ABOUT THE ARTIST

EDUCATION

2013  Individual Workshop, Photogravure
      Cape Fear Press, Carolina Beach, NC

2011  Bachelor of Fine Arts, Drawing & Printmaking
      University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, WI

SELECTED EXHIBITION RECORD

2013  Mystic Hands
      Hoofprint Workshop, Chicago

      Portraits
      Gallery 224, Port Washington, WI

      From Plate to Paper: The Art of Printmaking
      Monmouth Museum of Art, Lincroft, NJ

      Body Like a Barrow
      Bert Green Fine Art, Chicago

      Top Drawer Prints
      Peltz Gallery, Milwaukee, WI

2012  Southern Graphics Council Exhibition
      Travelling internationally through 2015

      Inspired by...
      Woman Made Gallery, Chicago

2011  Can You Make This Last Forever?
      Common Wealth Gallery, Madison, WI

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2011-  Printer
       pres.  White Wings Press, Chicago

More information about Kao and her work:
www.frozencharlottepress.com

Raeleen Kao

Inhospitable

December 14, 2013 – June 8, 2014

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF SURGICAL SCIENCE
1524 N. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60610

www.imss.org
STATEMENT

In my earliest memory, I was laying heavily sedated on a hospital bed at three years old. In the four hours prior, my heart had been cut out from my chest and my body sustained on a machine which replicated a heart’s function of pumping blood through my arteries. I see my work as a record from that first memory through a series of separate chronic conditions and surgical procedures which continue to affect my body.

I see beauty as a mask for the morbidity of deterioration and draw on the vanity associated with desperation to produce a façade of stability as the body becomes increasingly susceptible to illness. The manner in which I depict hair demonstrates the delicacy of an individual strand, as well as the contrived beauty of a braid, and exposes its easily disheveled nature. Hair exists as a form of pride, infamously with Marie Antoinette to its modern importance with cancer patients. In my work, I explore hair as a precise record of health and as an extension of femininity and sexual power, made most evident in its absence under the invasive treatment of chemotherapy.

I focus on scars, stitches, and biopsy sites which actively externalize one’s most intimate medical history. My self-portraits explore the body as an object vulnerable to physical and psychological trauma as a result of disease and subsequent treatment. My portrayal of the body confronts the prospect of death and exhibits loss, with exhausted passiveness represented by figures curled up in child-like and fetal positions that convey the impression of sleep.

These themes of loss are heavily centered on aspects of the body which anatomically define a woman. Historically, there has always been a stigma placed upon women who are unable to conceive, who give birth to stillborn children, or who suffer miscarriages. The shapes I choose to construct reference nests, umbilical cords, and ovum. These images obsess over a destruction of the female reproductive system and the recurring trauma of the loss of a child.

This exhibition is the latest in the Museum’s ongoing ANATOMY IN THE GALLERY series exploring embodiment through contemporary art. More information about this program is available at www.imss.org/anatgallery.htm.

CHECKLIST

1. **More Beautiful in Death, 2012**, 2-plate etching & aquatint edition of 8; $300 unframed, $350 framed
2. **Inhospitable, 2013**, 2-plate etching, aquatint, & chine colle edition of 7; $350 unframed, $425 framed
3. **Untitled, 2012**, graphite and monoprint, $825 framed
4. **Haunted Chamber, 2013**, 4-plate etching & aquatint edition of 6, $465 framed
5. **Without Me, You’re Nothing (1 of 2), 2013**, graphite on paper contact artist for pricing
6. **Poison Shared Is Poison Halved (1 of 2), 2013**, graphite on paper contact artist for pricing
7. **Poison Shared Is Poison Halved (2 of 2), 2013**, graphite on paper contact artist for pricing
8. **Without Me, You’re Nothing (2 of 2), 2013**, graphite on paper contact artist for pricing
10. **Carrier, 2013**, 2-plate etching, chine colle, & collagraph edition of 7, $414 framed
11-15. **Untitled I-V, 2012**, graphite on paper, each $1,250 framed
16. **Pretty Maids (1 of 3), 2012**, graphite on paper, $666 framed
17. **Pretty Maids (2 of 3), 2012**, graphite on paper, $975 framed
18. **Pretty Maids (3 of 3), 2012**, graphite on paper, $400 framed
20. **An Imperfect Truth, 2013**, graphite on paper, $500 framed
21. **Coexist, 2013**, graphite on paper, $1,325 framed
22. **Father’s Pride, 2013**, 4-plate etching & photogravure edition of 6; $375 unframed, $440 framed
23. **Mother’s Treasure, 2013**, 4-plate etching & photogravure edition of 6; $375 unframed, $440 framed

*Sales inquiries: raeleenkao@gmail.com*