

legs

*a collaborative exhibition by
Christine Fellows, Chantel Mierau, Jennifer Still*



November 23, 2023 – February 16, 2024

Is all this effort of living in a body to learn to become free of it?

-Jennifer Still, *legs*

Poet Jennifer Still invited artist friends Christine Fellows (music/sound/stop-motion) and Chantel Mierau (costume/video) to collaborate with her to extend her long poem *legs* into a short film. Together, over many months, the trio listened deeply to the writing, took it into their hearts and responded.

legs is an elegy. The poem is a daughter's reflection upon the life and loss of her mother to lung cancer. Through the creation of the film, the three women artists process this grief.

The artists' use of objects, colours, shapes, lines, and textures hold symbolic meaning. Pale blue stands in for the membraneous sky, lake, swimming pool, hospital sheets. Hot pink pool noodles perch atop Still's mother's old roller skates. Doll-sized overalls, made by Still's maternal grandmother, the crushed velvet tracksuit sewn by Mierau, and the North Kildonan high school running track are rust-coloured flashes of red. And of course, there are the outrageously long navy nylons.

Nylons hold the body and the film together. They are shown in single pairs or in groupings. Sometimes they are occupied by the bodies of the three artists who wear them. Very often the nylons are animated by the breeze or the waves as they flutter along a clothesline or slither just beneath the water's surface. At times, the nylons are bulbous from the artists' attempts to stuff them with all manner of bizarre gifts: sewing patterns, cake slices, sparkly streamers, rubber toilet plungers.

While *legs* is a very personal response to the grief of losing a loved one it shows us the joy, beauty, absurdity, and humour amid the fallibility of our bodies.

Jennifer Gibson

Director/Curator, Gallery 1Co3

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Christine Fellows finds music in sounds we tend to take for granted: the voices of the people we love, the sounds of the spaces we move through as part of our daily lives. Although she identifies primarily as a songwriter and performer, her practice includes poetry, spoken word, paper collage, stop motion video, sound design, and composition. Over two decades, she has released 8 solo albums, and toured internationally both as a solo artist and as a collaborator, from the Canadian Arctic to Southern Australia. For her latest solo album *Stuff We All Get* (2022) she created 13 songs alongside 13 stop-motion videos.

Chantel Mierau is a visual artist working in video and performance. Her work examines the everyday, and a frequent focal point in her work is the body and clothing. By strategically using repetition to either lull and comfort, or to build tension and suspense, Mierau reckons with the comfort and discomfort of living in a body. Since graduating from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2011, she has exhibited locally and nationally. Her recent work “3 Chores” was exhibited in Winnipeg at Platform Centre for Photographic and Digital Art in 2019 and was subsequently featured in *BlackFlash Magazine* in 2020.

Jennifer Still composes poems with physicality. She is the author of several handmade chapbooks and three poetry books, *Comma* (Book*hug), *Girlwood* (Brick Books) and *Saltations* (Thistledown). *legs* is a limited-edition chapbook with Baseline Press (2022) and winner of the 2021 Malahat Review Long Poem Prize. In 2020 she collaborated with Christine Fellows on “I Write with Fossils”, a video-poem exploration, and the live-action sewing video “Close Call” with Chantel Mierau. She was the 2015 Carol Shields Writer-in-Residence at the University of Winnipeg where her first line of legs remains looped through a ceiling tile.

EXHIBITION HOURS

Monday - Friday between 12:00 and 4:00 pm from November 23, 2023 until February 16, 2024 (closed December 23, 2023 – January 7, 2024).

AFFILIATED PUBLIC EVENTS

Reception: November 23, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 pm at Gallery 1Co3

Conversation with Christine Fellows, Chantel Mierau and Jennifer Still: Date/time/location TBA

Care Tag Poetry Workshop: Date/time/location TBA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Gallery 1Co3 is on Treaty 1 Territory, the homeland of the Red River Métis and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Inineu, Anishinew, Dakota and Dene peoples, and. Our water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation.

legs was created in the Red River Valley on Treaty One Territory, Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Treaty Three Territory, Pine Falls, Manitoba, with generous grant awards from the Canada Council for the Arts and Manitoba Arts Council.

Gallery 1Co3

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