

Take Care

Because care is not a domestic question but rather a public matter and generator of conflict.

- Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike - Four hypotheses”

September 11, 2017–March 10, 2018
Blackwood Gallery

#callresponse | Amelia Abreu | Art Metropole | Lise Haller Baggesen and Deirdre M. Donoghue | Beverly Bain | Christi Belcourt | Amber Berson and Juliana Driever | Anthea Black | Marc Böhlen | Lisa Busby | CareForce | Cevan Castle | The Center for Parenting Artists | Circo Zero | Claire Fontaine | Joshua Clover | Cynthia Cranford | Marcia Crosby | Cultural Workers Organize | Thirza Cuthand | Dames Making Games | Erika DeFreitas | Dillon de Give | cris derksen | Kay Dickinson | Steven Eastwood | The Element Choir | EMILIA-AMALIA | Lauren Fournier | Kelly Fritsch | Mercy Gichuki | Janna Graham | Maggie Groat | k.g. Guttman | Nasrin Himada | Tarah Hogue | Home Affairs with Ozlem Ozkal | Sheena Hoszko | Maria Hupfield | Marisa Morán Jahn (Studio REV-) | Jakob Jakobsen | Ursula Johnson | Kwentong Bayan Collective | Carolyn Lazard | Yaniya Lee | Leisure (Meredith Carruthers and Susannah Wesley) | Cheryl L’Hirondelle | Deborah Ligorio | LoVid | Paul Maheke | Terrill Maguire | Robyn Maynard | Isaac Murdoch | Esther Neff and IV Castellanos | Petrina Ng | Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn | Onaman Collective | Shani K Parsons | Coman Poon | Precarious Workers Brigade | Radiodress | Raju Rage | Helena Reckitt | Kerri-Lynn Reeves | Jeff Reinhardt | Ian Roderick | Zoë Schneider | Shane Aslan Selzer | Sarah Sharma | Amie Siegel | Juliana Spahr | Danielle St-Amour | Kara Stone | Tanya Tagaq | Pelin Tan | Kaitlin Tremblay | Evan Tyler | Joshua Vettivelu | Justice Walz | Boo Watson | Jessica Lynn Whitbread | Tania Willard | Laakkuluk Williamson-Bathory | Laura Yuile | Alize Zorlutuna | and more...

Curated by Letters & Handshakes

CIRCUIT 1
Labour of Curation
September 11–30, 2017

CIRCUIT 2
Care Work
October 16–November 4, 2017

CIRCUIT 3
Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid
November 20–December 9, 2017

CIRCUIT 4
Stewardship
January 8–27, 2018

CIRCUIT 5
Collective Welfare
February 12–March 10, 2018

Front cover:
Claire Fontaine, *Untitled (Rust & Tears)* (detail), 2017. Digital image printed on acrylic billboard, 72in x 108in. COURTESY THE ARTIST.

Take Care

Letters & Handshakes

take care: to tend to; to sustain; to express empathy; to caution against risks; to appropriate or extract, with no or little compensation, a human capacity perceived as an infinitely replenishable gift; to politicize, reclaim, organize, or revalorize care...

Encompassing a five-part exhibition series, performances, and workshops, *Take Care* follows a 2016 group exhibition, curated by Letters & Handshakes, at the Blackwood Gallery. That exhibition, *I stood before the source*, featured artists confronting the aesthetic problem of representing contemporary capitalism, and concluded with this impulse: to imagine a “shift from the metrics of accumulation to the requirements of care as an ordering principle of social relations.”¹ Immediately, however, this statement encounters the “crisis of care,”² the problematic within, against, and beyond which *Take Care* mobilizes more than 100 artists, activists, curators, and researchers.

