

SOCIAL PHARMACY, SOLO EXHIBIT: JODY WOOD

SOCIAL PHARMACY (2021-22)

Participative installation in multiple locations, Sweden and United States

Social Pharmacy (Folkets Apotek) is a site-specific exchange of health remedies. The work presents individual health as a collaborative performance scripted and enacted by strangers living in proximity of one another, moving an individualistic behavior of self-care into a relational gesture of community care. Participants are co-authors; they are invited to share their own recipe for a health regiment, and in exchange, take away a community member's remedy for emotional, mental, or physical health. The project becomes a dynamic living library of people who comprise a specific locale, in the present and in generations past.



Social Pharmacy, Installation View, Skövde Art Museum, Sweden, 2022

The Social Pharmacy moves beyond a focus on a marginalized segment of population to speak to the dependency and vulnerability that consistently marks every human life. Our vulnerability arises as a result of the fact that every individual body can and will become ill, be injured or find itself otherwise in need of healing. This reality necessitates that we will be dependent on social institutions and relationships throughout our lives. Such a universal perspective, which begins with recognizing the fragility of the body, seems particularly appropriate in this pandemic era.

– **Martha Albertson Fineman**

SOCIAL PHARMACY (2021-2022)



Social Pharmacy, Installation view in Simpnäs, Sweden, 2021, Supported by Skövde Art Museum and AiR BKN.

Dried leaves from blueberries and birch against diabetes. Renfana for troublesome insects. These are some of the home remedies in "Folkets apotek", a shimmering cure house placed a stone's throw from the water in Simpnäs. Jody Wood lives in Brooklyn, New York, and works extensively with themes around society and health. What is the goal of the project? Jody Wood describes it as putting something in motion and creating processes that continue on. The home remedies are part of a larger health issue. It's a way to share knowledge; it becomes an infrastructure that gets people to share care with each other.

- **Margaretha Levin Blekastad for Norrtälje Tidning Paper**

SOCIAL PHARMACY: NEW JERSEY (2021)

Site-specific participative installation in collaboration with Elijah's Promise, New Brunswick, NJ

Social Pharmacy began as a collaboration with Elijah's Promise, an agency working to alleviate food insecurity and homelessness in New Brunswick, NJ. As their artist-in-residence, I explored vaccine hesitancy as per the agency's request. New Brunswick is dubbed 'Healthcare City' because of its many nationally recognized hospitals, pharmaceutical corporations, and internationally recognized medical research facilities. It also had the lowest vaccination rate of any city in New Jersey during 2021 and a 35% poverty rate. *Social Pharmacy: New Jersey* establishes a mutual aid system of home remedy exchanges taking place at the food distribution center of Elijah's Promise. Recipes collected from constituents were turned into consumable objects and returned to the community. As the artist activated the pharmacy, it also became a hub for community members to exchange knowledge and advice with one another.



Social Pharmacy helps us imagine what sharing care could look like while prompting questions about mutual aid brought to the forefront by the pandemic. How might we create systems of health that operate on the free exchange of knowledge and service versus prevailing models of care for cash? When healthcare systems fail us and we must care for ourselves, what do we have to offer each other? Can capitalism and care coexist?

- Nicole J. Caruth, Independent Curator and Writer

SOCIAL PHARMACY: NEW JERSEY, GALLERY INSTALLATION (2022)
Wood, acrylic paint. Size variable



Social Pharmacy: New Jersey, Installation View, Skövde Art Museum, Sweden, 2022

AGAINST MEDICAL ADVICE (2022)

Live Performance 35:00 and 2-channel video 8:40

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/arsqm35kqt4g8bj/AAAkO516droCFWmKnFFJp8H9a?dl=0>

Against Medical Advice collected oral histories from patients with Medicaid and without health insurance who were constituents of Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick, NJ. We worked with actors to devise personal narratives for live performance for an audience of community members and health care advocates. The project explores the tension between the illusion of the abundance of medical care with experiences of accessing care and the realities of poverty.



