAN HOUSE

AFHLE, Hungarian House was the brainchild of Hungarian immigrants living in New York City in the early 1960s who felt it important that one of the world's largest cities have a community establishment, a stronghold where the Hungarian-American diaspora could experience and maintain its Hungarian identity, enrich their experiences with Hungarian culture, art, science and language, and serve as a bridge between Hungarian, Hungarian-American, and American societies.

NEW YORK CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (NYCEDC)

The mission of NYCEDC is to encourage economic growth in each of the five boroughs of New York City by strengthening the City's competitive position and facilitating investments that build capacity, generate prosperity and catalyze the economic vibrancy of city life as a whole.

BROOKLYN ARMY TERMINAL (BAT)

BAT is the premier affordable hub for modern industrial businesses, entrepreneurs, and working families in NYC. Located on the Sunset Park waterfront in Brooklyn, BAT provides manufacturers with the tools and space they need to grow and succeed.

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BioBAT Art Space is located in the Brooklyn Army Terminal in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Accessible by New York City Ferry from DUMBO and Wall Street Pier 11 (South Brooklyn and Rockaway lines) and by MTA from the 59th Street stop on the N and R trains.

ADAPTIVE HUES & CIRCULAR FUTURES opens June 14th, 2025, and runs through February 21, 2026.

Featured Artists: The pHen Artist Collective (Boldizsár Csongor Nagy, Nora Gulya, and Szonja Somogyvari)

Partner organizations: BioBAT Inc., Moholy-Nagy University, Biodesign Challenge, American Hungarian Library and Historical Society, Hungarian House, New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), Brooklyn Army Terminal (BAT)

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For more information, please visit *www.biobatartspace.com*