Nancy Fraser theorizes the current care crisis as an outcome of an intensifying contradiction. On one side is capitalism’s dependence for its perpetuation on the performance of manifold caring activities. On the other side is the evident strain on and neglect of caring capacities and the people who provide care, where care is broadly understood as the work of tending, paid or unpaid, to social bonds.³ Among the myriad manifestations of the crisis of care is widespread precarious work in the “global care chain,”⁴ in which the workforce is segmented by class, gender, race, status, and geography; the attack on established institutions of social support and models of collective security by forces of dispossession under settler colonialism and neoliberalism; insufficient state funding to adequately satisfy mounting needs for healthcare, eldercare, and childcare, with the void filled by the commodification of care “services” to which

access is stratified by income power; a squeeze on the time and attention available for care in the context of stagnating wages, rising living costs, escalating productivity demands, and perpetual digital connectivity; the undervaluing of care, both culturally and monetarily, through well-worn gendered narratives in which care is framed as a “labour of love”; and, beyond the realm of social reproduction specifically, the sustained disregard for the nonhuman, a policy of carelessness whose consequences are climate change, species extinction, and water toxicity.

Anatomizing the crisis of care and its systemic underpinnings, *Take Care* pushes back against both the low cultural visibility of care work and the prevailing extractivist attitude toward care, an attitude which, as Fraser puts it, treats care, like nature, as a free, infinite resource—a logic to which this project’s title signals.⁵ *Take Care* joins ongoing collective efforts⁶ to “[enhance] the status of care,” as Isabell Lorey⁷ describes one of the aims of activist-research collective *Precarias a la Deriva*. Rather than take care for granted, however, this project is a transdisciplinary inquiry into care, setting out to explore its heterogeneous and contested meanings, practices, and sites, as well as the political, economic, and technological forces currently shaping care. Although this project strives to elevate care, the intention is not to position care as cure or panacea, or as benign: care involves relations of power in which concern and control, empathy and exhaustion, dependence and interdependence, the systemic and the intimate, responsibility and obligation are entangled.

Take Care unfolds as a series of five exhibition themes, or circuits of care.⁸ Recalling the etymology of curate (*curare*: “to take care of”), *Labour of Curation* views cultures of work and interaction in art institutions through a care lens, and reflects on art’s

implication in, rather than detached observation of, the crisis of care. Traversing care as a social gesture, a job, and a political site, *Care Work* presents counter-narratives of the provision of care, care workers’ struggles, and caring labour’s transformation through colonialism, marketization, migration, and technology. *Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid* turns to support structures and collaborative practices beyond institutional spaces that are conventionally associated with care, such as hospitals and long-term residential care facilities, to consider care as a disposition, a system of reciprocity, a radical act, and an elusive goal within communities of art and activism alert to the challenge of sustainability.⁹ *Stewardship* decentres the isolated individual as the privileged recipient or scene of care, and forefronts “epistemically-diverse”¹⁰ conceptions and collective practices of care that centre upon relationships to land, territory, and nonhumans. Engaging spaces of the welfare state as contested sites of differentially distributed care, *Collective Welfare* confronts tensions between institutional bounds and autonomous practices of denying, circulating, or “centring care”¹¹ in social relations.

Animating these imbricating circuits are multiple questions:

What meanings are assigned to care, and by whom? Who speaks for care? What ways of knowing, representing, or performing care are erased or marginalized by dominant medical or public health framings of care? Who cares, and under what conditions? How are the perceptions of care and the conditions of care work mutually reinforcing? Where are the spaces of learning to care? What is care’s fate under neoliberal capitalism whose governing ideals are competition and individual responsibility? How is the attentiveness necessary to care affected by the demands of contemporary work and always-on media life? How is care enacted or neglected in the affective economies of art and activism? What is the relationship between care and resilience in communities

of dissent? What forms and strategies of collective organization are emerging from care work? What would it mean for the exercise of care to be self-determined? What wider political-economic and social transformations are begged by calls to democratize the burden of care and establish a “care-centered economy?”¹² How does, and how might, the category of care function politically? “(W)hy not begin to imagine and construct an organization of the social that prioritizes persons, that attends to our sustainability—from access to health care to the right to affect—which orients toward our enrichment as human beings—from the access to knowledge, education, and information to the freedom to move around the world—that listens to our desires?”¹³ Could an expansive conception of care open common discursive ground toward linking multiple struggles in the domain of social reproduction? And finally, how can we work against the tendency of “curatorial and institutional initiatives that perform radicalism on a discursive or representational level, without addressing or transforming the political conditions under which they operate?”¹⁴