Against Medical Advice, Installation View, Norrtälje Konsthall, 2022

SOCIAL PHARMACY: ESSAY EXCERPT

“We’ve Always Had Our Ways” by Nicole J. Caruth, independent curator and writer

Published by Skövde Art Museum for artist monograph, 2022



Social Pharmacy, Installation View, Skövde Art Museum, Sweden, 2022

WE’VE ALWAYS HAD OUR WAYS

”Jag gick där utan pengar och hade ingenstans att bo, och jag var bara sjuk ... det var allt jag kunde göra för att ta mig till Miss Butler’s. De bäddade ner mig, och jag hade lunginflammation. Miss Butler tog tjära, som de hämtar från tallen, och täckte mitt bröst med den där tjäran. Jag vet inte vad den innehöll, men i alla fall gjorde den mig frisk. Jag hade ingen doktor... Hon var en gammal dam och hon gillade huskurer.” – Walter M. Cavers¹

”En artomfattande omsorgsrevolution kan dock inte ske utan en uppgörelse med det som varit. Avkoloniseringsprojektet är ingen engångsutbetalning av skadestånd från förtryckare till förtryckt, från vit till svart, från borgerskap till arbetarklass, från män till kvinnor, från bosättare till ursprungsfolk. Ekonomisk gottgörelse är tveklöst ett inslag i läkandeprocessen, men detta kan inte ske genom en engångsutbetalning. Gottgörande omsorg kräver en omdaning av vårt sätt att hålla, handla och interagera med varandra och med livsväven.” – Rupa Marya och Raj Patel²

¹ William H. Chafe, Raymon Gavins och Robert Korstad, *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Talk About Life in the Segregated South* (New York: The New Press, 2021), 38.

² Rupa Marya och Raj Patel, *Inflamed: Deep Medicine and the Anatomy of Injustice* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2021), 327.

”I was walking with no money and nowhere to live, and I was just sick . . . It was all I could do to make it to Miss Butler’s. They put me to bed, and I had pneumonia. Miss Butler put tar, what they get out of pine, and covered my chest with that tar. I don’t know what was in that stuff, but anyway, it made me well. I didn’t have no doctor . . . She was an elderly lady, and she liked the home remedies.” – Walter M. Cavers¹

”A pan-species care revolution cannot happen, however, without a reckoning. The decolonizing project isn’t a one-off reparations payment from oppressor to oppressed, from white to Black, from bourgeoisie to working class, from men to women, from settler to Indigenous. Reparation is certainly part of the process of healing, but it cannot be dispensed through a single payment. Reparative care requires a transformation of the way we hold, exchange, and interact with one another and the web of life.” – Rupa Marya och Raj Patel²

Jody Wood’s exhibition at the Art Museum of Skövde will coincide with the two-year mark of the

¹ William H. Chafe, Raymon Gavins, and Robert Korstad, *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Talk About Life in the Segregated South* (New York: The New Press, 2021), 38.

² Rupa Marya and Raj Patel, *Inflamed: Deep Medicine and the Anatomy of Injustice* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2021), 327.

När Jody Wood inviger sin utställning på Konstmuseet i Skövde kommer vi att ha levt i två år med coronapandemin. Till dags datum har omkring 5,3 miljoner människor runt om i världen dött i sjukdomen.³ Ännu fler av oss har förlorat vänner och familjemedlemmar. I denna nya version av vår värld mäter vi inte längre tiden i dagar eller månader utan i varianter. När jag skriver detta har omikron börjat göra sig gällande och hotar att sända en ny sorgväg över världen. Sorgen är alltid en katalysator för sökande – efter svagheter i våra sociala system, efter kärnpunkten i våra relationer, efter någon att skylla på, efter sätt att bespara oss smärta i framtiden. Det som redan står klart, liksom i alla kriser, är att vi nog måste undersöka hur vi kan bli bättre på att finnas till hands för varandra.

