

These Spaces Hold Us

**Yasmeen Nematt Alla, Jonathan Herrera Soto, Annie Kielman
Curated by Rohan Ayinde**

March 6th - 27th, 2020

Opening Reception: March 6th, 6-9pm

Open Hours: Wednesday-Saturday, Noon-4pm and by appointment

These Spaces Hold Us pivots around the fulcrum of care, paying close attention to the journeys and mediations that happen between ideas and their material manifestations. Taking grief as a shared experience and healing as a shared desire, the exhibition asks what it means to be held and how artists can create spaces that hold us.

Across the artworks in *Spaces*, there is sincerity mixed with cynicism about the potential of healing from the violence of our contemporary landscape. Reading them through the lens of alienation caused by capitalism allows the different threads of these works to form the knit of a tightly layered narrative.

Grief, care, translation, violence and labor rub up against one another in a texture of meanings that ask the audience to coalesce around their points of commonality while simultaneously contemplating their own profound isolation. A pool becomes a vessel for letting go of grief, pallets morph into love poems for forgotten and marginalized communities and workout stations signpost futile performances of labor.

While the artists approach the spectrum along which care and grief emerge from divergent positions, each is committed to upending narratives we have inherited and co-constructed. They each accept our complicity in them as locations from which we might begin to let go of harmful structures, together.

Annie Kielman is a Chicago based artist and educator whose work touches on how the human body calibrates across the messy and inseparable combination of the physical world with innumerable digital spaces. Annie received her MFA in Printmedia from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2013. She currently teaches at Harold Washington College and School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and is co-founder of a Print shop and shared artist space in Lawndale. Annie has exhibited and lectured widely in Chicago and throughout the US.

<http://anniekielman.com/>

Yasmeen Nematt Alla is an Egyptian-Canadian artist whose practice approaches immigration and refugee narratives from an interpreter's perspective. As someone who lives between cultures, she deciphers the language barriers that are attached to alienation. This extends to creating gestures of care and empathy, ones that are founded in exploring solitary experiences and discovering points of connection within them. She considers how art-making can bridge the

gap between what we know and what we hope to understand. Entranced by the power of text and its ability to dialogue with the onlooker, she creates sentences that act as portraits for herself and those who share similar circumstances through sculptural, interactive and performative gestures.

<https://www.yasmeennematt.com/>

Jonathan Herrera Soto is a printmaker originally from Chicago and currently based in Minneapolis, MN--traditionally Wahpekute and Mdewakanton lands. He graduated with a BFA from the Minneapolis College in Art and Design in 2017. Recent solo exhibitions of Herrera Soto's work include "In Between / Underneath" at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, "Querida Presencia" at the Duluth Art Institute, and "Entre Rios y Montañas" at Annex Gallery, Chicago. He has participated in numerous artist residencies and fellowships, some of which include Kala Institute, CA; Yaddo, NY; Kimmel Harding Nelson Center, NE; Hambidge Center for the Arts, GA; Epicenter, UT; The Studios at MASS MoCA, MA; 33 Officia Creativa, Italy; Spudnik Press Cooperative, Chicago; and High Point Center for Printmaking, MN. Herrera Soto is a 2018 recipient of the Santo Foundation Individual Artist Award, the Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant, a 2019 recipient of the Metro Regional Arts Council Next Step Grant, and is a current 2019-2021 Jerome Hill Artist Grant fellow.

<https://jonathanherrerastudio.com/>

Rohan Ayinde is a Chicago based artist, writer and curator. His interdisciplinary work is centered around creating "otherwise" potentials (Ashon Crawley), and in so doing breaking down and simultaneously reconfiguring the ideological architectures that shape our daily and generational lives. Most often the landscapes he explores are rooted in questions about quantum physics, black radical aesthetics and architecture.

<https://www.rohanayinde.com>