

Graham Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Katherine Simóne Reynolds, *The Scene of the Unseen*, 2023. Fiber/rag inkjet print, 16 x 24 in. Courtesy the artist

A different kind of tender and the practice of overhealing

Katherine Simóne Reynolds

March 25–June 10, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, March 25, 4–6 p.m.

Chicago, March 16, 2023—In her first solo exhibition in Chicago, Graham Foundation Fellow, Katherine Simóne Reynolds continues her exploration of overhealing from trauma in a new body of work produced throughout her residency at the Madlener House. *A different kind of tender and the practice of overhealing* includes multidisciplinary works that reference the creation of a keloid—a raised scar-like skin growth that continues to grow beyond the original site of a wound—as an outward representation of healing and a site sensitive to recovery and repair in tandem.

The work centers on two towns in southern Illinois, Cairo and Brooklyn. Cairo was established as a port on the Mississippi River in the nineteenth century, and Brooklyn—also known as Lovejoy—was founded by Priscilla “Mother” Baltimore in 1829 after buying her own freedom,

Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts
Madlener House, 4 West Burton Place, Chicago, Illinois 60610 T 312-787-4071 F 312-787-6350
info@grahamfoundation.org www.grahamfoundation.org

and later became the first town incorporated by African Americans in the United States in 1873. By considering the historic and current conditions—as well as potential futures—of these Midwest communities, the exhibition addresses relationships between perceptions of abandonment and fertility, Black female imagination, and different manifestations of healing as Reynolds looks at the Rust Belt as a kind of keloidal landscape.

A character figure, Queen, emerges in the exhibition. Inspired by an epitaph, found in Charleston, Missouri, just across the Mississippi River from Cairo, Illinois: the tombstone simply reads, “The Queen Oct. 14, 1939.” Reynolds embodies this figure within the photo series exhibited in the first and second floor galleries and the new major two-channel episodic film work, *A different kind of tender*, shown in the east gallery on the second floor. Together, floor-based Keloid sculptures; a series of nail poems, made in collaboration with Cairo resident Chena Brazil, with lines such as “Am I Free?” cascading down acrylic press-on nails; and an installation throughout the first-floor galleries of clay nests and plaster festoons, selected from the Decorators Supply catalogue of ornamentation that dates to the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition; the works in the exhibition weave a multitude of references—including the 1861, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 that protects the gourd-like nests of the Cliff Swallow—to reflect on questions of freedom, protection, visibility, and invisibility in the lives of Black women and the landscape at the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers.

A different kind of tender and the practice of overhealing was made possible through the Graham Foundation Fellowship—a program that provides support for the development and production of original and challenging works and the opportunity to present these projects in an exhibition at the Graham’s galleries in Chicago. The Fellowship program extends the legacy of the Foundation’s first awards, made in 1957, and continues the tradition of support to individuals to explore innovative perspectives on spatial practices in design culture.

Katherine Simóne Reynolds practice investigates emotional dialects and psychogeographies of Blackness, and the importance of “anti-excellence.” Her work physicalizes emotions and experiences by constructing pieces that include portrait photography, video works, choreography, sculpture, and installation. Taking cues from the midwestern post-industrial melancholic landscape having grown up in the metro east area of Saint Louis, she formed an obsessive curiosity around the practices of healing as well as around a societal notion of progress spurning from a time of industrial success. Utilizing Black embodiment and affect alongside her own personal narrative as a place of departure has made her question her own navigation of ownership, inclusion, and authenticity within a contemporary gaze. She draws inspiration from Black glamour and beauty while interrogating the notion of “authentic care.” Her practice generally deals in Blackness from her own perspective, and she continuously searches for what it means to produce “Black Work.”

Reynolds has exhibited and performed at Pulitzer Arts Foundation, St. Louis; The Museum of

GF

Modern Art, New York; and SculptureCenter, Long Island City, NY, among other spaces. Alongside her visual art practice, she has embarked on curatorial projects at SculptureCenter; Stanley Museum of Art, Iowa City; and Clyfford Still Museum, Denver.

Special thanks to the project collaborators, including Papa Blankson, director of photography, and Regina Martinez, sound designer for the film, *A different kind of tender*, in addition to Chena Brazil, nail artist designer.

RELATED EVENTS

Thursday, April 27, 6 p.m.

Alicia Olushola Ajayi and Kelley Lemon in conversation with Katherine Simóne Reynolds

Thursday, May 11, 6 p.m.

