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PRESS RELEASE

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KIM HARTY

Birthing Anatomies

March 8 – April 13, 2024

Opening: Thursday, March 7, 5-7pm

NEW YORK -- Heller Gallery is pleased to present *Birthing Anatomies*, our second solo exhibition of new work by Kim Harty.

Eight glass sculptures and three digital prints comprise the exhibition and were made by Harty over the last eighteen months to address ideas around reproduction and the body following the Dobbs vs. Jackson Women’s Health Organization ruling. The work grapples with themes of reproductive justice and societal perceptions of reproductive anatomy through abstraction, challenging the narratives we construct about our bodies and exposing the gap between imagination and lived experience.

Even though this collection of her work started with the impetus of the 2022 Supreme Court decision, it is impossible not to be reminded of its timeliness in the face of more restrictive recent legislation and how and why the work resonates in a much broader sense echoing the words of Jamelle Bouie’s February 23rd NYT article: “You cannot disentangle abortion from reproductive rights. You cannot disentangle reproductive rights from bodily autonomy. And you cannot disentangle bodily autonomy from basic questions of equal rights and democratic freedom.

The artist says that she “approaches glass making through an experimental feminist lens,” delving into structures inspired by the body: from cells to vascular systems and organs. While her glassblowing practice is grounded in history of the traditional vessel, which was once venerated as the apex of aesthetics and skill, Harty’s work moves beyond it. Using both her considerable skill as a glassmaker and the material’s innate ability to represent the complex physicality of human organ forms, all while referencing decorative glass tropes, her pieces provoke contemplation of the beautiful and grotesque aspects of the body.

“As a queer birthing person, the Dobbs vs. Jackson Women’s Health Organization legal decision has prompted a fresh perspective on my own birthing and loss experiences, sparking a deep concern for reproductive justice and the mechanisms shaping our perceptions. I try to

thread the tenuous line between the embodied experience of making and the experience of living in a birthing body,” says Harty.

The three digital prints in the exhibition include is a collage of photos of handblown fragments later re-purposed for her sculpture titled *I’m Pro Becky*, as well as two *AI Taxonomy* prints for which Harty experimented with an AI application and text prompts, articulating tasks she also set for herself. The resulting images juxtapose AI’s interpretation with her own sculptural works.

Kim Harty received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2013), and her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design (2006). She currently serves as Section Lead & Associate Professor of Glass at the College of Creative Studies in Detroit, MI. Harty is an artist and scholar and her work, which includes sculpture, performance, video & photography has been shown extensively in the United States and in Europe, including at the Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH; Stanze del Vetro, Venice, Italy; Museum of Arts & Design, New York, NY; Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY; Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA & Design Museum Ghent, Ghent, Belgium. Her work is held in the collection of the Toledo Museum of Art.