FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE SHELLEY & DONALD RUBIN FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES

IN THE POWER OF YOUR CARE

AN EXHIBITION FEATURING THE WORK OF
ANA MENDIETA, JO SPENCE, ANDREAS STERZING, FRED TOMASELLI,
HANNAH WILKE, AND DAVID WOJNAROWICZ, AMONG OTHERS

The 8th Floor, 17 West 17th Street, NYC
April 19 to August 12, 2016
Opening Reception, Tuesday, April 19, from 6:00 to 8:00pm

New York, March 24, 2016 – The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation is pleased to announce In the Power of Your Care, an exhibition about health and health care as a human right, and the interdependencies of care in our culture, from personal relationships to government policy. Addressing issues such as the politics of institutionalized care in hospitals and military detention centers, the FDA’s ban on blood donations from gay and bisexual men, and the challenges
posed by medical treatments of cancer and HIV, *In the Power of Your Care* proposes that health care as a human right can be upheld through community-based efforts and policy change. The exhibition will be on view **April 19 to August 12, 2016** at **The 8th Floor**, the exhibition and programming space for The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, located at 17 West 17th Street, New York City.

*In the Power of Your Care* features artists – **caraballo-farman**, Jordan Eagles, Pepe Espaliú, Rajkamal Kahlon, Simone Leigh, Ana Mendieta, Mladen Miljanovic, Frank Moore, Carmen Papalia, Hunter Reynolds, Jo Spence, Andreas Sterzing, Sunaura Taylor, Fred Tomaselli, Hannah Wilke, David Wojnarowicz, and Jody Wood – who courageously question how health is defined in our culture, highlighting blind spots in the public policy surrounding care. A common theme connecting many of the works in the exhibition is the unstable definition of physical and mental health, its relationship to beauty, and the illusive nature of being cured.

Reflecting on the history of the AIDS crisis and the support network that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, Pepe Espaliú’s sculpture *Nest* (1993) is a ring of crutches that elegantly conveys the interdependencies necessary for survival. Hunter Reynolds’ video *Medication Reminder* (2015) pays homage to the networks of care and support within the community affected by HIV, specifically the unwavering commitment of Kathleen White, a close friend of Reynolds who called him on a daily basis to remind him to take his medication. Andreas Sterzing’s photographic portrait *David Wojnarowicz (Silence=Death); New York* (1980/2014) depicts Wojnarowicz with his mouth sewn shut, a metaphor for the unspeakable and under-recognized realities of living with HIV at the time. Frank Moore’s paintings characterize the surrealist experience of treatment, from the bureaucracy of hospitalization to the anxieties that came with experimental medical treatments for HIV.

Several artists in the exhibition – **caraballo-farman**, Jo Spence, and Hannah Wilke – express the struggles associated with cancer and battles surrounding the patient’s relationship to the hidden manifestations of physical disease. caraballo-farman’s *The Contemplation Source Room* (2016) is a sound and light environment in which cancer is visualized in a ritual combining 3D prints of tumors, the sounds of an MRI scan and a shaman’s chants in a healing ceremony. Spence and Wilke’s portraits reveal the trepidation and resignation of undergoing care, and the physical changes and sense of loss that occur during treatment. Wilke’s two “performalist” self-portraits (a term she coined to describe her portraits) document the artist before and after treatment; Spence’s *Phototherapy* series, specifically her collaboration with Terry Dennett, express the uncertainty of change in the face of institutionalized care.

Taking a more clinical approach to picturing health, Ana Mendieta’s film *X-ray* (c. 1975) is an x-ray view of the artist’s skull and jaws in motion as she performed a speech test. Within the exhibition are several artworks by Jordan Eagles including slide projections and prints that incorporate cow blood and blood donated by gay men. Projections of slides containing gay blood expand upon the prejudicial politics surrounding the FDA’s ban on blood donations by gay and bisexual men, which was only partially lifted in December of 2015.
Also included is a suite of three non-figurative portraits by Fred Tomaselli, in which the stars of astrological charts are replaced with over-the-counter and prescription medication, and illicit substances taken by his subjects. Each portrait considers how the chemistry of medication, when taken as prescribed or by self-medicating, contributes to the formation of an individual’s identity.

Rajkamal Kahlon, Mladen Miljanovic, and Jody Wood examine a range of traumatic experiences – military detention, the after-effects of military service, and homelessness – as a way of acknowledging injustices that produce trauma, their effect on physical and mental health, and pathways to recovery. Kahlon’s Untitled Series of Autopsy Reports (2011) serves as a critique of U.S. military policy and commemoration of Iraqi and Afghani detainees whose lives were lost at the hands of the U.S. military. Miljanovic’s Show Where it Hurts With Your Hand (2012) is a visual diary that documents the written communication between two people: a man incapacitated due to post-traumatic stress syndrome following military service and his wife who administers his care. Wood’s Beauty in Transition is an ongoing project in which she operates a mobile beauty salon offering free services to homeless individuals that is, according to the artist, conceived to “facilitate empathic understanding and to unravel the reductive label of homelessness.”

Also concerned with health and recovery is Simone Leigh’s Free People’s Medical Clinic (2014), a project that revisits the often overlooked health care efforts organized by black women for the African American community during the 19th century as well as the Black Panthers’ community-based health care from the 1960s to the 1980s. Included in the exhibition are ephemera related to Leigh’s Free People’s Medical Clinic, which points to a need for more dignified health care options within underserved communities.

Repositioning disability as a political issue, Sunaura Taylor’s recent works on paper explore the visual discourses of disability and, as she notes, how her practice can become “freaked” when viewers learn that she paints with her mouth instead of her hands. Also engaging with disability in socio-political terms, artist Carmen Papalia shares his experience of blindness by leading participants on public walks. In his video White Cane Amplified (2015), Papalia exchanges his white cane for a high school marching band to reinterpret the cane as a sonic navigation tool.

About The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation
The Foundation believes in art as a cornerstone of cohesive, resilient communities and greater participation in civic life. In its mission to make art available to the broader public, in particular to underserved communities, the Foundation provides direct support to, and facilitates partnerships between, cultural organizations and advocates of social justice across the public and private sectors. Through grantmaking, the Foundation supports cross-disciplinary work connecting art with social justice via experimental collaborations, as well as extending cultural resources to organizations and areas of New York City in need. sdrubin.org
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