

# Art and biology mix at new UC Irvine exhibit



British artist Anna Dumitriu will show her artwork titled "Engineered Antibody" at the "Wetware: Art Agency Animation" exhibit opening Saturday at UC Irvine's Beall Center for Art + Technology. Dumitriu and two other artists in the exhibit were in an artist residency program at the university. (Courtesy Beall Center for Art +)



By **Alex Chan**

FEBRUARY 4, 2016, 4:15 PM

**A**rtists from around the globe will showcase their understanding of art and biology in an exhibit opening Saturday at [UC Irvine's](#) Beall Center for Art + Technology.

The display, called "Wetware: Art Agency Animation," will include works created by three artists during a three-week UCI residency in October and November. Six other artists also are featured, from locations such as Mexico City, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Vienna, Austria.

In July, the university put out a call for an artist to complete a piece that would incorporate biological or computational materials in a style called synthetic biology.

Interested artists submitted proposals in August for a chance to stay in Irvine and work with science professionals on campus to develop their artwork.

In the end, British artist Anna Dumitriu and Berlin duo Evelina Domnitch and Dmitry Gelfand were chosen for the residency.

Dumitriu collaborated with researchers in UCI's Liu Lab for Synthetic Evolution.

The piece she will exhibit — "Engineered Antibody" — is a beaded necklace inspired by lab member Xiang Li's research on an antibody engineered to block HIV infections.

Dumitriu said she struggled at first to understand the lab's work with the antibody, but the challenge eventually sparked the idea for the necklace.

"The first two days, I met with the lab and got them to explain to me what they were doing," she said. "I spent a lot of time just to literally grasp the concept. Then Xiang said it was like beads."

The necklace's 452 beads, which Dumitriu handmade out of polymer clay, depict the antibody's amino acids.

Some of the other artwork in the exhibit will include pieces made of gas tanks and images scanned by microscopes.

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## **IF YOU GO**

**What:** "Wetware: Art Agency Animation"

**When:** Saturday through May 7. Hours are noon to 6 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays (closed March 22 through 29).

**Where:** UC Irvine Beall Center for Art + Technology, 712 Arts Plaza

**Cost:** Free

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