It is within these final two questions that the exhibition series’ political proposition and organizing strategies emerge. Its political proposition, kept in play throughout, pivots on care as a possible nodal point among actions, struggles, and visions that “replace” care “as an *arche* of human existence and of social relations.”¹⁵ And in its organizing strategies, *Take Care* strives to take on the challenges posed by its program: to rethink affective dimensions of (curatorial) labour; decentre individual authorship; profile radical communities of care; reallocate cultural and institutional resources; cut through apathy and empathy; invite “multiplicity and complication;”¹⁶ practice collective resiliency; respect existing initiatives and historical precedents; generate new bonds; and to explore care as a concept for catalyzing recomposition, or for establishing linkages across conflicts and contexts. *Take Care* is, in short, a connective project.

- 1 Letters & Handshakes, "I stood before the source," *I stood before the source* (Mississauga: Blackwood Gallery, 2016), 32. See also Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike - Four hypotheses," trans. Franco Ingrassia and Nate Holdren, in *The Commoner*, no. 11 (2006): 42.
- 2 On the crisis of care, see: Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike"; Nancy Fraser, "Contradictions of Capital and Care," in *New Left Review* 100 (2016): 99-117, and "Capitalism's Crisis of Care: A Conversation with Nancy Fraser," in *Dissent* (Fall 2016): 30-37; Emma Dowling, "Love's Labour's Cost: The Political Economy of Intimacy," *Verso blog* (13 February, 2016): <http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2499-love-s-labour-s-cost-the-political-economy-of-intimacy>; Radiodress, in consultation with Syrus Marcus Ware, ed., *MICE 02: Healing Justice* (Fall 2016): <http://micemagazine.ca/issue-two>.
- 3 Fraser, "Contradictions of Capital and Care."
- 4 Arlie Russell Hochschild, "Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value," in *On the Edge: Living with Global Capitalism*, ed. Will Hutton and Anthony Giddens (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000), 130-146.
- 5 "In capitalist societies, the capacities available for social reproduction are accorded no monetized value. They are taken for granted, treated as free, and infinitely available as 'gifts,' which require no attention or replenishment. It's assumed that there will always be sufficient energies to sustain social connections on which economic production, and society more generally, depend. This is very similar to the way that nature is treated in capitalist societies, as an infinite reservoir from which we can take as much as we want and into which we can dump any amount of waste. In fact, neither nature nor social reproduction are infinite; both of them can be stretched to the breaking point." Fraser, "Capitalism's Crisis of Care," 91.
- 6 Here we note previous exhibitions such as *Skills Exchange: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care* (2008-2012, Serpentine Galleries, London), *Grand Domestic Revolution* (2009-2012, Casco, Utrecht), *Care Crisis* (2012, Futura, Prague), *Episode 7: We Can't Live Without Our Lives* (2015, Tramway Arts, Glasgow), and *Universal Hospitality* (2016, Vienna); and organizations such as Caring Across Generations, Service Employees International Union, National Domestic Workers Alliance, Care Revolution Network, and many more.
- 7 Isabell Lorey, *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious* (London: Verso, 2015), 91.
- 8 The terminology of "circuits" is favoured in part because it underscores interdependence. The possibility that "circuits" connote a technological rationality is intentional, given emerging experiments in, for example, the automation of care work (e.g. robot care), and it also acknowledges the heightened digital mediation of care generally.
