

*body / armor*

**Chelsea A. Flowers, Luan Joy Sherman, Marcela Torres, and Kim Ye  
Curated by Lauren Leving**

**February 2 - March 3, 2018**

**Opening Reception: Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6-9PM**

**Opening night performance by Marcela Torres: 7:30PM**

Additional performances and programming:

*How To Take Care / Trans Boxing Collective*

Luan Sherman & Nola Hanson

Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1PM

*Performing Wellness: An Artist Led Day of Self Care*

Chelsea Flowers, Marcela Torres, Chris Zain, and Rhonda Wheatley

Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 12 – 5PM

*Taken Down* (Closing performance)

Kim Ye

Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 4PM

*body / armor* presents four artists who use their practices to rethink and expand the definition of self-care, both for themselves and for the communities of which they are a part.

Historically, the health needs of marginalized groups have been pushed aside, overlooked by systems developed by and favoring white patriarchal values. During the civil rights movement, self-care became a political act; activists created safe spaces to cultivate the mental, physical, and emotional well being of those frequently relegated to the sidelines. Again, in 2016 immediately following the Presidential election, the concept of self-care saw a surge in popularity. A brief Google search of the term results in hundreds of articles, lists, and resources detailing wellness methods. However, while the need for self-care is universal, there is no single solution that meets the requirements of every individual.

While it can be argued that the process of making artwork is inherently an act of self-care, the artists in *body / armor* go one step further, unabashedly rupturing structures of injustice and drawing from their lived experiences to create performances, objects, and video that connect with audiences on a personal level, promoting healing and showing the importance of holistic care.

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Based in Detroit, **Chelsea A. Flowers** holds an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art. She has shown work at various galleries and alternative spaces in Columbus and Cleveland OH including Marcia Evans Gallery, and Junctionview Studios, with an upcoming exhibit at Muted Horn Gallery. Additionally, she has held performances at Hatch Gallery in Detroit and the Museum of Human Achievement in Austin. She has expanded her skills and research by attending ACRE, Unlisted Projects, and Real Time and Space residencies, culminating in performances at the various establishments. She explores ideas of "otherness" through comedic troupes, physical play, nostalgic memorabilia, and participatory performance.

**Luan Joy Sherman** (b. 1993) is a queer, trans male artist living and working in Brooklyn, NY. He works with embroidery, photography, sculpture, performance, video, and sound, to explore gender, queer theory, and body politics. He has attended residencies at The Chautauqua School of Art (2014), Black Mountain School (2016), School of the Alternative (2017), The Mall of Found (2017), and ACRE (2017), for which he received a Brenda Greene Gender Inclusivity scholarship. In 2016, he taught a course on queer theory and intersectionality in Brooklyn, NY for the experimental education initiative, "Sunday School." In 2017, he taught a course titled "Queering Masculinity" while serving as faculty for the School of the Alternative in Black Mountain, NC. He graduated from The Savannah College of Art and Design in 2015 with a B.F.A. in Painting and Art History.

**Marcela Torres'** practice attempts to repair, transform, and destabilize cultural ideologies that target and oppress "the other." She enmeshes the physicality of martial arts with bastardized political encounters to create modes of collaborative healing and utilizes these strategies to set up performative situations that uncover the reality of the varied and differentially weighted interpellations in which we reside. Marcela has an MFA in Performance from the School of the Art Institute and a dual BA/BFA in Sculpture and Art History from the University of Utah.

**Kim Ye** (b. 1984, Beijing, China) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work incorporates performance, sculpture, video, installation, text, and painting. She received her MFA from UCLA (2012), and BA from Pomona College (2007). Exploring themes of labor, intimacy, taboo, sexuality, and the power exchange between artist and audience, Ye uses the body and its accessories to give form to power as a non-binary force. She has exhibited and performed nationally and internationally at the Hammer Museum, Getty Center, Moran Bondaroff, Alter Space, Material Art Fair, Visitor Welcome Center, Human Resources, and Pomona College Museum of Art, among others.

**Lauren Leving** is a Chicago-based writer and curator. She graduated with a BA from Tulane University and recently received her MA in Museum & Exhibition Studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She has worked as the Curatorial Fellow for Hyde Park Art Center, at 6018North, and in commercial galleries in both Chicago and New Orleans. Her research and curation investigate the intersections of contemporary exhibition practices, pedagogy, and social justice.