

For Immediate Release: October 22, 2024

Why You Should Care About The Art Gallery of Regina's Newest Exhibition, *Care*

Saskatchewan artists reveal the unknown, the ignored and the unseen – internal anatomy, viruses, dreams, memories and pain – in an exhibition that redefines illness resilience



Regina, SK:

On October 31, 2024, the Art Gallery of Regina opens a new exhibition, *Care*, featuring Saskatchewan artists Tea Gerbeza, George Glenn, Karishma Joshi, and Karlie King with Ashley Johnson, whose experiences of illness and contact with the medical system informs their artwork. The artists in the exhibition, curated by Sandee Moore, use their bodies, medical tests, memories, and nightmares to create artworks that challenge audiences to rethink how sick bodies are perceived in society, how lives are reshaped by illness, and the complex interplay between our physical and metaphorical inner worlds.

The word "care" is ambiguous, constantly mutating. It can be something that causes worry, an assertion of fondness or an act of maintenance. Power shifts radically for subjects in relationship to care: "I care" versus "I care for her" versus "he goes into care."

Artists such as Karishma Joshi and Tea Gerbeza use their transformed bodies or testing apparatuses as raw materials for their artworks.

Joshi's artwork, *Lines of Sorrow*, is like a perverse advent calendar, each transparent pouch stuffed with that day's fallen hair, their accumulation a vivid demonstration of the unrelenting nature of her illness. A human hair with a width of 100 microns is emblematic of insignificance, of the way

that women's health issues are underexamined and trivialized. "Polycystic ovary syndrome," says Joshi, "is poorly studied, and there is no cure." Symptoms of PCOS – infertility, balding, weight gain, and increase in facial hair – rob women of their identity and social value. As a South Asian woman, Joshi is aware of the value her cultural background places on long, luxurious locks as signifiers of a woman's femininity, desirability and fitness.

Gerbeza, a poet, coils paper, contorting the material into a visceral language of pain. Her *Bedscares*, collage and paper-quilled works, depict the bed as an ambivalent, all-encompassing landscape. For Gerbeza and many others, the bed is a "place and an identity. For a queer, disabled, and chronically ill artist," she writes, "whose bed [...] is a place of rest, recovery, pleasure, creation, discovery, selfhood, but also sickness, pain, isolation, and unself."

In some collages, she assembles the downy forms of pillows and mattresses from the rigid lengths of used diabetes test strips, demonstrating how bed and health are entangled with a sense of self. These collages are then slid across a scanner platen, another kind of bed, resulting in jagged, disrupted, and rumpled *Bedscape* prints. Paper-quilled leaves and tendrils in Gerbeza's work offer a hopeful counterpoint to constrictive twists and fragmented angles; the vegetal is a visual strategy for resilience, what she describes as building a kinship with body, self and pain.

George Glenn and two-person artist's collective Karlie King and Ashley Johnson take the confusing and dehumanizing machinations of the medical system as their subject matter.

Glenn's paintings and drawings are diagrams that trace a route through childhood homes and hospital Polio wards, overlaid with nightmare architecture. The re-emergence of the dormant Polio virus in the artist's body coincided with the reawakening of long-forgotten memories of infantile paralysis, surgeries, and hospitalizations. Glenn credits this illness with turning him into an artist as it destroyed his motor neurons; he writes, "The Poliovirus changed the course of my life from a physical interaction with the world to the more cerebral space of the art studio. It is here that I reconcile my interior memory with my dream of the world and my daily life."

Abstract art, in particular, often seeks to represent the inarticulable and unknowable. Viruses are mysteries. One of Glenn's artworks, a hybrid drawing/sculpture, appears at first to be abstract, but it is, in fact, a representation of the Poliovirus. Rendered in shimmering colour and complex geometric folds, it is wonderful if not beautiful. The artist acknowledges that he, too, is a hybrid; the Poliovirus is a part of him.