- 9 Self-care, in particular, courses through the exhibition circuitry. On the politics of self-care, especially as mobilized by Audre Lorde, see, for example, Sara Ahmed, "Selfcare as Warfare," *feministkilljoys* (August 25, 2014): <https://feministkilljoys.com/2014/08/25/selfcare-as-warfare/>; Billy-Ray Belcourt, *Masturbatory Ethics, Anarchic Objects: Notes on Decolonial Love*, unpublished thesis (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2016); Lauren Fournier/Lynx Sainte-Marie/Sarah Sharma, "Antinomies of Self-Care," in *The Blackwood 1* (Summer 2017): <http://blackwoodgallery.ca/publications/TheBlackwoodissue01.html>.
- 10 Anna-Sophie Springer and Etienne Turpin, "Reassembling the Natural," <http://reassemblingnature.org/verschwindende-vermaechtnisse/>. On forms of knowing and ways of being in relation to humans, nonhumans, communities, and territories that exceed colonial frameworks, see, for example, Deborah Bird Rose, "People and the Planet: Anthropocene Noir," *Arena Journal*, no. 41/42 (2013): 206-219; Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy: Nishnaabeg Intelligence and Rebellious Transformation," in *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3, (2014): 1-25; David Garneau, "Migration as Territory: Performing Domain with a Non-Colonial Aesthetic Attitude," in *VOZ-À-VOZ/VOICE-À-VOICE*, eds. Maria Alejandrina Coates and Julieta Maria, e-fagia (September 18, 2015): <http://www.vozavoz.ca/feature/david-garneau>; Zoe Todd, "Indigenizing the Anthropocene," in *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies*, eds. Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015), 241-254; Audre Simpson cited in Tarah Hogue, "#callresponse," *Art21 Magazine* (December 26, 2016): <http://magazine.art21.org/2016/12/26/callresponse/#>.
- 11 Albert Banerjee and Pat Armstrong, "Centring Care: Explaining Regulatory Tensions in Residential Care for Older Persons," in *Studies in Political Economy* 95 (Spring, 2015): 7-27.
- 12 Ina Praetorius, *The Care-Centered Economy: Rediscovering What Has Been Taken for Granted*, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Publication Series Economy + Social Issues, 16 (2015): https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/the_care-centered_economy.pdf.
- 13 Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike," 42.
- 14 Helena Reckitt, "Support Acts: Curating, Caring and Social Reproduction," in *Journal of Curatorial Studies* 5, no. 1 (2016), 25. Here, Reckitt draws on Marion von Osten and Andrea Phillips, among others.
- 15 Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike," 41.
- 16 Radiodress, "we begin with our bodies," *MICE 02* (Fall, 2016): <http://micemagazine.ca/issue-two/we-begin-our-bodies-mice-issue-2>.

CIRCUIT 1

Labour of Curation

September 11–30, 2017

Recalling the etymology of curate (*curare*: "to take care of"), *Labour of Curation* views cultures of work and interaction in art institutions through a care lens, and reflects on art's implication in, rather than detached observation of, the crisis of care.

Habits of Care
Curated by Helena Reckitt

Lisa Busby, Claire Fontaine,
Deborah Ligorio,
Paul Maheke, Raju Rage,
Amie Siegel, Laura Yuile

Public Programs

***Wages for Housework:
The Canadian Context***

An EMILIA-AMALIA Feminist Working
Group Workshop
With Helena Reckitt and Christina Rousseau
Tuesday, September 5, 6–9pm
Art Metropole

Curating and Caring

Three-part workshop led by Helena Reckitt
September 9, September 20, September 23
University of Toronto St. George
and University of Toronto Mississauga

Opening Reception

With performances by Paul Maheke and
Laura Yuile
Wednesday, September 13, 5–8pm
Blackwood Gallery

***Protocols, Policies, and Proposals
Performed***

Scores composed by Lisa Busby and
performed by The Element Choir
Friday, September 22 and Saturday,
September 23
Various locations at University of Toronto
Mississauga

