Last winter, in the closet of my childhood bedroom, I excavated a self-portrait from middle school. My eyes are dull, my affect flat, and in the bottom right hand the title reads: me (depressed).

I have deep-seated memories of drawing myself at that age that every so often come to the forefront of my mind - a reminder that this tangled web of melancholy in my heart has been a steady bedfellow since youth.

Having undergone gender affirming surgery nearly a decade ago, I am riddled with regret. Not with being transgender, but rather I am afflicted with a constant low-grade baby fever. The hurdles I would have to clear to adopt, to have a home, to even simply maintain a steady partnership, reside high upon the moon.

The works on display are excerpts of my journal entries, interspersed with drawings. They depict times that I have experienced moments of levity beyond emptying cups and bed rotting with yet another lover. I have found that it is when I'm caring for others, solely immersed in the act of mothering, that this sense of self-indulgent angst momentarily ceases.

It is common for artists to reveal the depth of our personal lives, the tenor of our souls, the joys and grief that have taken hold of our heart from a young age, who we love and what we care for. In the midst of preparing for this show though, I made the choice to entomb a few of my journals in their frames, as I am not ready to share them with the public so readily. This selection of writings and drawings are safely sealed away and will remain so until my death, do as you wish upon my passing.

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Umico Niwa (b. 1991, Nagoya, Aichi, Japan) lives and works between the USA and Japan. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include: Memory Palace at The Asia Society, Houston (2025); Gut Friendly, Public Gallery, London (2025); Becoming Feral, Towada Arts Centre, Japan (2024); The Harbinger of Luck: Made of Kisses and Clovers x+x+, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Texas (2024) My Life Inside a Shoe, XYZ Collective, Tokyo (2023); and The Quantified Elf (and how it came to

love itself), Someday, New York (2022). Select group exhibitions include: Sculpture Center, New York (2025); Chanel Nexus Hall, Tokyo (2024); Simon Subal, New York (2022); Kristina Kite, Los Angeles (2021); and Miriam in New York (2020). She was a resident at The Houston Museum of Fine Arts (2023 - 2025) and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art (2022).