Johnson, who lives with a congenital heart condition, and King also seek to reveal the unknowable: the interior of our bodies. They invite people to explore and understand their internal anatomy in their multisensory installation, *The Moving Heart*. Karlie King's clay hearts sculpted from earthen clay are deliberately imperfect yet invitingly tactile. Visitors can feel the clay hearts warm in their hands, hold them to their chests and listen to air circulating through their chambers in response to poetic instructions or free experiential anatomy workshops led by Johnson. *The Moving Heart* is a bridge between the tangible and the intangible, say Johnson and King, "The heart [...] determines

our mortality and encases our deep longings. To move from our inner landscapes is to express our inheritance, memories and experiences."

Artists can reveal the unknown, the ignored and the unseen: internal anatomy, viruses, dreams, memories and pain.

Funded by an SK-Arts Artists-in-Communities grant, Ashley Johnson will offer free experiential anatomy workshops for the public and selected groups throughout the exhibition run. Guided by the question, "Can moving bring us closer to knowing ourselves?" Johnson invites people to understand their anatomy by interacting with the ceramic hearts in her artwork with Karlie King, *The Moving Heart*, and an accessible process of observing, sensing and visualizing.

Join us to celebrate this exhibition at a public reception with the artists on Friday, November 1, from 5:00 - 7:00 PM. Experience *Care* until January 11, 2025; admission to the Art Gallery of Regina (2420 Elphinstone Street) is free.

Media contact:

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Contact Moore to arrange interviews with the artists in English.

Please note that this email contains a link to a GoogleDrive folder of images that may be reproduced.

LINKS

Artists' bios:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NeODjkgSK42HypJdCw89_WpgZyH2QrPuavkLMUUPKnk/edit?usp=sharing

(click link to access GoogleDrive)

Reproduction-ready images:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bwo36w66KSxNVM4eNNQPsJQ_nEiGaRU1?usp=sharing

(click link to access GoogleDrive)

Websites:

[exhibition webpage](#)

For Calendar Listings:

Exhibition title: *Care*

Artist(s): Tea Gerbeza, George Glenn, Karishma Joshi, Karlie King and Ashley Johnson

Short description: Saskatchewan artists reveal the unknown, the ignored and the unseen – internal anatomy, viruses, dreams, memories and pain – in an exhibition that redefines illness resilience

Curator: Sandee Moore

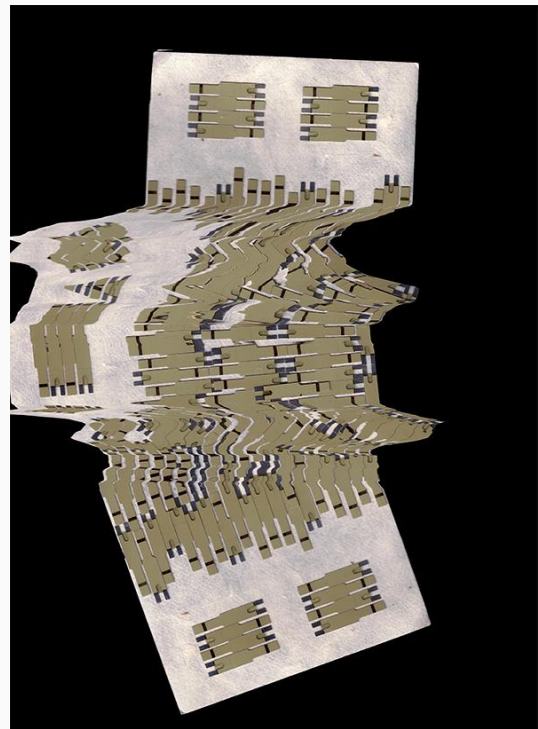
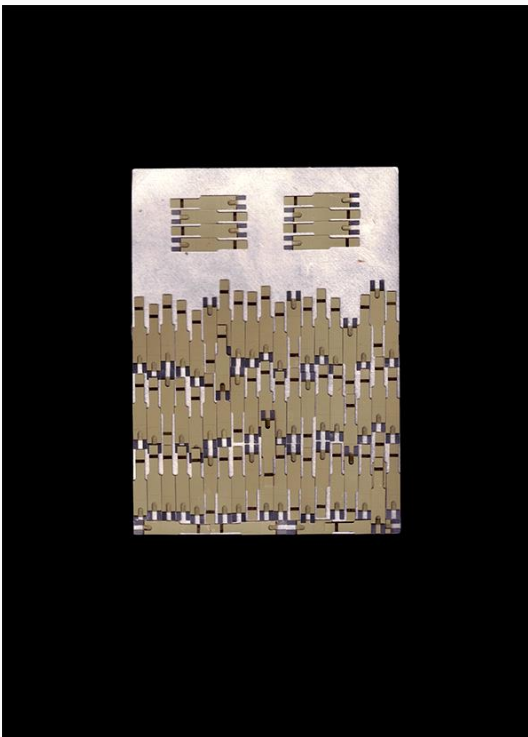
Dates: October 31, 2024 - January 11, 2025