***Care Crisis, Care Connective:
An Open Forum on Cultural Work***

With Helena Reckitt and *Curating and
Caring* workshop participants, Raju Rage,
Precarious Workers Brigade, Jacqueline
Hoàng Nguyễn and Boo Watson
Hosted by Letters & Handshakes
Saturday, September 23, 10am–6pm
Blackwood Gallery

**Reader-in-Residence Session with
Art Metropole**

Public reading by Joshua Vettivelu
Wednesday, September 27, 12–1pm
Blackwood Gallery



Deborah Ligorio, *A Somatheory Encounter: Relational Objects* (detail), 2017. Mixed media, dimensions variable.
COURTESY THE ARTIST.

CIRCUIT 2

Care Work

October 16–November 4, 2017

Traversing care as a social gesture, a job, and a political site, *Care Work* presents counter-narratives of the provision of care, care workers' struggles, and caring labour's transformation through colonialism, marketization, migration, and technology.

k.g. Guttman
Hands become Ears

Marisa Morán Jahn
(Studio REV-)
CareForce

Kwentong Bayan Collective
In Love and Struggle

Onaman Collective
Land and Water Protectors

The Let Down Reflex
Curated by Amber Berson
and Juliana Driever

Lise Haller Baggesen and
Deirdre M. Donoghue,
Cevan Castle / The Center
for Parenting Artists, Dillon
de Give, Home Affairs with
Ozlem Ozkal, Leisure, LoVid,
Jacqueline Hoàng Nguyễn,
Shani K Parsons, Kerri-Lynn
Reeves, Shane Aslan Selzer

Public Programs

FREE Contemporary Art Bus Tour
Exhibition tour to Blackwood Gallery,
Art Gallery of Mississauga, Art Gallery of
York University, Y+ contemporary
Sunday, October 15, 12–5pm

Carework as Choreography
Wednesday, October 18, 1–5pm
12–2pm: Feminist Lunchtime Talks with
Marisa Morán Jahn (CareForce), Kwentong
Bayan Collective, Cynthia Cranford, and
care worker advocates
2–3pm: Exhibition Talk & Tour
3pm: Dance Rally
Blackwood Gallery
Presented in partnership with Women and
Gender Studies

Care, Automated
Workshop with Amelia Abreu, Marc Böhlen,
Kelly Fritsch, Ian Roderick, Sarah Sharma
Saturday, October 21, 11am–3pm
McLuhan Centre for Culture and Technology

**Reader-in-Residence Session with
Art Metropole**
Public reading by Alize Zorlutuna
Wednesday, October 25, 12–1pm
Blackwood Gallery

Hands become Ears
Performances led by k.g. Guttman
For students by appointment only
October 25–November 4 (not including Sundays)
University of Toronto Mississauga campus

Love's Labours
A moving image program curated by
Shani K Parsons
Saturday, October 28, 1–3pm
The Revue Cinema

A Day of Affectionate Actions
Saturday, November 4, 1–4pm
1pm: Introduction by Amber Berson and Juliana
Driever
1:30pm: *HouseHold* by LoVid, live performance
3pm: *By My Own Admission* by Dillon de
Give, live theatre event
MiST Theatre, University of Toronto Mississauga



Marisa Morán Jahn (Studio REV-), *CareForce Disco* (documentation of a rally on the steps of City Hall, Los Angeles), 2016. With the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA), Pilipino Workers Center, National Domestic Workers Alliance.
PHOTO: MARC SHAVITZ. COURTESY STUDIO REV-.

CIRCUIT 3

Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid

November 20–December 9, 2017

Infrastructures and Aesthetics of Mutual Aid turns to support structures and collaborative practices beyond institutional spaces that are conventionally associated with care, such as hospitals and long-term residential care facilities, to consider care as a disposition, a system of reciprocity, a radical act, and an elusive goal within communities of art and activism alert to the challenge of sustainability.

