

OUT

ENTERTAINMENTART & BOOKS

AIDS Artists Anchor New York Exhibit on Health Care



Silence=Death, 1989

David Wojnarowicz (Silence=Death); New York, 1989/2014;

Pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag satin paper;

Artist: Andreas Sterzing

The elevator reaches the eighth floor, and peering through glass doors is the accusing yet desperate stare of a man, photographed—his mouth sewn shut.

The portrait of artist and AIDS activity David Wojnarowicz serves as a shocking welcome to “In the Power of Your Care,” an exhibition of art about health and health care at The 8th Floor on West 17th Street. The exhibition is sponsored by

the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation and curated by Sara Reisman.

Reisman thinks that Wojnarowicz's silent stare perfectly sets the tone for the show, where paintings, sculptures, video and more tell stories of conditions from HIV/AIDS to cancer.

"We want the exhibit to be an immersive space," said Reisman. "We want to find ways that these diseases intersect with others—how care, the responsibility of health changes over time."

The exhibit includes other works by artists invested in the AIDS crisis, including Frank Moore and Pepe Espaliu. More modern works, such as Hunter Reynolds' video "Medication Reminder" and Jordan Eagles's blood slides, tackle the issues of treatment and the stigma that still surrounds the disease.

In fact, Reisman created the show after seeing by Eagles's recent work. The artist's "Blood Mirror," created from blood donations by gay, bisexual and queer men, responded to the Food and Drug Administration's former ban and now deferment for gay and bisexual male blood donors.

"Prejudice made treatment so hard to access, which is what some of these artists portray," she said. "Now, we have artists showing us this unfulfilled promise of not just a cure, but adequate care, that speaks across the AIDS movement and across diseases and conditions."

Walking the gallery from piece to piece—disease to disease—Reisman hopes visitors ask the tough questions about what health care means to themselves and society.

"How do you have communal accountability? How do you find a diversity in your empathy for conditions?" she said.

Eagles's blood slides project a dark-ruby kaleidoscope in the corner.

"The way care is administered—maybe it can never be complete," she said.

"In the Power of Your Care" will be on view at The 8th Floor, 17 West 17th Street, until Aug. 12. [Click here](#) for more information on the exhibition and the artists.