Artist talk by Katherine Simóne Reynolds

Saturday, May 13, 3 p.m.

Reading by Jaqui Germain

Saturday, June 10, 2 p.m.

Performance by Jared Brown and Regina Martinez

ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship program extends the legacy of the Foundation's first awards, made in 1957, and continues the tradition of support to individuals to explore innovative perspectives on spatial practices in design culture. These initial fellowships provided a diverse group of practitioners a platform to pursue innovative ideas in the field, and they included alumni such as experimental architect Frederick J. Kiesler, painter Wilfredo Lam, Pritzker Prize winning architects Balkrishna V. Doshi and Fumihiko Maki, designer Harry Bertoia, photographer Harry M. Callahan, and sculptor Eduardo Chillida, among others.

Artist [David Hartt](#) piloted the contemporary Fellow program with his new body of work *in the forest*, which premiered at the Graham in the fall of 2017. Click below to learn more about other Graham Foundation Fellows and their work at the Madlener House:

[Brendan Fernandes: *The Master and Form* installation in collaboration with Norman Kelley \(2018\)](#)

[Torkwase Dyson: *Wynter-Wells School* \(2018\)](#)

[Martine Syms: *Incense Sweaters & Ice* \(2018–19\)](#)

[Nelly Agassi: *Spirit of the Waves* \(2019\)](#)

[Tatiana Bilbao Estudio: *Unraveling Modern Living* \(2019–20\)](#)

[Poured Architecture: *Sergio Prego on Miguel Fisac* \(2020\)](#)

[Anna Martine Whitehead: *FORCE! an opera in three acts* \(2020–21\)](#)

Barbara Stauffacher Solomon: *Exits Exist* (2022–23)

Mark Wasiuta (forthcoming)

ABOUT THE GRAHAM FOUNDATION

Founded in 1956, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts fosters the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its role in the arts, culture and society. The Graham realizes this vision through making project-based grants to individuals and organizations, and by producing exhibitions, events and publications.

The Graham Foundation was created by a bequest from Ernest R. Graham (1866–1936), a prominent Chicago architect and protégé of Daniel Burnham.

THE MADLENER HOUSE

Since 1963, the Graham Foundation has been located in the Madlener House, a turn-of-the-century Prairie-style mansion designed by Richard E. Schmidt and Hugh M. G. Garden. Built 1901–02, it was later renovated by prominent modern architect Daniel Brenner. The 9,000 square-foot historic home now hosts galleries, a bookstore, an outdoor collection of architectural fragments, an extensive non-lending library of grantee publications, and a ballroom where the foundation hosts a robust schedule of public programs.

BOOKSHOP

The Graham Foundation's bookshop, designed by Ania Jaworska, offers a selection of new, historically significant, and hard-to-find publications on architecture, art and design, many of which have been supported by grants from the Graham Foundation.

GALLERY HOURS AND VISITOR INFORMATION

The galleries and bookshop are open to the public Wednesday through Saturday, 12–5 p.m. Admission is free. Reservations are required; book on exploretock.com/grahamfoundation. Group tours are available by request.

ACCESSIBILITY

The second-floor galleries and the third-floor ballroom, where events are held, are only accessible by stairs. The first-floor galleries and bookshop are accessible via outdoor lift. Please call ahead to make arrangements.

MEDIA CONTACT

A selection of high-resolution digital images are included here, additional images are available on the [press section of our website](#); email Ava Barrett for the press login. Press tours are welcome by appointment.

Ava Barrett

Program and Communications Manager

abarrett@grahamfoundation.org



Katherine Simóne Reynolds, *The Scene of the Unseen*, 2023. Fiber/rag inkjet print, 16 x 24 in. Courtesy the artist



Katherine Simóne Reynolds, *Trace of the Lower Body on the Missouri River*, 2023. Fiber/rag inkjet print, 16 x 24 in. Courtesy the artist



Katherine Simóne Reynolds, *A tangled state of abandon touched by the last light*, 2023. Fiber/rag inkjet print, 16 x 24 in. Courtesy the artist



Katherine Simóne Reynolds, *"The Last Place They Thought Of"*, 2023. Fiber/rag inkjet print, 30 x 45 in. Courtesy the artist



Katherine Simóne Reynolds, *Overgrown Entertainment*, 2023. Fiber/rag inkjet print, 24 x 16 in. Courtesy the artist