

Self Love—“Love yourself.” It’s an undeniably great phrase. Regardless of time, place, or culture, numerous people—from religious figures and philosophers to pop stars—those so called “The Greats” have all preached the virtues of self love. Like Laozi’s words “Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts one,” continuous emphasis on the importance of self love has established it as the ideal “lifestyle” nowadays, with well-being, a healthy routine of caring for both body and mind, as its foundation. Get ready with me to go to yoga: Light up a stick of Nag Champa incense, put on a head-to-toe Lululemon fit, and learn asanas from an app that costs \$14.99 a month on your smartphone. Wash your hair with aromatherapy shampoo, and apply an anti-aging cream infused with ginseng extract. A pricey smoothie made with 12 ingredients, including protein and collagen might be able to make your day slightly more special. Isn’t it familiar? Pretty sure, we are all into it.

In this exhibition Haena Yoo, whose art practice observes how distorted histories in everyday micro consumption lubricate capitalism through her father’s soy sauce factory and her mother’s personal cosmetic products, turns her attention to her sister’s interest in yoga and Pilates, focusing on self-care culture and industry. During the British colonization of India, yoga¹ was banned and its ancient historical ethos of connecting the body and mind was dismantled. Similarly, Western colonization eroded indigenous life practices that were based on a collective culture sharing both domestic and productive labor and began to inject individualism infused with capitalism into society. Even Western figures with the sincerest intentions like Indra Devi² and Richard Hittleman³, who spent a long time in the region and struggled to learn the essence of yoga in order share its benefits with many, could not avoid the extreme commodification in their home countries where capitalism was born. Yoga’s functional effects on health and beauty along with a fetish for orientalism popularized it—especially among women—and led to the rapid expansion of secondary industries such as nutritional and beauty supplements. This has given rise to the exploitation of traditional knowledge, resources, and labor, such as the cultivation of herbs and medicinal plants, as well as excessive intervention into the environment. Today, palm oil, the source of glycerin, which is the base of most cosmetics, is produced by sweat labor. The popularity of tropical fruits as beauty foods generates mass carbon emissions from trade and many wild plant species such as maca, which once only grew in the Andean region of Peru, have been developed into cultivated varieties, disrupting ecological cycles. Like these GMO⁴ crops,

¹Yoga originates from the Sanskrit word “Yuj,” which means “to yoke” or “to bind.” In this context, the “chariot” symbolizes the human body, the “horses” represent the untamed mind, and the “charioteer” signifies the soul (pure consciousness). Yoga is the practice of controlling our body and mind. In Sanskrit, the word “Yoga” is used to express all forms of connection.

²Indra Devi (1899–2002), often referred to as the “First Lady of Yoga,” was a pioneering yoga teacher who played a crucial role in popularizing yoga in the West during the 20th century, especially among Hollywood celebrities and the general public in the United States.

³Richard Hittleman (1927–1991) is an American Yoga teacher and author who taught Hatha and Raja Yoga through one of the first Yoga television series, Yoga for Health.

⁴GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) is a plant, animal, or microorganism that has been altered through biotechnology. These GMOs can also be transformed into ingredients.

⁵Pilates was invented by Joseph Pilates, a German who was imprisoned in Britain during World War I, as an efficient exercise method that could be performed in limited spaces. It involves the use of equipment and has clearer physical and medical purposes. The Cadillac, the most famous Pilates tool, originated from a prison bed fitted with springs.

today's yoga has been crossbred with Pilates—which originated in the early 1920s from opposing Western perspectives—and other exercises to create a new realm of industry.

