

Haena Yoo

Severance

October 27 - December 16, 2023

Opening, Friday, October 27, 2023, 6-8pm

Bibeau Krueger is pleased to present *Severance*, a solo exhibition by Haena Yoo, opening on Friday, October 27th, from 6-8pm.

Through various organic substances and assemblages that incorporate detergent-based chemicals, Yoo's personal experience with loss is revealed in materials that act to both decay and preserve. The title of Yoo's exhibition, *Severance*, is taken from the Severance Hospital in Seoul, Korea, where Yoo's mother had been hospitalized until she was asked to return home given the low odds of survival.

Considering capitalism's infinite loop, the human instinct to act on self-preservation is personalized and catastrophized given conditions that favor access and ability. Wellness culture assumes the pinnacle of perfectionism, while disease implies personal failure and dysfunction; an opportunity to aspire for perfection once again. Regarding the impressionable hierarchy of humanized care, Yoo's installation references contemporary wellness culture and the history of eastern medicine, citing the Donqui Bogam, "Principles and Practice of Eastern Medicine", a Korean book compiled by Heo Jun in 1613, to develop a written origin of preventive medicine.

Severance forges a narrative of subjugation while examining the implication of self-security through medicine and the history of non-consensual biomedical experiments. Yoo presents blown glass sculptures held ajar by surgical tools bracing an interior containing a wax sculpture submerged in liquid detergent. The sculptures are scattered on custom plinths made various in scale, identifying the imperfect entry of abstract strategy and false dilemma into an equation that weighs the odds of survival with ability of access.

Yoo's multi-part sculpture, *The Coverage*, is a series of sculptures that depict early advertisements for detergent, revealing a point of entry related to Western obsession with the eradication of germs. Yoo layers imagery from the Donqui Bogam, ads of detergent, wellness culture, history of surgical tools, and medicine in an act of merging the historical cues taken from visuals employed by both eastern and western medicine. A vinyl sheath containing mixed liquid covers the sculptures, creating a curved reflection and ultimately distorting the image behind it.

Fear of disease and of machines, often understood as partners in design and necessary to modern life, invoke the roots of perfectionism that appeal to the long and complex narrative of Westernization. To both fear and desire a potential solution to the body and its traumas complicates a personal surrender to systems that have benefited from the erasure of histories and bodies that have unknowingly and unwillingly built the dominant position of western medicine in the world.

Although *Severance* contains Yoo's personal life, it equally responds to a larger narrative surrounding the idea of security and trust in capitalist systems that are monetized and incentivized to strategize on access and survival.

Haena Yoo is a multidisciplinary artist who works between Seoul and Los Angeles. Yoo makes installations constructed with found materials, video, sound, and smell, exploring themes of labor, identity, and global capitalism. Through bricolage she uses materials borrowed from different minority cultures, making operative systems that symbolize social interactions and power structures resulting from neo-globalization. Her work often shows the urgency created by limiting materials to what is at hand, showing the archeological and socio-political status of the maker.

Yoo has had solo exhibitions at Gallery Shilla, Seoul (2022); Murmurs, Los Angeles (2021); P.Bibeau, New York City (2021); u's, Calgary (2020) among others, and she presented a collaborative exhibition with Erin Calla Watson at As It Stands (2019); Sterling Wells at AWHRHWR, Los Angeles (2018). Selected group exhibitions have been held at Eli Klein, New York City (2022); Other Places Art Fair, San Pedro (2019); Torrance Art Museum, Torrance (2018); Leroy's, Los Angeles (2018); AALA, Los Angeles (2018). She is a recipient of a 2018 Emerging Artist Grant from the Rema Hort Mann Foundation.