Konstnären Jody Wood är känd för att skapa konstnärliga projekt kring omsorg. Detta gör hon ofta genom att samarbeta med sociala hjälporganisationer, bland vilkas klienter man finner några av de mest sårbara och osynliga i vårt samhälle, till exempel människor som drabbats av hemlöshet. Wood försöker engagera fler av oss i en dialog om förbisedda sociala frågor som döljer sig bakom mer omdiskuterade problem som den globala bostadskrisen.

³ “Coronavirus Resource Center,” Johns Hopkins University & Medicine, 15 december, 2021, <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>.

coronavirus pandemic. To date, some 5.3 million people globally have lost their lives.³ Even more of us have lost friends and family. In this new version of the world, we no longer track time by days or months but by variants. As I write this, Omicron has started to make itself known, threatening to send another wave of grief across the globe. Grief is always a catalyst for looking — looking for deficits in our social systems, looking carefully at our relationships, looking for someone to blame, looking for ways to spare ourselves pain in the future. What is clear now, as in any crisis, is that we need to look closely at how we can better show up for each other.

The artist Jody Wood is known for creating artistic projects about care. She often does this by collaborating with social service providers whose clients include the most vulnerable and invisible people in our society, such as people experiencing homelessness. Wood seeks to engage more of us in dialogue about overlooked social issues that underlie mainstream ones, like the global housing crisis. In this style of art-making (commonly called social practice art), the artist is not a creator

³ “Coronavirus Resource Center,” Johns Hopkins University & Medicine, accessed December 15, 2021, <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>.

SOCIAL PHARMACY: ESSAY EXCERPT

“The Social Pharmacy” by Martha Fineman, legal theorist and author of *The Autonomy Myth*
Published by Skövde Art Museum for artist monograph, 2022



Artist monograph (left), *Social Pharmacy: Portrait Series*, Inkjet Print, 2021

THE SOCIAL PHARMACY

I Jody Woods innovativa konstnärliga metod ingår det att välja ut angelägna sociala frågor eller praktiker att utforska, och att kombinera samhällsvetarens empiriska insikter med konstnärens kritiska och kreativa vision. Detta kritiska och konstruktiva interdisciplinära tillvägagångssätt har potential att alstra unika och produktiva insikter om sociala praktiker som vi annars riskerar att ta för givna. Som konstnär är hennes uppgift inte bara att avbilda eller konceptuellt exemplifiera verkligheten, utan även att uppdaga omdanande möjligheter. Hennes ambition är att de som kommer i kontakt med verken ska bli direkt engagerade i denna kreativa process och involverade i arbetet som deltagare snarare än som rena observatörer eller betraktare. På så vis tvingar hon oss inte bara att se utan även att bry oss om dessa sociala praktiker och deras inverkan på våra enskilda och sociala liv.

I några av sina tidigare verk har Jody behandlat brännande frågor kring samhälleliga misslyckanden som hemlöshet. Bland de allvarliga konsekvenser som synliggjordes fanns det stigma och utanförskap som drabbar vissa medlemmar av samhället som en följd av deras boendestatus. Behovet av medkänsla och effektiv socialpolitik när det gäller boenden för samhällets missgynnade och utstötta är tveklöst viktigt och detta projekt satte framgångsrikt ljuset på dessa frågor. Men även om verket kunde väcka sympati och omtanke

Jody Wood's innovative artistic method involves selecting significant social issues or practices to explore and combining the empirical insights of the social scientist with the critical and creative vision of the artist. This critical and constructive interdisciplinary approach has the potential to yield unique and productive insights into those social practices that we may otherwise take for granted. As an artist, her task is not to merely represent or conceptually exemplify reality, but to also reveal transformative possibilities. She seeks to directly engage those encountering her work in this creative process, bringing them into the work as participants rather than mere observers or onlookers. In doing so, she compels us to not only see, but to care about these social practices and the effects they have on our individual and social lives.

