The Hayden Gallery's new exhibition is putting not only art, but the artist on display. Lynda Benglis, of New York and the University of Rochester, is constructing the sixth in a series she calls "Adhesive Products," rigid polyurethane foam sculptures that hang from the wall and protrude up to fifteen feet, creating the effect of floating on empty air.

Benglis creates her pieces by pouring a freshly prepared mixture of plastic and pigment over a framework made of wood and chicken wire covered with a polyethylene drop sheet. The materials flow and spread like molasses or molten lava, rapidly hardening into a solid mass that is both rigid and extremely light. Because of the toxic fumes, visitors will not be able to enter the gallery in numbers (though individuals are being allowed to don respirators and go in) until the pieces are complete, sometime before this Thursday. The exhibit will be formally opened with a party at the gallery Friday night. The MIT Community, needless to say, is invited, and drinks will be served.

The exhibit will be dismantled and the pieces destroyed on December 19.

Benglis began work last Thursday, promptly attracting the stares of curious passersby, who have since been crowding the windows of Hayden. Unfortunately, the view isn't terribly good. The community's view is being augmented, however, by closed-circuit TV displays in building 7 and 10. Originally scheduled to be set up last week, the screens did not appear until yesterday due to delays on the part of Video Frontier, the group supplying the equipment, according to Hayden Gallery Director Kasha Linville. Audio-visual and Univel are supplying the transmission lines, while camera and sound work is being done by Twenty-two Video, friends of Ms. Benglis from New York.

The Hayden Adhesive Products consists of six wallmounts, each done in a single color. Benglis' ideas and feelings about her work are not easily verbalized, she says, "Otherwise I'd be a writer." "I'm just making a piece of art, that's all." The exhibition is an expensive one in terms of the artist's time and the cost of materials. But it is attracting at least one visitor who might help defray the cost: Max Wasserman, one of the biggest real estate developers in the Boston area and currently a key mover behind the development of the Harvard Square area, who donated a gas mask and watched Benglis at work after discussing the possibility of arranging materials supply at cost from the primary manufacturers. -Bruce Schwartz

Adhesive Product

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Photos by Lloyd Marks

Kasha Linville invited Lynda Benglis to MIT because she thought her exhibition would provide something a little different to the MIT community, "a special kick." That did sit up interest in Hayden and remind people that we have an art gallery here.

The Adhesive Products series is named after the Bronx firm that manufactures the foam components—resin and a catalyst. The Hayden pieces are the first set Benglis has done in different, but solid, colors. She explained that each set of constructions was used to work out different ideas, and that she doesn't see any point in repeating herself. One of the reasons she came to MIT, she said, was that the space is "more vertical" than the previous ones she used. Adhesive Products I consisted of nine black pieces along an eighty foot wall at Minneapolis' Walker Arts Center. Benglis' next large constructions, in Milwaukee, were phosphorescent, and were displayed in a room whose lighting was programmed to shut off periodically. Her last show, at Paul Cooper's New York gallery, featured a piece called "Pinto," modelled in shades of black, grey and white.

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