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*A Better Yesterday*

May 19–September 3, 2017

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

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JooYoung Choi was born in 1982 in Seoul, South Korea. She was adopted in 1983 by an American family in Concord, New Hampshire; in 2007 Choi was reunited with her birth family in Ansan, South Korea. She received her BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston in 2010, and her MFA from the Art Institute of Boston in 2012. She currently lives and works in Houston. Through her work, Choi reminds viewers of a time in their earlier lives when the world was magical and everything was alive with narrative. As the artist has stated on multiple occasions, creating imaginary friends is a marvelous ability and should not be limited to children. In her created epic mythology, Choi explores the lives of her characters through video, installation, and two-dimensional works on paper. Her presentation at CAMH will conclude the story arc that began with installations at Houston's Project Row Houses and Lawndale Art Center.



***Paracosmic Viewing Station & Pleasure  
Vision Transmission Receiver [Gen. 1]  
RED, 2016***

Wood, lacquer, acrylic, polymer clay, media  
player, and monitor

Featuring ***CWTV Presents: Pleasure  
Vision Ultra-Feature***

Deluxe Edition, 2015

Digital video, animation, and music  
composed by the artist

19:10 minutes, looped

Courtesy Jereann and Holland Chaney



***Quantum Soup—Spacia and Amplexus:  
All There Is That Is Real Is the  
Friendship That Two Can Share, 2016***

Acrylic on cut and layered canvas

Courtesy Drs. Duyen and Marc Nguyen



***The Daily Veritas: Stepping on the Face of Madness, 2015***

Acrylic on cut and layered canvas

Courtesy Buddy Steves and Rowena Young



***Somnioplexic Resonance, 2017***

Acrylic on cut paper and canvas

Courtesy the artist and Anya Tish Gallery,  
Houston



***Big Time Rescue*, 2017**

Acrylic on cut paper and canvas

Courtesy the artist and Anya Tish Gallery,  
Houston



***Time for You and Joy to Get  
Acquainted*, 2017**

Wood, fleece, felt, quilt batting, fiberfill,  
and poly foam

Courtesy the artist and Anya Tish Gallery,  
Houston

Jack Early was born in 1962 in Raleigh, North Carolina. Early studied at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. He lives and works in Brooklyn. Early's ascent to fame began in the late 1980s as half of the duo Pruitt-Early. Pruitt-Early's irreverent work challenged prevailing orthodoxies and blurred the boundaries between low culture and high art. Their first solo show, ***Artwork for Teenage Boys***, was held in 1990 at 303 Gallery, New York. Pruitt-Early quickly garnered attention. In 1992 they presented the now legendary ***Red, Black, Green, Red, White and Blue*** exhibition at Leo Castelli Gallery. Following the Castelli show, which was wildly misinterpreted, provoking much vitriol, Early exiled himself from the art world and spent the next thirteen years discovering he could write music. In recent years, Pruitt-Early's artworks have been reappraised and increasingly hailed by collectors, critics, and museums.

Early claims it was his music that brought him back to making art and his songs have become integral to many of his new art objects, including ***Jack Early's Life Story in Just Under 20 Minutes*** (2014), a centerpiece to his CAMH presentation. Also on display are life-sized, soft-sculpture versions of the artist's family. Reminiscent of beanbag chairs, they evoke the familial space in the late 1960s and invite us all to imagine our families tamed and made into cute stuffed creations. The backdrop in many of Early's paintings, including ***Magical Surprises*** (2015), mirrors the soldier wallpaper he chose for his childhood bedroom. In Early's own words: "I was a gay eight-year-old in 1970. I would have chosen flowers or a circus theme, but it wasn't lost on me that choosing soldiers would lend some air of masculinity." When silkscreening the soldier wallpaper pattern for his canvases, Early changed the design "just a bit" and now the two soldiers hold hands instead of just standing near each other.





***Man Boobs*, 2014**

Oil on silkscreened canvas

Courtesy the artist and Fergus McCaffrey,  
New York



***Jack Early's Life Story in Just Under 20 Minutes*, 2014**

Wood, sign paint, turntable, and vinyl record

Courtesy the artist and Fergus McCaffrey,  
New York

Please ask a gallery attendant to start the record to experience this artwork.



***Magical Surprises*, 2015**

Oil on silkscreened canvas (four panels)

Courtesy the artist and Fergus McCaffrey,  
New York



***Maudie, Aunt Lib, Jack, and Bernice  
on the Front Porch, 2017***

Wood, house paint, and printed canvas  
Courtesy the artist and Fergus McCaffrey,  
New York



***Sock Jock, 2015***

Oil on silkscreened canvas  
Courtesy the artist and Fergus McCaffrey,  
New York



Lily van der Stokker was born in 1954 in Den Bosch, The Netherlands. She earned a degree in drawing and textiles from R.K. Scholengemeenschap St. Dionysus, Tilburg, and a degree in monumental design and painting from the Academy of Art and Design St. Joost, Breda. She currently lives and works in Amsterdam and New York City.

Van der Stokker's wall paintings—defined by outlines with flat areas of color—reveal their origin in small-scale drawings and often resemble childlike illustrations replete with cloyingly-cute flowers and loop-de-loops. The suite of drawings on display are based on her longest romantic relationship, which ended with her partner's death. The culminating wall painting is a marvelous monument to the sense of the past, once all-consuming, now merely ***Useless Movement*** (2010). If a wall painting can be understood as a type of monument to the inescapable reality of the passage of finite human lives, then this work is its most realistic expression.



***Useless Movement***, 2010

Acrylic paint on wall and mixed media  
Courtesy the artist and Koenig & Clinton,  
New York



***Mistake*, 2010**

Colored pencil on paper

Courtesy the artist and Koenig & Clinton,  
New York



***So What?*, 2008**

Colored pencil on paper

Courtesy the artist and Koenig & Clinton,  
New York



***Our Friends Elise and Arnold*, 1998**

Colored pencil on paper

Courtesy the artist and Koenig & Clinton,  
New York



***Lily Is 41, Jack Is 57, Design for Wall  
Painting and Couch, 1998***

Colored pencil on paper  
Courtesy the artist



***Jack and Lily Live Together 5 Years,  
Design for Wall Painting and Couch,  
1998***

Color pencil and pen on paper  
Courtesy the artist



***Jack Is 60, I Am 44, Design for Wall  
Painting and Couch, 1998***

Colored pencil and pen on paper  
Courtesy the artist