In some of her earlier work, Jody addressed pressing issues of societal failure, such as homelessness. Among the significant consequences exposed were the stigma and exclusion imposed on certain members of society as a result of their housing status. The need for compassion and effective social policy in regard to housing for the disadvantaged and dispossessed is certainly important and this project successfully raised those issues. However, while it may have generated feelings of sympathy and concern, the focus on only the situation of some also permitted

fokuserade det bara på ett fåtals situation och tillät på så vis betraktaren att hålla sin distans: att betrakta det som är ett universellt behov i termer av ett "vi" (de framgångsrika med bostad) och ett "de" (de misslyckade utan bostad). Behovet av tak över huvudet är något som förenar alla människor och den kritiska betoningen på hemlöshetsstatusen och situationen för några enskilda utsatta individer skymde implikationerna av denna allmängiltiga, delade verklighet.

Det aktuella verket, *Social Pharmacy*, överskrider detta fokus på ett marginaliserat befolkningssegment för att vittna om beroendet och sårbarheten som konsekvent präglar varje mänskligt liv. Vår sårbarhet är en konsekvens av det faktum att varje enskild kropp kan och kommer att bli sjuk, skadad eller på annat vis i behov av läkande. Denna realitet gör oss ofrånkomligen beroende av sociala institutioner och relationer under våra liv. Ett sådant universellt perspektiv, som utgår från insikten om kroppens bräcklighet, ter sig extra relevant i denna pandemiska tid. Covid-19 har fått oerhörda konsekvenser på individ- och samhällsnivå, konsekvenser som tycks undfly såväl medicinska som politiska lösningar. Pandemin påminner oss (ännu en gång) om att många problem ligger bortom den enskilda människans kontroll och att förväntningarna på självständighet och autonomi i bästa fall är begränsade. Det rådande läget borde också göra det

the viewer of the piece to stand separate and apart to perceive what is a universal need in terms of "us" (the successful and housed) versus "them" (the unsuccessful and unhoused). The need for shelter is something that all humans share, the critical emphasis on the status of homelessness and the situation of only some deprived individuals obscured the implications of this universal shared reality.

This current piece, *The Social Pharmacy*, moves beyond a focus on a marginalized segment of population to speak to the dependency and vulnerability that consistently marks every human life. Our vulnerability arises as a result of the fact that every individual body can and will become ill, be injured or find itself otherwise in need of healing. This reality necessitates that we will be dependent on social institutions and relationships throughout our lives. Such a universal perspective, which begins with recognizing the fragility of the body, seems particularly appropriate in this pandemic era. Covid-19 has had tremendous individual and societal consequences that seem to elude both medical and political resolution. The pandemic teaches us (once again) that many problems are beyond individual control and that expectations of self-sufficiency and autonomy are limited at best. The current situation also should make it clear that dependence on social institutions and relationships is inevitable,

SOCIAL PHARMACY: NYC (2022)
Interactive installation at Whitebox Gallery, NYC



Social Pharmacy, Installation view at Whitebox Gallery, NYC, 2022



Visitors browse inside window installation of Social Pharmacy at Whitebox Gallery, NYC, 2022

SOCIAL PHARMACY: PORTRAITS (2022)

Inkjet Prints - 27" x 40"

Series of 8



Social Pharmacy: Portraits, Installation View, Skövde Art Museum, Sweden, 2022

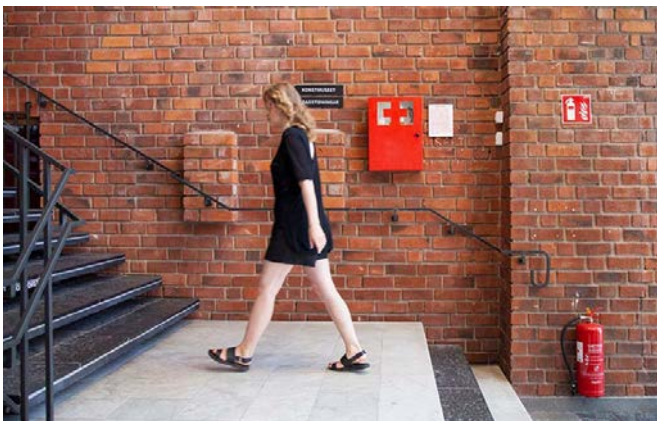


Social Pharmacy: Portraits, Installation View, Norrtälje Konsthall, Sweden, 2022

SOCIAL PHARMACY: FIRST AID KIT (2022)

