

Our Dogs

by Megan Arnold

| would never ever

Sora Park

September 11 - October 30, 2026



Sora Park. Studio image of *I would never ever*, 2026.

Sora Park Artist's Statement

Troy was such a monster when he was a puppy. My arms were always covered in scratches and bruises from his sharp puppy teeth as he attacked me for no reason other than because he wanted to. He has mellowed a lot now that he is 10 years old.

“But have you ever eaten a dog?”

Can I just talk about my dog without you asking me that question?

I would never ever by Korean-Canadian artist Sora Park explores how the presence of dogs in her life has brought both comfort and tension.

The exhibition confronts the painful reality many diasporic people face, where racial stereotypes dehumanize entire communities by associating their identities with savagery and uncivilized behavior through their relationships with animals. Growing up as a Korean-Canadian, the artist encountered jokes and comments about eating dogs, making her acutely aware of how others perceived her identity.

Alongside the racial stereotypes the artist experienced, the exhibition also depicts the joy of loving and caring for animals. Weaving together these contrasting emotions, I would never ever illustrates the complexity of loving her own dogs while confronting racial stereotypes she did not create but is nevertheless expected to answer for.

Our Dogs by Megan Arnold

CW: animal abuse



My white dad tried dog meat in the Philippines sometime in the early 1990s. He told me this when I was around 12 years old, and it both fascinated and disgusted me. He was proud to have tried it, as if partaking in the consumption of dog flesh was a kind of initiation into the culture. I remember being impressed at my dad's adventurous palate, as much as I felt the heft of the taboo. My mom, who emigrated from the Philippines in 1986, was adamant that she had never eaten dog, and that it was not a common food source back home. She distanced herself from the practice, perhaps trying to gain proximity to Western culture as much as my dad was looking to be accepted into Filipino culture. They both wanted to belong in each other's worlds.

Sora Park and I first connected in 2025 over our shared adoration of dogs, evidenced in each of our art practices. In our conversations, she has described her experience of immigrating to Canada from

South Korea when she was a teenager. Her parents brought a pet dog into the family, and walking that dog around their neighbourhood served as a point of friendly contact with other people. However, encounters with peers who assumed she must have eaten dog meat as a Korean person made Park struggle to square the circle of loving dogs as pets against Western perceptions of Koreans as dog-eating freaks. The exhibition *I would never ever* explores the always present cultural tension in dog+human relationships for non-white people, especially East and Southeast Asians, living in the West.

Dog meat has been and continues to be consumed around the world in various contexts, but Park's focus is on her motherland. In South Korea, the breeding and slaughter of dogs for meat was banned in 2024, but Park shared with me that she has heard stories of dogs raised in small cages, being beaten to tenderize their flesh for human consumption. A series of wall works in *I would never ever* reference the deformities of those dogs' paws—their wrists curve back into themselves, their claws curl around the cage wires. They have never touched the ground. These misshapen paws are contrasted against the finely manicured nails of pet dogs, mounted like décor in a grooming parlour. Across the room, the scratch marks of those claws burn blue and red into the wall.

A pair of works depict the simple outline of two dogs' heads side-by-side, long tongues lolling out of their open mouths. Texts reading "her dogs" and "those dogs" curl around each piece; the tongues of "those dogs" are outlined in red, linking them to the J-curved paws of "those dogs" raised in industrial cages. The red outlines, stark under the blue light, allude to blood, pain, and violence. This seems to serve as a clear delineation between Park's well-kept canine companions in Vancouver and the abused livestock dogs on the other side of the world—but Park doesn't allow for easy binaries in this exhibition. The dogs in these two pieces are depicted identically and ambiguously. They are floppy-eared, sharp-toothed, and blank-eyed, suggesting the heavy panting of anxiety or pain as much as after a rigorous game of fetch, or a walk in an increasingly too-hot summer.