Opening reception: November 1, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Website: <https://www.artgalleryofregina.ca>

Free Admission





images (clockwise from top in desktop view): George Glenn, *Body Memory: Dead Nurse*, 2008, graphite, coloured pencil, soft pastel on paper; Karishma Joshi, *Lines of Sorrow* (video still); Tea Gerbeza, *Bedscares series: Diagnosis Bed Triptych* (1st of three panels), 2022, used diabetic test strips, digital, multimedia; Tea Gerbeza, *Bedscares series: Diagnosis Bed Triptych* (3rd of three panels), 2022, used diabetic test strips, digital, multimedia; Karlie King and Ashley Johnson, *The Moving Heart* (Ashley Johnson performing in the installation), 2022, clay, vinyl text, sound, stethoscope.

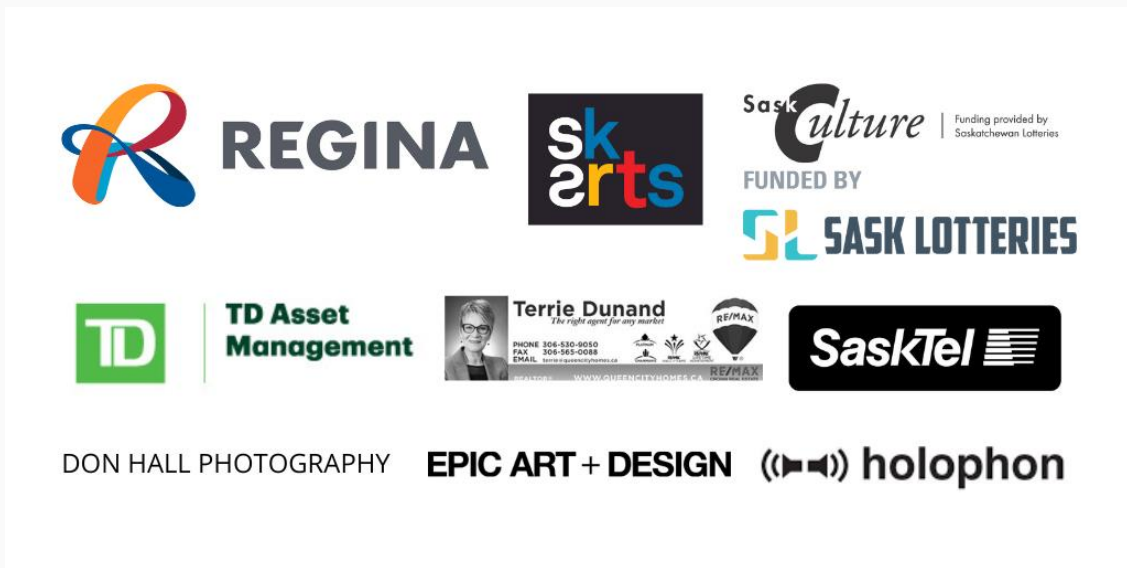
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AGR

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Located on Treaty 4, the traditional territory of the Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota, Lakota and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Métis people, the Art Gallery of Regina (AGR) is a dynamic cultural hub, promoting the development and appreciation of contemporary art, primarily created by Saskatchewan artists. AGR provides opportunities for Regina's citizens and visitors to engage with contemporary art through free exhibitions, participatory events, performances, artists' talks, critical writing, and educational programming.

The Art Gallery of Regina gratefully acknowledges the support of its core funders, project funders, partners and sponsors:



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