



Keep the Shadow, Ere the Substance Fade: Mourning during the AIDS Crisis

9/17/2016-12/11/2016
Katz Gallery

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During much of the 20th century, death was a private and comparatively silent event. However, during the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 1980s and 90s, a politicized resurgence of highly visible and public acts of mourning emphasized the body ravaged by the virus. In some ways, these practices paralleled the public and material mourning practices of the nineteenth century. By juxtaposing objects and artworks related to mourning from the Victorian Era—intricately woven hairworks and ornate brooches kept as bodily relics of the deceased—and during the AIDS crisis, *Keep the Shadow* examines two analogous cultures of bereavement. The exhibition proposes that these historical periods uniquely relied on the materiality of the individual body, and items associated with it, as relics in order to grapple with mortality and persevere in the face of death. Curated by 2015-16 Block Museum Graduate Fellow, C.C. McKee.

Artists in the exhibition include Eric Avery, Félix González-Torres, David Grieger, Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Mock, Domingo Orejudos, Andres Serrano and Leonard Rifas

C.C. McKee is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Art History and was the 2015-2016 Block Graduate Fellow. McKee's dissertation explores the relationship between artistic exchange, abolition, and emergent conceptions of racial subjectivity in French Atlantic world during the long nineteenth century. Affiliated with interdisciplinary programs in Critical Theory and Gender and Sexuality Studies, McKee's research is informed by psychoanalysis and affect theory from feminist, queer, and critical race perspectives. McKee also has a vested interest in writing on and curating contemporary Caribbean art and queer visual culture.

Image: Eric Avery, *Life Cycle of HIV* (detail), 1999, linoleum cut and color lithograph. Collection of the Mary & Leigh Block Museum of Art. Courtesy of the artist.

Exhibition Programs

Keep the Shadow: The Body and Mourning

October 13, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

[RSVP](#)

Block Graduate Fellow C.C. McKee will draw connections between mourning-related objects and artworks from the Victorian Era and during the AIDS crisis—the foundation of his exhibition *Keep the Shadow, Ere the Substance Fade: Mourning during the AIDS Crisis*. McKee will be joined in conversation with professor Alessia Ricciardi, whose work has explored mourning from the perspective of psychoanalysis, literature and film. [Read More](#)

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