“Self Love.” Let's take another look at the beautiful phrase. The extreme individualism that motivates colonization and the development of neoliberalism repeatedly and voluntarily subjugates our bodies and minds to capital, plunging us into isolation and self-doubt, severing relationships. Here we are not the subjects. The need for self love, framed as a restoration of the self, ultimately serves as a means to define the self that dreams of existing outside of capitalist society as an object of healing and to return to the cycle of labor. Self love, where “I” is the subject, is in fact gaslighting—suggesting the origin of the problem lies within oneself. The artist thus unfolds a landscape of distorted emotions and bodies that consume the altered history through the self love industry, which wins over our hearts. Cold and bizarre massage devices promise 0.1mg of sustainable youth, health, and inner peace. Gently massaging glycerin bodies soothe the urge to break the laptop that causes our tech neck and to rebel against our bosses. The flattened histories encapsulated within yoga mats and disassembled Pilates⁵ machines are refracted in transparent bodies, mixed with all kinds of undigested “healthy” ingredients. Believe it or not, swollen pine roots infected by fungi are said to be excellent for lowering cholesterol. So even if it costs as much as gold, it is an investment in oneself, isn't it? Inhale to loosen your mind with love, exhale as your limbs tear in self-torture, to be reborn as this era's beautiful woman, faithful consumer, and healthy worker.

Breathe in, breathe out. ♦

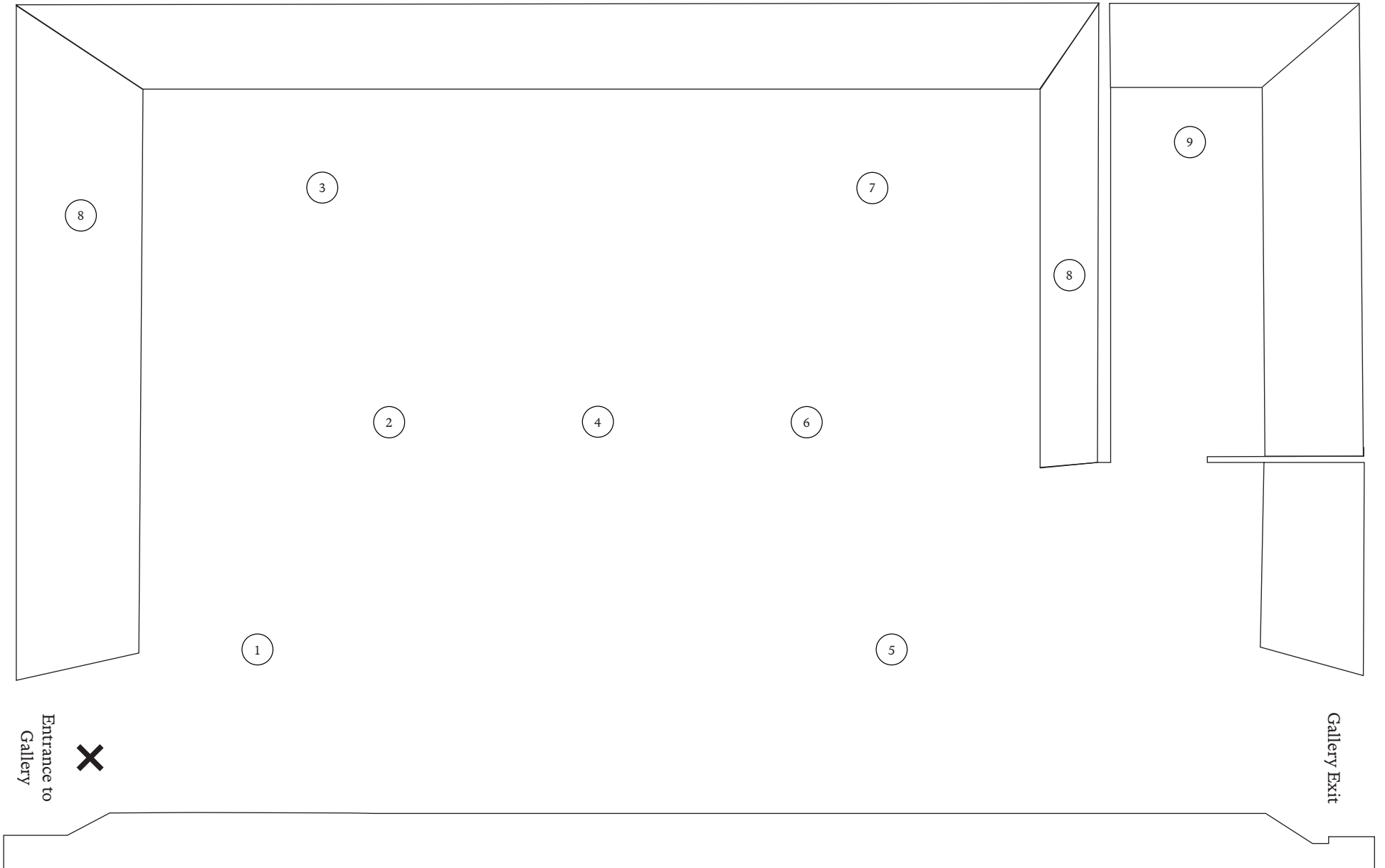
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Haena Yoo is a multidisciplinary artist who works between Seoul and Los Angeles. Yoo makes sculptures and installations constructed with found materials, video, sound, and smell, exploring themes of labor, identity, and global capitalism. Through a tinkering process, 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.