The Sustenance Rite
Curated by Lauren Fournier

Anthea Black, Thirza
Cuthand, Erika DeFreitas,
Petrina Ng, Zoë Schneider,
Kara Stone, Evan Tyler,
Justice Walz, Jessica Lynn
Whitbread

Radiodress
MKV Ceremony

Circo Zero
*Turbulence (a dance about
the economy)*

Public Programs

FREE Contemporary Art Bus Tour
Exhibition tour to Blackwood Gallery,
Oakville Galleries, Kitchener-Waterloo
Art Gallery
Sunday, November 19, 12–5pm

MKV Ceremony with Radiodress
Nine private immersions will be offered
between November 20 and December 3
elgallery

**Reader-in-Residence Session with
Art Metropole**
Public reading by Lisa Myers
Wednesday, November 22, 12–1pm
Blackwood Gallery

Dames Making Games
Workshop with Kaitlin Tremblay
Thursday, November 23, 9–11am
Communication, Culture, Technology
Building, University of Toronto Mississauga

Turbulence (a dance about the economy)
Circo Zero
Friday, November 24 and Saturday,
November 25, 8pm
Collective Space

Feminist Lunchtime Talks
***Mapping Informal Networks of Women
Living with HIV***
Jessica Lynn Whitbread, with respondent
Mercy Gichuki
Wednesday, November 29, 12–2pm
Blackwood Gallery
Presented in partnership with Women and
Gender Studies

***Tea Time: Mapping Informal Networks
of Women Living with HIV***
Facilitated by Jessica Lynn Whitbread
Blackwood Gallery
Private event



Justice Walz, *Anxiety Escape Kit* (detail), 2017. COURTESY THE ARTIST.

CIRCUIT 4

Stewardship

January 8–27, 2018

Stewardship decentres the isolated individual as the privileged recipient or scene of care, and forefronts “epistemically-diverse” conceptions and collective practices of care that centre upon relationships to land, territory, and nonhumans.

#callresponse

Curated by Tarah Hogue,
Maria Hupfield, Tania Willard

Christi Belcourt, Marcia
Crosby, Maria Hupfield,
Ursula Johnson, Cheryl
L’Hirondelle, Isaac Murdoch,
Esther Neff and IV
Castellanos, Tanya Tagaq,
Tania Willard, Laakkuluk
Williamson-Bathory

Public Programs

Please visit our website at blackwoodgallery.ca for up-to-date information on the programs in this circuit.

**Artists-in-Residence: Ursula Johnson,
Cheryl L’Hirondelle, cris derksen**
Blackwood Gallery

***#callresponse* Social Media
Writer-in-Residence**

Feminist Lunchtime Talks
Indigenizing Curriculum
Wednesday, January 10, 12–2pm
Blackwood Gallery
Presented in partnership with Women and
Gender Studies

Opening Reception and Performances
Wednesday, January 10, 5–8pm
Blackwood Gallery

**Song workshops with Ursula Johnson
and Cheryl L’Hirondelle**

***Nikamon Ohci Askiy (Ke’tapekiaq
Ma’qimikew): The Land Sings***
Performance by Ursula Johnson,
Cheryl L’Hirondelle, and cris derksen

Panel Discussion
On the stewardship of land, water, and
Inuit art collections

Inuit Artist Database Edit-A-Thon
Wednesday, January 17, 1–3pm
Blackwood Gallery
Presented in partnership with the
Inuit Art Foundation

**Reader-in-Residence Session with
Art Metropole**
Public reading by Maggie Groat
Wednesday, January 24, 12–1pm
Blackwood Gallery



Ursula Johnson and Cheryl L'Hirondelle, *Nikamon Ohci Askiy (Ke'tapekiaq Ma'qimikew): The Land Sings* (performance documentation), 2016. FADO Performance Art Centre. PHOTO: HENRY CHAN. COURTESY THE ARTISTS.

