

geno(ME)

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MULTIMEDIA

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: Personal genomics have an ever-growing role in daily life. As advances in technology make genotyping more affordable and commercial options such as 23andMe multiply, opportunities to learn about the minute inner workings of your every cell—arguably what makes you, you—crop up every day. Even President Obama has addressed the importance of personal genomics through his Precision Medicine Initiative which aims to collect the genetic information of one million volunteers over the next few years. Intimate knowledge of yourself, your DNA, and the code that makes it can have a resounding impact on how you choose to live your life. Personally, as an identical twin, I've always grappled with the role of DNA in forming who I am considering my sister and I share close to 100% of our genes yet are distinctly different people. With this in mind, I decided to create an interactive piece that allows each viewer to build their own "DNA". To do so, I will have a key of specific colors of pipe cleaners that correspond with physical traits including eye and hair color, gender, height, etc. With this key, attendees will construct their own DNA ladder. At the end, they will have the option to donate their "DNA" to the larger piece - a sculptural conglomerate of all of the individual "DNA" lengths meant to represent the national efforts and potential toward elucidation regarding what makes up the "American" genome. The piece will challenge viewers to consider their knowledge of themselves and their connection to their DNA.

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MAJOR: Environmental Biology