Participative Installation, Skövde Culture Center and City Hall, Skövde Sweden
Steel, enamel - 18" x 22"

First Aid Kit is a site-specific exchange of health remedies installed in public municipal buildings. The work presents a non-hierarchical model of exchange in contrast to top-down service provision. The work is presented as an architectural fixture, alongside other emergency care equipment such as the fire hydrant and defibrillator.



First Aid Kit, Installation View, Skövde Culture Center, Sweden, 2022

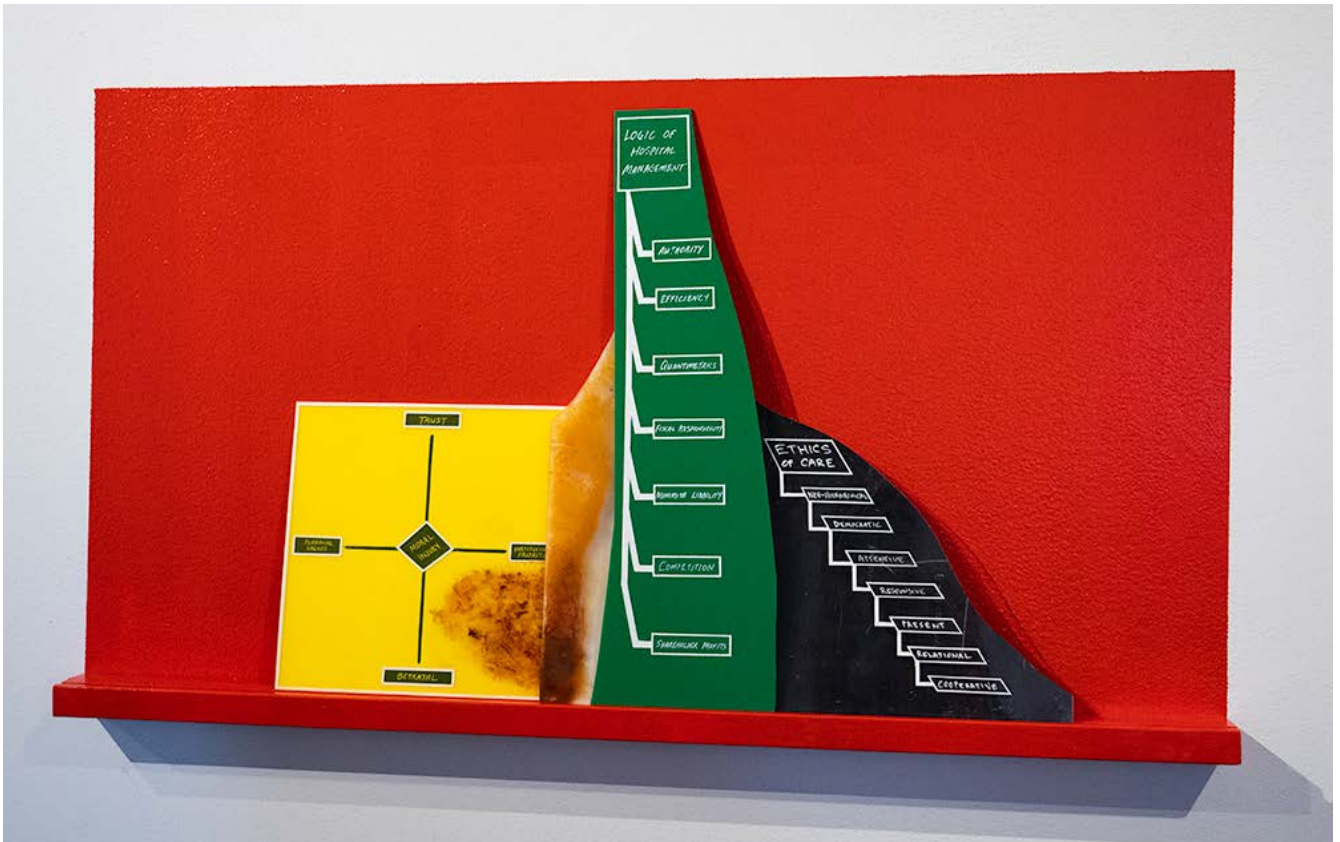
TAXONOMIES OF CARE (2022)

