

TRAVELING
EXHIBITION

VITAL SIGNS: FROM PATIENT TO POWER



Vital Signs: From Patient to Power – Nine contemporary disabled artists reimagine disability through creativity, resilience, and care. Their work challenges medical and cultural assumptions, sparking new conversations about access, representation, and belonging while inviting audiences to see disability beyond medicine and into spaces of power and possibility.

Vital Signs: From Patient to Power brings together nine contemporary disabled artists who transform the idea of “disability aesthetics.” Instead of reflecting the clinical gaze of medicine, these artists place health and care in their own hands, offering vivid, deeply personal perspectives shaped by lived experience.

Here, “from patient to power” signals not therapy or treatment, but creative practices that challenge the medical model of disability—the notion that disability is a problem to be fixed. The works on view reclaim disabled bodies and lives from being treated as specimens or records, reframing them through expression, resilience, and interdependence.

This exhibition shows how disabled artists extend the call to decolonize museums and galleries into another critical arena: the hospital. Their work questions ableist assumptions, unsettles narratives about illness, and exposes the gaps in the medical industrial complex. At the same time, they invite us to imagine institutions—whether hospitals or cultural spaces—that are more open, welcoming, and inclusive.

The exhibition also reflects the contradictions disabled people often navigate between hospitable and inhospitable systems. Within artist communities, health and care become collaborative and interdependent, modeled through mutual support.

In this way, hospital aesthetics is both process and product: a bold rethinking of how illness and disability can be experienced and expressed on one’s own terms.

Through drawing, sculpture, painting, installation, performance, video, and socially engaged practice, the artists featured—Ezra Benus, Riva Lehrer, Priyanka D’Souza, Carly Mandel, Bhavna Mehta, Dylan Mortimer, Dominic Quagliozzi, Katherine Sherwood, and Sunaura Taylor—share powerful visions that connect art and care in striking ways. Their works ignite vital conversations about bioethics, representation, and access, while opening new possibilities for how art can shape cultural narratives around disability.

Vital Signs invites audiences to look beyond the narrow lens of medicine and encounter disability through creativity, care, and resistance. It asks us not only to view, but to listen—to recognize art as a living exchange that redefines power, community, and belonging.

For more information, visit:

www.eusa.org/exhibition/vital-signs

Left Images: Riva Lehrer, *Blue Veronika*, 1999; gouache on amate paper, 36 x 24 inches, Courtesy of private collection. Bhavna Mehta, *Gather*, 2017; embroidery and cutting on Stonehenge paper, 19 x 19 inches, Courtesy of the artist. Dylan Mortimer, *Dying, and Yet We Live On*, 2021; cut paper, paint, and glitter on panel, 48 x 32 inches; Courtesy of the artist.

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M A A A
MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE



THE EXHIBITION IN YOUR GALLERY

ExhibitsUSA allows venues to work with our team of interpretive specialists to customize the exhibition based on spatial limitations. If your institution plans to augment or edit the exhibition you are hosting, please notify us of your plans so we can work together on bringing the best exhibition to your venue.

SUPPORT MATERIALS AND SERVICES

When you host an ExhibitsUSA exhibition, you will receive a range of support to present the exhibition to—and engage with—your community, all developed by our team of museum specialists in collaboration with the project's curatorial partners.

THESE INCLUDE:

- A marketing and publicity kit with digital images and cutlines, logos, and a sample press release
- A programming guide with extensive educational resources and program/activity planning ideas for host venue staff and teachers
- Custom-designed interpretive panels, object labels, gallery guides and/or other interactive engagement tools
- A registrar's packet with instructions and documents for condition reporting, and installing and de-installing the exhibition
- Custom-built crates for easy handling and maximum protection, along with instructions for proper packing
- On-call logistical support

Above: Dylan Mortimer, *Surgery Diptych 1*, 2023; cut paper, paint, and glitter on panel, 48 x 65 inches; Courtesy of the artist.

Curator: Amanda Cachia

Organized by: ExhibitsUSA

Content: 44 artworks

Duration: 7-week display

Out-of-Region Rental Fee: \$15,250

In-Region Rental Fee: \$9,150
(In-region states: Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas)

Shipping expense: Exhibitor is responsible for payment of outgoing shipping.

Security: Intermediate

Run. ft.: 216 linear ft.; 891 sq. ft.

Number of Crates: 8

Total Weight: TBD

Insurance: The exhibition is fully insured by ExhibitsUSA at no additional expense to you, both while installed and during transit.

DATES AVAILABLE:

Vital Signs: From Patient to Power is touring September 2027 through December 2032. The dates below reflect 7-week exhibition periods. Dates are subject to change; please contact MoreArt@maaa.org or (816) 800-0925 for current availability.

January 28–March 16

April 6–May 25

June 16–August 11

September 1–October 20

November 20–January 7