CIRCUIT 5

Collective Welfare

February 12–March 10, 2018

Engaging spaces of the welfare state as contested sites of differentially distributed care, *Collective Welfare* confronts tensions between institutional bounds and autonomous practices of denying, circulating, or centring care in social relations.

Steven Eastwood
The Interval and the Instant

Sheena Hoszko
*Correctional Service Canada
Accommodation Guidelines:
Mental Healthcare Facility*

Jakob Jakobsen
*HOSPITAL
PRISON
UNIVERSITY*

Carolyn Lazard
In Sickness and Study

Public Programs

Feminist Lunchtime Talks

*Policing Black Lives: State Violence in
Canada from Slavery to Present*
Robyn Maynard, in conversation with
Beverly Bain and Sheena Hoszko
Wednesday, March 7, 12pm
Blackwood Gallery
Presented in partnership with Women and
Gender Studies

FREE Contemporary Art Bus Tour

Exhibition tour to Humber Galleries,
Blackwood Gallery, Art Gallery of
Mississauga, Art Gallery of York University
Sunday, February 25, 12–5pm

Reader-in-Residence Session with Art Metropole

Public reading by Yaniya Lee
Wednesday, February 28, 12–1pm
Blackwood Gallery

Running with Concepts: The Empathic Edition

Friday, March 9–Sunday, March 11, 2018
Blackwood Gallery

This three-day, annual event is part-colloquium, part-workshop, part-performance, and part-experiment. *Running with Concepts: The Empathic Edition* brings together participants selected from an open call for submissions alongside distinguished guests including **Joshua Clover, Steven Eastwood, Nasrin Himada, Jakob Jakobsen, Carolyn Lazard, Jeff Reinhardt, Juliana Spahr, Pelin Tan, and more.**

Running with Concepts: The Empathic Edition recognizes that we are having a global crisis of empathy. With presentations by artists, poets, pedagogues, filmmakers, prison chaplains, prison abolitionists, registered nurses, health care administrators, human rights lawyers, and others, the event asks: If care is a connective issue across social contexts and struggles, what might a new “care coalition” look like? What practices of empathy might promote an ability to relate without identification, appropriation, or condescension?

A complete list of presenters will be released in February 2018.



Steven Eastwood, *Island* (film still), 2017. COURTESY THE ARTIST.

A Very Careful Strike - Four hypotheses¹

Precarias a la Deriva

In the face of this prevailing logic, our wager consists in recuperating and reformulating the feminist proposal for a logic of care.² A care that appears here as a mode of taking charge of bodies opposed to the securitary logic, because, in place of containment, it seeks the sustainability of life and, in place of fear, it bases itself on cooperation, interdependence, the gift, and social ecology. Seeking a definition of care, we identify four key elements:

Affective virtuosity: this is a matter of a criterion of social ecology, which breaks with the idea that care happens because someone loves you and presents it more as an ethical element that mediates every relation. This affective virtuosity has to do with empathy, with intersubjectivity, and contains an essential creative character, constitutive of life and the part of labour (nonremunerated as much as remunerated) that cannot be codified. What escapes the code situates us in that which is not yet said, opens the terrain of the thinkable and livable, it is that which creates relationships. We have to necessarily take into account this affective component in order to unravel the politically radical character of care, because we know – this time without a doubt – that the affective is the effective.

Interdependence: we take as our point of departure the recognition of the multiple dependence that is given among the inhabitants of this planet and we count social cooperation as an indispensable tool for enjoying it. The task of politicizing care leads to opening the concept and analyzing the concepts that compose it: economically remunerated care, nonremunerated care, self-care, and those activities that assure the sustainability of life. People depend on each other, these positions are not static and it is not only “the others” that need care. The proposal consists in destabilizing these positions, which, when they are mediated by a labour, relation remain even more fixed,

because we want to think relations beyond those of commodity mediations, following the logic of the gift, where one gives without knowing what, how, and when one will receive something in exchange.