Park understands this isn't West vs. East. A breeding facility and biomedical research lab in Wisconsin made headlines this year after animal activist raids found over a thousand dogs kept in inhumane environments strikingly similar to those associated with the dog meat industry in South Korea. In Park's exhibition, the blue light that soaks the room dissolves any illusion of a binary between "civilized" and "savage", muting all visual markers in the room, from the artworks on the walls to the people viewing them. As much as Park loves dogs, that love is inextricable from the violence and exploitation that we as humans have historically inflicted and continue to inflict on all non-human

animals, whether for food, clothing, science, entertainment, or companionship.

In February 2020, my co-workers and I discussed the new coronavirus thing that was blowing up in the news. “People who eat cats and bats are getting what they deserve,” one co-worker spat. I sat in uncomfortable silence, the only person of colour in the room, as the conversation continued around me. Evidently, I was one of “their dogs.”

To eat dog as a white male tourist, like my dad, is to be adventurous and worldly. People of colour—already subhuman in white-supremacist patriarchal capitalist contexts—become dogs in the act (imagined or actual) of eating dogs. Dogs need to be trained: only obedient animals are allowed inside the master’s house. I would never ever presents Sora Park’s personal adoration of dogs, while acknowledging the complex realities of animal hierarchies within different cultures, survival, and the ongoing subjugation and colonization of Others.



I enter the gallery. My eyes flash in the blue light. I crane my neck towards the wall, take one mangled paw between my teeth, and shake it.



Sora Park. Studio image of *I would never ever*, 2026.

Bios & Acknowledgements

Sora Park

Sora Park is a Korean-Canadian interdisciplinary artist living on the traditional territories of the q̓wɑ:ńłəń (Kwantlen), q̓ícəy̓ (Katzie), Máthxwi (Matsqui) and Se'mya'me' (Semiahmoo) First Nations, also known as Langley, BC.

Sora's research-based practice explores how her identity as a Korean-Canadian person is shaped and continuously transformed by her experience of diaspora.

She received her BFA in Photography from Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver and an MA in Fine Arts from Bergen Academy of Art and Design in Bergen, Norway.

In her free time, she likes going to film festivals, hanging out with her lazy dog, listening to Bachata, and playing and watching tennis.

Megan Arnold

Megan Arnold is a multidisciplinary artist living with her partner and dog in Guelph, Ontario—the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation—where she works as the Music Director at 93.3 CFRU and as a sessional instructor in the Department of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph. She has participated in residencies, festivals, and exhibitions across Canada and Europe. Megan is obsessed with dogs, love, and magic.



Forest City Gallery (FCG) is an artist-run centre founded on artistic autonomy with a commitment to excellence in programming exhibitions and events that reflect and address recent developments in cultural production. FCG serves to foster and support contemporary art, promoting dialogue among local, regional, and international arts communities. FCG represents artists of all disciplines and career levels with a focus on emerging artists and practices.

FCG's programs and exhibitions are free and accessible to all thanks to the generous support of the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, London Arts Council, and the London Community Foundation.

We are grateful to our artists, members, volunteers, donors, and community partners. Our operations rely on your generous and dedicated support.

Please consider becoming a member of FCG.

For information on our programming, or for other general inquiries, please contact the gallery at info@forestcitygallery.com

1025 Elias Street, London, Ontario, N5W 3P6, Canada

Forest City Gallery is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape, Huron-Wendat and Attawandaron peoples, which has been a site of human activity for over 10,000 years. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nations communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Forest City Gallery acknowledges the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers, and we acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples endure in Canada.

To acknowledge this traditional territory is to recognize its longer history, one predating the establishment of the earliest European colonies. We also acknowledge the colonial frameworks within which Forest City Gallery operates and the need to identify and remove barriers on an ongoing basis.

The works presented here are Copyright © 2024 Rima Sater, Laura Acosta and Sandi Rankaduwa. Parties may not distribute, modify, transmit, download, copy, or use the materials in our print and digital publications for public or commercial purposes, or for personal gain, without express written permission of the artists, author and Forest City Gallery. Any unauthorized use of these materials may violate copyright laws, trademark laws, the laws of privacy and publicity, contract, and communications regulations and statutes and any other applicable laws.