Installation: Plexiglas, acrylic paint, paper – size variable

This series of data portraits depicts power flows and organizational dynamics of hospital systems



Taxonomies of Care, Installation View, Skövde Art Museum, Sweden, 2022



Taxonomies of Care, Installation View, Norrtälje Konsthall, Sweden, 2022

SOCIAL PHARMACY: STUDENT WORKSHOP (Spring, 2022)
MFA students at Sam Houston State University, Huntsville TX

I designed curriculum around Social Pharmacy and led MFA students through a socially engaged process to design and implement their own iteration of Social Pharmacy for their local community. Students visited with local health leaders inside and outside traditional medicine and partnered with a senior center and public library to collect and disseminate home remedies in Huntsville, TX.



Traveling Social Pharmacy led by MFA students in collaboration with Jody Wood in Huntsville, TX

SOCIAL PHARMACY – Presentations & Exhibits

- Solo Exhibitions:** Skövde Art Museum, Skövde, Sweden (April 14 - Sept 11, 2022)
Whitebox Gallery, Front Window, NYC (July 20 - 27, 2022)
Norrtälje Konsthall, Norrtälje, Sweden (Oct 8 - Nov 26, 2022) (Career Survey).
- Artist Monograph:** Jody Wood with essays by curator Nicole J. Caruth and feminist legal scholar Martha Albertson Fineman, published by Skövde Art Museum
- Public Talks:** *Collectivizing Action: Art, Health, and the Responsive State*, Panel discussion with artist Jody Wood and legal scholars Martha Albertson Fineman at Emory University, Titti Mattsson, Ulrika Andersson at Lund University, hosted by Skövde Art Museum, Sweden (9/9/22)
Archived Link: <https://vimeo.com/751766294>.
Creative Showcase: Social Pharmacy, 18th International Conference on the Arts in Society, New Aesthetic Expressions: The Social Role of Art, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland (scheduled for July 2023)
- Workshops:** Children’s Pharmacy Workshop (summer program in conjunction with Social Pharmacy exhibit), Norrtälje Konsthall and Museum, Sweden
Collaborative Seminar: Social Pharmacy, MFA in Art & Social Practice, Sam Houston State University
- Press**
Hon delar med sig av sina bästa huskurer (She shares her best home remedies), Norrtälje Tidning Paper, written by Margaretha Levin Blekastad. 6/28/21 (arts feature).
A Social Art Project Brings Healthcare Exchange to Huntsville, Glasstire, written by Jessica Fuentes, 4/1/22
Jody Wood bjuder in till Folkets apotek: “Som ett bibliotek av människor” (Jody Wood invites you to Social Pharmacy: “It is like a library of people”), Skaraborgs Allehanda Daily Paper, written by Amelie Länsberg Rylander, 4/12/22
Huskurer till USA från Björkö , Social Pharmacy featured in Norrtälje Tidning Paper, written by Margaretha Levin Blekastad. 6/28/21 (cover story).
The Social Pharmacy, written by Martha Fineman, featured by Emory University, The Vulnerability and Human Condition Initiative. 6/15/22