

Min-Young Her

□: each mouthful a comma or period

Commissioned by The Physics Room
ONE NIGHT ONLY at MAP Studio, 76 Hawdon Street, Ōtautahi
Friday 1 September, 7:30 - 9:30pm

Min-Young Her's work starts with □. This is the Hanja form for mouth (Hanja is the traditional Korean writing system, based on Chinese characters). This symbol, with an expanded series of associations including portals, openings, entrances and exits, gates and doorways, eating, shouting, truth, and language itself, is the primary reference in this non-narrative, dream-logic sequence by Min-Young Her.

The artist is interested in the relationships between such letterforms and the physical body. In particular, the work focuses on the sensory connections between the mouth and the eye; between speaking, tasting and seeing; between being seen and just being. These ideas, centred on eye and mouth, have fascinated many artists historically, including performance artist and writer Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, surrealist filmmaker Luis Buñuel, and philosopher Georges Bataille.

Drawing on imagery including endoscope footage from inside her own throat, Min-Young Her's work asks what constitutes the borders of the self, and of language. Responding to, and at points seeming to almost visibly shiver with a sense of world anxiety, the work also offers a form of antidote: that one might turn inwards to find a place of escape, or rest, or nourishment.

Min-Young Her is a multi-disciplinary artist of South Korean heritage, who grew up in Ōtautahi and is currently based in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. In 2019 she graduated from Ilam School of Fine Arts at University of Canterbury with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, majoring in sculpture. Her work focuses on relationships between language and the body, including garments and larger textiles that may be inhabited, often testing the limits of our communicative abilities. Since graduating, Min-Young has collaborated with Orissa Keane on *As it comes down*, The Physics Room, Ōtautahi, 2020; *Art Seconds*, The Den, Ōtautahi, 2021, and *Made from local and imported ingredients*, The Blue Oyster Project Space, Ōtepoti, 2021. Recently she held a solo exhibition, *Misaeng*, at 2022 play_station, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, 2022. In 2020 she was a recipient of the Springboard Award through The Arts Foundation, mentored by Tiffany Singh.

Ngā mihi nui ki a Movement Art Practice for their support of this project.