

For Immediate Release



Tiffany Jaeyeon Shin: Universal Skin Salvation
November 10 - December 16, 2018
Opening Reception: Saturday, November 10, 6 - 9pm



Tiffany Jaeyeon Shin, *Self Portrait 2* (Detail), 2018.

Knockdown Center is pleased to present ***Tiffany Jaeyeon Shin: Universal Skin Salvation***, the artist's first large-scale solo exhibition on view November 10 - December 16, 2018. The exhibition features a custom line of K-beauty products and a fully immersive sauna alongside new video, photo, and collage works. Visitors are invited to apply the beauty products and enter the sauna installation, absorbing small amounts of home-brewed lactic acid. For Shin, the active bacterial agent acts as a stand-in for bodily rehabilitation from the Korean War, and as an extension of the Korean "flesh" enlivened by biological matter.

Lactic acid is a bacterial compound found in sour milk, in muscles, and in fermented foods like Kimchi. Recent studies show that lactic acid can fortify the composition of the microbes in the gut, improving the metabolization of bodily injuries and building immunity to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The bacterium can also lighten the flesh by exfoliating dead skin and rejuvenating new skin cells, and is popularly used in K-beauty products as a whitening agent. K-beauty refers to the Korean cosmetics industry centered on skincare products that promise users a fair and flawless complexion.

Shin engages with the concept of lactification, a term coined by philosopher Frantz Fanon that refers to the whitening of a race or to make one "milky." The lactification of Korean skin grows increasingly apparent with the rise of the multibillion dollar K-beauty industry in the United States. Shin asks: how does K-beauty's emphasis on achieving a "glassy" and "transparent" complexion render Korean skin exoticized and impermeable, or plasticized, following the trauma and migration of the Korean War? How does Korean subjectivity emerge through flesh that has undergone extreme processes of cultural possession?

Shin offers visitors a chance to absorb her custom lactic acid formula through their own skin within the sauna structure and via the lotions, mist sprays, and serums available for use. Shin's *Self-Portraiture* print and video series capture in detail the lactic acid beauty products on display conflated as the racialized skin of the other. The slick, shiny surface quality of the products highlights the ways in which they serve as containers or exteriors for the skin beneath. These works thus implicate the skincare industry as a participant in a new form of imperialist capture, allowing one to achieve the skin of a Korean woman without her subjectivities.

About the Artist

Tiffany Jaeyeon Shin explores the porousness of bodily boundaries and the ceaseless movement of living processes, like fermentation that echo the history of colonialism. Shin is interested in entangling the history of conquest and the literal digestion of material - herbs, medicine, and food - into a new system of relations that emerge from a complicated history of entanglement. Shin has exhibited at SPRING/BREAK, New York, NY (2018), Disclaimer Gallery, Brooklyn, NY (2018), AC Institute, New York, NY (2017), Abrons Arts Center, New York, NY (2017), Miranda Kuo Gallery, New York, NY (2017), and many others. Forthcoming shows include Phantom Limb at Cody Dock, London, England and Ghost in the Ghost at Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Brooklyn, NY. Shin lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

About Knockdown Center

Knockdown Center gallery hours are Thursday and Friday from 5 PM to 9 PM, Saturday and Sunday from 2 PM to 8 PM. Knockdown Center is located at 52-19 Flushing Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378.

Featuring programming of diverse formats and media, Knockdown Center aims to create a radically cross-disciplinary environment. The particularity of our architectural environment and history leads us to gravitate toward projects that demonstrate a sensitive reactivity to site and environment. Visit our website, or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Press Inquiries

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