Recent solo exhibitions and projects include Murmurs, Los Angeles, (2024); Bibeau Krueger, New York City, NY (2023); Gallery Shilla, Seoul, South Korea (2022); Murmurs, Los Angeles (2021); and P.Bibeau, New York City, NY (2021). She is a recent recipient of the Fund for Korean Art Abroad and the Emerging Artist Grant from the Rema Hort Mann Foundation. Yoo's work has been featured in Art in America, The New York Times, CARLA Magazine, and X-TRA among others. She has a forthcoming two-person show at Le Cyclop of Jean Tinguely, Milly-la-Forêt, France in 2025, as well as a forthcoming residency at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2025.



①	<i>Opening Sequence, 2024</i>	Modified massager motor, aluminum, chains, biners, threads, spring, stainless, polyurethane vinyl, socks, chicken peas, clear sticker, UV print on dyed yoga mats, Rit dye, glycerin	Dimensions Variable
②	<i>Suffocate, 2024</i>	Plastic pearl, beads, grains, stocking, leggings, turkey tail, UV print on dyed yoga mats, polyurethane vinyl, glycerin	Dimensions Variable
③	<i>Reformer Sequence 2024</i>	Modified massager motor, aluminum, stainless, steel, rope, polyurethane vinyl, fabrics, leggings, sea moss, clear sticker, tension band, grains, cords, magnolia flowers, goji berries, Phellinus Linteus, Chaga, ginsengs, parsley, UV print on dyed yoga mats, polyurethane vinyl, glycerin	Dimensions Variable
④	<i>Deep Breathing Sequence, 2024</i>	DC motor, aluminum, wood, stainless, clear sticker, fabrics, leggings, tension band, grains, kidney beans, chicken peas, cranberry beans, macadamia nuts, cashews, almonds, walnuts, gemstones, beads, threads, turkey tail mushroom, Phellinus Linteus, deer antler velvet, blown glass, gel wax, elm bark, astragalus root, wire, sea moss, spring, thread, cord, tube, UV print on dyed yoga mats, polyurethane vinyl, glycerin	Dimensions Variable
⑤	<i>Chair Sequence, 2024</i>	Modified massager motor, aluminum, plastic, stainless, wood, biner, Lululemon yoga mat strap, cordyceps, vitamin peels, plastic pearl, beads, bracelet, leggings, fabrics, UV print on dyed yoga mats, polyurethane vinyl, glycerin	Dimensions Variable
⑥	<i>Prana, Nadis, and Chakras, 2024</i>	Blown glass, gel wax, elm bark, astragalus root, wire, sea moss, spring, thread, cord, tube, aluminum, UV print on dyed yoga mats	Dimensions Variable
⑦	<i>Pullover Sequence, 2024</i>	Lat bar, strap, Lululemon yoga mat strap, descender, carabiners, slings, chains, beads, spring, fabric, leggings, clear sticker, tension band, turkey tail, chaga, sea moss, threads, bracelets, gemstones, UV print on dyed yoga mats, polyurethane vinyl, glycerin	Dimensions Variable
⑧	<i>Lumps on the Root, 2024</i>	Gold electroplated ginseng, gold electroplated 송근봉 (song-geun bong; roots of Korean red pine), chain, gold thread	32 × 4.5 × 3.25 inches 21 × 3.5 × 2 inches
⑨	<i>Who is John Galt?, 2024</i>	single channel video with sound	8 minutes 47 seconds