Transversality: when we speak of care we refer to a notion with multiple dimensions. As we have already seen, there are remunerated and nonremunerated labours of care, blurring the false line that is persistently drawn between those who think themselves independent and crosses in an indissoluble form the material and the immaterial (relational, emotive, subjective, and sexual) aspects of our life, needs, and desires. Care takes place in commodity spheres and in those at the margins of the market, in the home and outside the home, combining a multitude of tasks and requirements for different specific knowledges. Care makes newly manifest that we cannot clearly delimit lifetime from work time, because the labour of care is precisely to manufacture life.³

Everydayness: care is that continuous line that is always present, because, if it were not, we could not continue living; it only varies in its intensity, its qualities, and its form of organization (more or less unfair, more or less ecological). We are speaking of the sustainability of life, that is to say, of everyday tasks of affective engineering that we propose to make visible and to revalorize as raw material for the political, because we do not want to think social justice without taking into account how to construct it in day-to-day situations.

Affective virtuosity, interdependence, transversality, and everydayness constitute the key ingredients of a careful know-how, fruit of collective and corporeal knowledge,⁴ that breaks with the securitary logic and thus opens cracks in the walls of fear and precarization. But this is not a prescription for sacrificed women, but rather a line upon which to insist in order for radical transformation.

1 This is an excerpt of an article originally published in English in *The Commoner*, no. 11 (2016), 33-45, and translated by Franco Ingrassia and Nate Holdren. The original Spanish article is licensed under Creative Commons and is available at http://www.sindominio.net/karakola/antigua_casa/precarias/cuidados/verycarefulstrike.htm.

2 Our concept of the logic of care differs radically from the ethic of care that some feminists (among them Carol Gilligan) proposed in the 1980s. While that notion of the ethic of care places emphasis on the individual attitudes of those who care and think care as a transcendent value (that is to say, more as a moral than a true ethic), for us, the logic of care is transindividual and immanent, it does not depend on one but rather on many, and is thus inseparable from the social, material, and concrete forms of organization of the tasks related to care.

3 On the transversality of care, see Precarias a la Deriva, *A la deriva (por los circuitos de la precariedad femenina)*, (Madrid: Traficantes de sueños, 2004), 224.

4 The phrase here refers to the Marxian “general intellect” as presented in the work of Paolo Virno, Antonio Negri, and others. [Translator’s note]

Does your
Gallery,
Museum,
Conference
Center or
Festival provide
Child Care?



Home Affairs, *Does your Gallery, Museum, Conference Center or Festival Provide Childcare?*, 2015. Screenprint on paper, 22in x 30in. COURTESY ARZU OZKAL AND THE ELIZABETH FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS.

Acknowledgments

Take Care

September 11, 2017–March 10, 2018
Curated by Letters & Handshakes

Letters & Handshakes is a collaboration of Greig de Peuter (Department of Communication Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University) and Christine Shaw (Blackwood Gallery and Department of Visual Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga). Letters & Handshakes' past projects include the exhibitions *I stood before the source* and *Precarious: Carole Condé + Karl Beveridge*, the forum *Fighting Foreclosed Futures: Politics of Student Debt*, and the symposium and micro-publication *Surplus?: Labour and the Digital*.

Staff

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Petrina Ng, Exhibition Coordinator
Alison Cooley, Curatorial Assistant and Collections Archivist
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Micropublication Printing

Thistle Printing Ltd.



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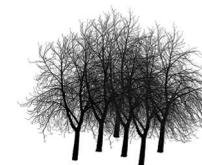


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Canada

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Blackwood Gallery

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Gallery Hours

Monday–Friday: 12–5pm
Wednesday: 12–9pm
Saturday: 12–3pm

The Blackwood Gallery promotes LGBTQ2 positive spaces and experiences and is barrier-free. The gallery is FREE and open to the public.

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