

KIM-LEE KHO / HEARTSPACE

Heartspaces are not tidy. They are bloody and muscular and visceral. They throb with the rhythm of our life. As their chambers squeeze, then fill, they experience high and low tides in the space of a single beat.

Being human is not tidy. We are born from blood and viscera and the scream that gives us breath, while our deaths set in motion a rapid decay.

From beginning to end there is so much mess, in our lives, our psyches, our hearts, and our flawed selves. And yet there is so much opportunity for beauty, for love, for connection.

We are an interconnected web, hidden, like the vast underground network that makes a forest. And like a forest, if we separate into smaller, divided sections, we all do more poorly.

In this show artist Kim-Lee Kho is interested in the visceral and emotional experience of our human hearts, of the life and connections we can find inside, outside and between our heartspaces.

Heartspace is part of her ongoing exploration of the human heart: as repository for emotions, as metaphor, as physical structure; using it as a gateway to what our hearts mean to us.

It began with Kho's fascination for three-dimensional medical models and antique anatomical illustrations. They serve as references for her to see what she can make of them, what she can find inside through them.

Kho's process starts with a feeling, a stirring of emotion, which then moves into her hand. Drawing allows her to contemplate subject matter, to move inside it and make connections. It has led her to consider different states of the heart, and to look for analogous visual material (branches, coral, maps etc.) to work with.

Heartspace explores these ideas in multiple media: drawing, painting, text, photography, digital, mixed media, film-based transfer prints and sculpture. It also features her first zine, drawing on her publication design background.

The large scrolls and use of ink and Chinese mulberry paper reflect the Chinese half of Kho's hybrid identity. She has a special interest in hybrid forms combining digital and tactile media and methods, manifesting as either digital or physical originals.

Heartspace is Kim-Lee Kho's debut solo exhibition as a member of The Red Head Gallery.

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KIM-LEE KHO / BIOGRAPHY

Kim-Lee Kho is a self-taught multidisciplinary Canadian artist, and former graphic designer/art director, exploring personal experience as a gateway to broader human concerns. The daughter of both a scientist and an artist, Kho's process and interests combine both influences, in sometimes unexpected ways.

Based in Brampton, Kho was a feature artist in both the 2016 and 2018 In Situ multi-arts festivals, developing large-scale installations in multiple media and live drawing performances for both events, held at the Small Arms Inspection Building (SAIB) in Mississauga, ON. She has shown in a wide variety of venues, including public art galleries, such as her solo exhibition Chains Unlinked, a multi-layered immersive installation exploring internal and external barriers through temporary mural drawing, video, textile, and sculpture at the Art Gallery of Mississauga.

Kho has participated nationally in exhibitions, residencies, and mentorships including at Renann Isaacs Contemporary Art (RICA) in Guelph ON, You Me Gallery in Hamilton ON, the Living Arts Centre in Mississauga ON, Evergreen Cultural Centre in Coquitlam

BC, Shadbolt Centre for the Arts in Burnaby BC, and as part of a two-year travelling exhibition for the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie in Alberta. She is a multiple Ontario Arts Council grant recipient.

In addition to her creative practice, Kho is a popular and knowledgeable arts instructor. She teaches at Fleming College's Haliburton School of Art + Design, and Neilson Park Creative Centre in Etobicoke. She also teaches workshops, gives talks, live demonstrations, critiques, and juries exhibitions, at the invitation of numerous art groups, centres and galleries in Ontario.

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