



KING'S LEAP

368 Broadway #506
New York NY 10013
Wednesday – Saturday 1-6PM
kingsleaprojects@gmail.com
www.kingsleaprojects.net

SHARONA FRANKLIN
NEW PSYCHEDELIA OF INDUSTRIAL HEALING
FEBRUARY 29–MARCH 28, 2020
OPENING RECEPTION: 6 – 9PM February 29, 2020

King's Leap is pleased to present the first solo exhibition in the United States of Sharona Franklin. Franklin's practice spans sculptures, Instagram accounts, edibles, and books, examining the bio-ethics and social responsibilities of treating people who live with disabilities. Entitled *New Psychedelia of Industrial Healing*, this exhibition explores, in part, an ongoing practice that Franklin defines as bio-ritualistic:

...the embodiment of biopharmacology, biocitizenship, and the unveiled autobiography of a daily ritual, private self injection, and the treatment of genetic disease.

Franklin's bio-rituals take the form of meditative assemblage: an ontological study of objects and imagery that intersect her ongoing medical treatments and domestic life.

To Franklin, medications (and other healing agents) are radical antibodies: non-corporeal cellular structures that have no body until they take shape in her body to combat disease. Here, the representation of (anti)bodies is explored through a tapestry quilt, where images and fabrics are collaged into the shape of a cellular organism. The tapestry, free-hanging from ribbons, can be read as an "antibody" of bio-ritual. Enmeshed in the quilt are recycled fabrics and cotton further printed with bio-ritualistic collages that Franklin began two years ago, and then documented and archived on her Instagram account, @star_seeded. Franklin's quilt exemplifies a working approach foregrounded in radical feminist labor practices, and seeks to address the limits and possibilities of disabled individuals while subverting an inherently masculine bio-pharmaceutical system. As an analogue practice, the quilt itself becomes a nurturing and enveloping body, a result of "feminine" work and its historically time-based relationship to social, economic, and physical immobility.

Two porcelain plates further examine questions of ingestion, mutation, and regeneration. A hexagonal 10-inch dinner plate hangs beside a circular plate printed with an image that echoes the cellular motif of the quilt. Side by side, they point to the physiological indeterminacy of nourishing the body. Designed by Franklin, outsourced to a ceramics studio, and finally, UV printed with images of further bio-rituals, the plates reflect upon the limits and possibilities of Franklin's production — what is organically conceived and thus consumed — and the practical and emotional support structure disabled individuals require.

Significant in Franklin's practice and recent production are edible gelatins and botanical cakes that the artist bakes and produces in her own kitchen. For Sharona, these edibles represent an important aspect of conviviality in her work—the social relationship food offers when eaten together. Disseminated on her other Instagram account @paid.technologies, these edible sculptures are a way to explore the fragility of the artist's body, and act as an exploratory investigation into healing methodologies. Here, Franklin's gelatin mold decomposes over the course of the exhibition—an opportunity to witness the physical ramifications of organic degeneration.

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Central to Franklin's practice is language. Extracts of her poetry, activism, and phraseology lace along the quilt and its ribbons, the plates, and the wall. For Franklin, written language and visual language (which most often takes the form of books and memes) are a means to provoke thought and action. Language takes on aesthetic shapes in her work, demanding provocation. This physicality demands visibility for disabled individuals in public space.

Franklin's use of psychedelia's consciousness-expanding qualities is enacted through the performance of daily life and ritual. Just as mind-altering drugs enact self-submission, Franklin sees her work as a radical acceptance of her bio-citizenship. She reflects on the dominion that bureaucracies and biopharmaceutical industries have over the bodies they sustain and nurture, like hers, while remaining cognizant of how those same powers can wield at arm's length decent access to medications, air quality, and water. For Franklin, psychedelia is total immersion, a complete, biocybernetic rewiring of how information is circulated.

Sharona Franklin (b.1987) is a Vancouver based multidisciplinary artist, writer, and activist. Documented through her social media platform, which includes [@paid.technologies](#), [@star_seeded](#), [@hot.crip](#), and [@disabled_personals](#), her work has reached thousands online. Through these platforms and her materials, Franklin's work disseminates her personal mythology of disability, gender, class, bio-citizenship, and botany. Recent exhibitions include those at Unit 17, Vancouver, Canada, G44 Center for Contemporary Photography, Toronto, Canada, New Image Art Gallery Los Angeles, CA, and Flux Factory, New York, NY. Recent publications include *Injustice in Biopharm*, 2019, Cassandra Press and *Rental Bod*, 2016, Peace Library Publications.