HAENA YOO

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EDUCATION

- 2025 (FORTHCOMING) Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME
- 2017 MFA Grad Art at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA
- 2014 BFA Fiber Art at Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea

SOLO/TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 (FORTHCOMING) two person show, Le Cyclop of Jean Tinguely, Milly-la-Forêt, France
- 2024 (FORTHCOMING) *Self Love Club*, Murmurs, Los Angeles, CA
- 2023 *Severance*, Bibeaukrueger, New York City, NY
- 2022 *The Oriental Sauce Factory (Part 2)*, Gallery Shilla, Seoul, South Korea
- 2021 *The Oriental Sauce Factory*, Murmurs, Los Angeles, CA
- 2021 *The Birth of Venus*, P.Bibeau, Brooklyn, NY
- 2019 *Erin Calla Watson & Haena Yoo, As It Stands*, Los Angeles, CA
- 2019 *Woman Fantastic Plastic*, u's, Calgary, Canada
- 2018 *Maintain Disgust*, collaborated with Sterling Wells, AWHRHWR, Los Angeles, CA
- 2017 *Guttin' n Out*, MFA Thesis Show, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA
- 2016 *Under Construction*, La Croix, Pasadena, CA

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *The Wind From The East*, Tote Gallery, Eton College Collection, London, United Kingdom
- 2024 *The Noise Media Art Fair*, Istanbul, Türkiye
- 2023 *Porsche SCOPES*, Seoul
- 2023 *I've Gone To Look For America*, Murmurs, Los Angeles, CA
- 2022 *With her voice, penetrate earth's floor*, Eli Klein, New York City, NY
- 2022 *Chambres d'Amis*, Office Baroque, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2021 *Substrata*, Epoch, Los Angeles, CA
- 2020 *The Struggle For Change*, Murmurs, Los Angeles, CA
- 2018 *La Biennale di Vista del Oro*, Yard Pedro, San Pedro, CA
- 2018 *Dae-Bak*, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA
- 2018 *An Arm's Length*, Tierra de La Culebra, Los Angeles, CA

- 2018 *It's Snowing in LA*, AALA, Los Angeles, CA
- 2018 *Ecoshamanism*, Leroy's, Los Angeles, CA
- 2018 *Some Ruins*, Scranch, Wonder Valley, CA
- 2018 *Greater Los Angeles MFA (GLAMFA)*, Max L.Gatov Gallery, CA
- 2017 *I AM ERICA*, New Wight Gallery, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- 2017 *Amplified Presence*, Scranch, Wonder Valley, CA
- 2017 *Refresh*, La Croix, Pasadena, CA

AWARD/GRANT/RESIDENCY

- 2025 (FORTHCOMING) Le Cyclop de Jean Tinguely Artist Residency, Milly-la-Forêt, France
- 2023 Recipient of Fund for Korean Art Abroad (FKAA), Korea Arts Management Service (KAMS)
- 2019 Final Nominee of CURRENT:LA Food Biennial, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affair
- 2018 Recipient of Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant

FAIRS

- 2024 The Armory Show, New York, Murmurs
- 2023 Art-o-rama, Marseille, Bibeaukrueger
- 2023 The Preview, Seoul, Gallery Shilla
- 2019 Other Places Art Fair (OPAF), San Pedro, Harborview and Pole

SELECT PRESS

ART IN AMERICA

[New Talent 20 Artists to Watch](#), Printed edition. Sept, 2024

THE NEW YORK TIMES

[Inside South Korea's Art-Mad Capital](#), Andrew Russeth. Jan, 2023

CARLA

[Existing Is Resisting](#), Issue 29. April, 2022

CARLA

[Interview with Haena Yoo](#), Stephanie Mei Huang, issue 27. March, 2022

X-TRA

[The Meaning Factory](#), Reuben Merringer. Dec, 2021