

Richmond Art Gallery Exhibition Explores Sustainable Small Space Living

Germaine Koh Home Made Home

June 17 - August 26, 2018

Opening Reception:
Saturday June 16, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Vancouver artist Germaine Koh contributes to the housing discourse through her exploration of small-scale dwelling as social sculpture in her solo exhibition *Home Made Home*. An advocate of creative space design, accessibility, sustainability and self-sufficiency, Koh's compact structures probe the complex housing issues relevant to the Lower Mainland.

Home Made Home will include several of Koh's structures - a portable, convertible telephone booth, a service kiosk, and a prototype for essential living services. Her newest construction, *Home Made Home: Lululiving*, is a 160 square foot micro-dwelling built on a flatbed trailer that will be located outdoors near the Richmond Art Gallery and Cultural Centre. This structure demonstrates progressive building technologies and ecological efficiencies of small-scale living, and prompts analogies to worker's housing, floating homes, barges, and shipping containers common to Richmond and Vancouver. While it is tempting to align *Lululiving* with the Tiny Home boutique industry so prevalent in contemporary media including reality TV shows and YouTube channels, for Koh, the structure is a vehicle for examining ideas of home and viable living space in the current Vancouver housing market.

Two separate displays are included in the exhibition that present a range of housing forms and contextualize Koh's works: historical images of do-it-yourself shelters and vernacular architecture from the local communities' history, and contemporary small home alternatives to the large conventional single-family home. A 200 square foot schematic model built for the exhibition functions as a proxy living space and houses the archival images depicting First Nations settlements, pole houses, and squatter shacks in Vancouver and Richmond. Finn Slough, a squatter's settlement established by Finnish fishermen in the late 19th century in Richmond is the last of these communities to exist in the region.

The second display, comprised of architectural presentation boards featuring small home alternatives, profiles case studies of small, prefab and mobile housing by designers, builders and activists invited by Koh and include Tiny House Warriors, Backcountry Hut Company and Lanefab. These projects, both conceptual and realized, highlight an underlying social and political momentum toward expanding conventional notions of housing and



social responsibility. All of the projects, local to the Pacific Northwest, innovatively respond to circumstances of homelessness, eviction, housing affordability and environmental threat.

Home Made Home draws attention to the systems and conventions operating within the present housing crisis, prompting questions of sustainability and civic engagement. Curator Nan Capogna explains, "While the challenges loom large given the dominant social, political and economic realities, Koh's smart work redirects us to the notion of human scale".

Essay by Toronto-based architect Annabel Vaughan is included in the exhibition brochure.

Home Made Home: Lululiving is presented in partnership with Richmond Public Art Program.

For interviews or high resolution images please contact the curator, Nan Capogna ncapogna@richmond.ca phone number: 604-247-8310. The artist is available for interviews.

BIOGRAPHY

Germaine Koh is a Canadian visual artist based in Vancouver. Her conceptually generated work is concerned with the significance of everyday actions, familiar objects and common places. Over the course of Koh's 25-year practice she has begun to consciously shift her work outside of the gallery and into the realms of public interventions and community-based activities; these presentation modes convey her long-standing concerns for civic engagement, negotiating public and common spaces, and technologies for survival and connection. Her work has been exhibited and nationally and internationally. Recently Koh became the City of Vancouver's first Engineering Artist in Residence.

Her exhibition history includes the BALTIC Centre (Newcastle), De Appel (Amsterdam), Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Para/Site Art Space (Hong Kong), Frankfurter Kunstverein, Bloomberg SPACE (London), The Power Plant (Toronto), Seoul Museum of Art, Artspace (Sydney), The British Museum (London), the Contemporary Art Gallery (Vancouver), Plug In ICA (Winnipeg), Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), and the Liverpool, Sydney and Montréal biennials. Koh was a recipient of the 2010 VIVA Award, and a finalist for the 2004 Sobey Art Award. Formerly an Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada, she is also an independent curator and partner in the independent record label weewerk.

RELATED EVENTS

Symposium: Resistance Begins at Home

Saturday, June 16, 2:00 – 6:00 pm

Learn, discuss and share information on small space living with local artists, planners, historians and activists. The overall symposium highlights creative approaches to housing alternatives and ways cities may develop in the future. Free admission, registration required.

Details on www.richmondartgallery.org.

Doors Open

Saturday, June 2 and Sunday, June 3

Germaine Koh's *Home Made Home: Lululiving* will be a featured site to visit during Doors Open Richmond. *Lululiving* will be open to the public from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm. Richmond Art Gallery staff and volunteers will be available to provide information in English and Mandarin.

The only public gallery in Richmond, the Richmond Art Gallery (RAG) is a municipal gallery supported by the non-profit Richmond Art Gallery Association. In operation since 1980, the Gallery presents exhibitions by regional, national and international artists, maintains a permanent collection of over 400 works, and presents innovative and diverse programming for children, youth, and adults. Richmond Art Gallery is dedicated to promoting dialogue among Richmond's diverse communities through the presentation of contemporary visual art.

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LOCATION

Richmond Cultural Centre
7700 Minoru Gate
Richmond, BC V6Y 1R9

VISIT US

Monday - Friday: 10 am - 6 pm
Saturday - Sunday: 10 am - 5 pm
Free Admission

CONTACT

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia

Image: Germaine Koh, *Home Made Home: Lululiving*, detail, 2018. Photo: Soledad Esnaola.