

Few organs are as charged as the human heart.

Seen as both the seat of human identity and the archetypal symbol of love, it is an organ that has been ascribed qualities and associations far beyond its anatomical functions. Since the first heart transplant in 1967, the technical aspects of the operation have been streamlined and now heart transplantation is the accepted therapy for end-stage heart failure.

While significant research has been conducted in transplantation using the bio-medical model, few researchers have explicitly connected organ recipients' experiences and cultural views about transplantation to the notion of embodiment.

Four internationally exhibiting artists, Alexa Wright (UK), Catherine Richards (Canada), Andrew Carnie (UK), and Ingrid Bachmann (Canada), have had access to an innovative research study exploring the process of incorporating a transplanted heart. This interdisciplinary study was conducted by a leading research team based at the University Health Network in Toronto. The team consists of Dr. Heather Ross, a cardiologist and Director of the Cardiac Transplant Program at the University Health Network (Toronto); Dr. Patricia McKeever, a health sociologist (U of T) ; Dr. Susan Abbey, a transplant psychiatrist (University Health Network); Dr. Jennifer Poole, a health scientist (Ryerson University, Toronto); and Dr. Margrit Shildrick, a philosopher (Linköping University, Sweden).

Dr. Shildrick and the four participating artists will be presenting on their work prior to the vernissage of the exhibition Hybrid Bodies. The talk will run for 1 hour, starting at 5pm, and is open to the public.