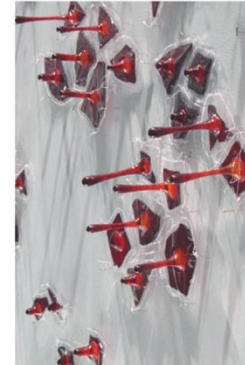


TAKE CARE:

● Biomedical Ethics in the Twenty-First Century

Kristina Arnold - Adrienne Outlaw
Sher Fick - Lindsay Obermeyer
Sadie Ruben - Jeanette May - Libby Rowe



CURATORIAL STATEMENT

The rapid advancement of medical technology has brought with it unprecedented bioethical dilemmas. Particularly in economically advanced countries, technologies are outpacing our ability to fully understand their moral implications. The exhibit *TAKE CARE: Bioethical Issues in the Twenty-First Century* considers civilization's unease with modern family planning, maternal and fetal care, childbirth and child rearing. For the first time in history, there is knowledge available to mothers which forces them to make life or death decisions whether to carry a disfigured, malformed, or unintentional fetus to term, whether to use pharmaceuticals with their associated risks, and whether to risk passing on genetic diseases. In these situations, we are no longer able to rely on long-established religious, societal or medical expertise for guidance, and too often, we only grapple with such problems at the time of crisis. The show highlights these bioethical dilemmas, with the hope that viewers will take the opportunity to better appreciate the complexity of these personal decisions in a rapidly changing world.



Kristina Arnold

Kristina Arnold addresses issues of biology and the sociological construction of health and medicine. Her glass and plastic *Drip* installation investigates genetic inheritance and the emotional cost of love. This internationally exhibited artist holds a BA from Brown University and an MFA from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



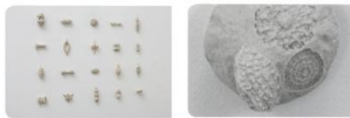
Monica Bock

Monica Bock's work focuses on the ordinary and extreme phenomena of maternal life. *Afterbirth (Sac Fluid, Cord)*, consists of three cast-glycerin dustpans. Glass bottles embedded in the handles hold the amniotic sac, amniotic fluid, and the umbilical cord. This nationally exhibited artist holds a BFA and MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.



Sher Fick

Sher Fick explores the social stigma of chemical and hormonal pharmaceutical therapy. In *Coping Skills*, a mirrored wooden altar holds 45 prescription bottles that Fick painstakingly wrapped with scraps of hand-stitched vintage fabric. This nationally exhibited artist holds a BFA from Middle Tennessee State University.



Annette Gates

Annette Gates makes porcelain sculpture rooted in the biological reality of microscopic single-cell organisms. Gates' work speaks to the genetic memory of mitochondrial DNA. This nationally exhibited artist holds a BFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder and an MFA from the University of Georgia, Athens.

TAKE CARE IS A TRAVELING EXHIBITION.

Additional venues can be arranged.

Visit http://www.n-cap.org/take_care.html

Jeanette May

Jeanette May's *Fertility in the Age of A.R.T. (Assisted Reproductive Technology)* examines the current discourse in micro-managed procreation through enigmatic photographs that combine scientific citations with images such as square-shaped eggs and sonograms. This internationally exhibited artist holds a BFA from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts.

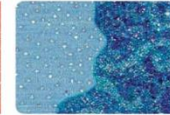
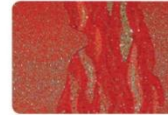
"... The MicroSort process allows clinicians to separate the larger X sperm from the Y sperm.

Pre-implantation Genetic Diagnosis screens embryos



Lindsay Obermeyer

Lindsay Obermeyer's beaded and embroidered *Shadows Series* investigates the ethics associated with pharmaceutical use in the treatment of mental disorders. This internationally exhibited artist holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, an MFA from the University of Washington, Seattle and an MAT from National-Louis University, Chicago.



Adrienne Outlaw

Adrienne Outlaw's *Fecund Videos Series* explores ethical issues developing with advancing biotechnologies. Videos of mysterious, fleshy forms juxtaposed with the latest advancements in biophysics seem to float inside mirrored, breast-like structures. This internationally exhibited artist holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MLAS from Vanderbilt University.



Libby Rowe

Libby Rowe confronts the fear of malformed offspring and the viability of life in *Womb Worries*, a collection of hand-made sock monkeys. Some of these red-lipped, grey bodied dolls have only one leg; others have far too many. This nationally exhibited artist holds a BFA from the University of Northern Iowa and an MFA from Syracuse University.



Sadie Ruben

Sadie Ruben's *Alien Fetus Series* visualizes the social and political consequences of bio-engineering through a series of fantastical, malformed and twisted bodies preserved in clear gel. These slimy, translucent, flesh-tone forms seem to float inside their glass containers. Ruben lives in Copenhagen. This is her first international show.





TAKE CARE:

Biomedical Ethics in the Twenty-First Century

EXHIBITION ESSAY BY TONYA VERNOOY

"Scientific progress makes moral progress a necessity; for if man's power is increased, the checks that restrain him from abusing it must be strengthened." - Madame de Stael, 1835

As molecular medicine, genetic manipulation, cloning, and stem cell research rapidly progress so too must the morality and ethics that assist in governing their boundaries. Through an examination of the grey area between enhancement and therapy, necessity and desire, parent and child, the nine artists participating in *TAKE CARE: Biomedical Ethics in the Twenty-First Century* reveal that there is no definitive right answer to the question of biotechnological advancement. It is the informed dialogue that is paramount. The political philosopher Michael J. Sandel writes, "Breakthroughs in genetics present us with a promise and a predicament. The promise is that we may soon be able to treat and prevent a host of debilitating diseases. The predicament is that our new-found genetic knowledge may also enable us to manipulate our own nature...to make ourselves 'better than well.'" Caught in the middle of this is the mother whose fundamental need to create, protect, and support her offspring to the best of her ability has to contend with biotechnology's possible repercussions. While scientists are driven by the aspirations of discovery and improvement, the artists serve as the cultural conscience, helping to explicate the complex and question the ramifications of a science that will pervade social, political, cultural, and self beliefs. ...While Sher Fick and Lindsay Obermeyer investigate the growing pharmaceutical role with advancing medicine, Annette Gates concentrates on the idea of the self within the world of cloning. Libby Rowe and Sadie Ruben examine the rights of the fetuses within genetic progress, and finally Monica Bock, Adrienne Outlaw, Kristina Arnold and Jeanette May explore the function of the mother within the biotechnological age. Through their artwork these artists explore the crucial social, economic, and ethical implications of biotechnological advancements and create a space for important dialogue. As Dr. Sirine Shebaya, Greenwall, Fellow in Bioethics and Health Policy at the John Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics, writes, "The best way to avoid slippery slopes to bad outcomes is to have an informed, democratic discussion that takes into account both expert opinions and social values. We need regulations because scientists and the general public need clarity about what they can and cannot do, a convincing rationale for permissions and restrictions, and a voice in arriving at decisions with such important ramifications." These artists are that voice.

To read Vernooy's expanded essay and texts by Linda Weintraub, Veronica Kavass and Ellen Wright Clayton, see the *TAKE CARE* catalog, available in print and as a free download on www.n-cap.org.

The *TAKE CARE* brochure and catalog are made possible with grants from the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation and the Tennessee Arts Commission.

the arts
changing lives!
TENNESSEE ARTS COMMISSION