



# Swallowed Whole

A Film by Heidi Kumao

4:00 minutes / Digital file, DCP / 16x9 / color / stereo / USA/Norway

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[www.heidikumao.net/projects/SwallowedWhole](http://www.heidikumao.net/projects/SwallowedWhole)

High resolution images can be downloaded here:  
<http://heidikumao.net/swallowed-whole-press-kit/>

## **Synopsis:**

*Swallowed Whole* is a somber, animated, experimental film about surviving extreme isolation and physical limitations as a result of traumatic injury.

After an acute sledding accident, a woman is forced to lie supine for an extended period of time during which she descends into a desolate, disorienting netherworld. Feeling stifled, she imagines she is trapped under a frozen lake; life continues on above her while she looks up from below.

“Swallowed Whole” weaves together photos, animations, videos and sound recordings and takes the viewer on an abbreviated jarring journey through physical and psychological landscapes of hospitalization and recovery. Some of the imagery and sounds were collected during The Arctic Circle 2013 Summer Solstice Expedition, an international research expedition for artists, writers, and scientists.

Edited to emphasize the physical impact of dropping, crashing, and slamming, the video repeats vertical frame-rolls from analog TV to metaphorically replay the impact that literally broke her back. The bone-crushing sounds and jarring movement echo throughout the film mirroring the repetition of trauma, and the trauma of repetition, commonly associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. The recurring instability of the image reflects the fragility of her injured body while providing a palpable experience for the viewer. The piece is inspired in part by Joan Jonas’ *Vertical Roll*, (1972) which uses a common analog television set malfunction to create a shifting stage of activity. *Swallowed Whole* uses fragmentation to both tell and disrupt the story and serves as a window of empathy into PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) repetition compulsion.

## **Festivals and Awards**

2015

53rd Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI  
Black Maria Film Festival, 34th Annual Festival Tour –Feb. – Nov. 2015  
Female Eye Film Festival, Toronto, June 2015  
Filmfest Dresden: International Short Film Festival, Germany  
Atlanta Film Festival, Georgia, March 2015  
Montreal International Animation Festival, Quebec  
International Short Film Festival 20min|max, Ingolstadt, Germany, June  
13th Festival Int’l Signes de Nuit, Lisboa, Portugal & Sarrbrücken, Germany  
Athens Animfest, Athens, Greece  
FONLAD Festival – Digital Art Festival Coimbra, Portugal (via CologneOFF –  
Cologne Int’l Videoart Festival)  
Tricky Women International Animation Filmfestival, Vienna, Austria  
48th World-Fest Houston International Film and Video Festival  
Mostra de Curtmetratges Dr.Mabuse XIV, Barcelona, Spain  
TallyShorts Film Festival, Tallahassee, Florida  
Humboldt Film Festival, Humboldt, California  
Illinois International Film Festival, Westmont, IL

2014

Seoul International Extreme-Short Image & Film Festival, Seoul  
Currents New Media Festival, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Videoholica International Video Art Festival, Varna, Bulgaria  
Rencontres Internationales Sciences & Cinemas, Marseille, France  
31st Tehran International Film Festival, Tehran, Iran  
Simultan Festival 2014, Timisoara, Romania

## **Awards**

Black Maria Film Festival, 34th Annual Festival Tour –Feb. – Nov. 2015,  
Jury's Choice Award – 1st Prize

World-Fest Houston, Remi Award, 2015

Seoul International Extreme-Short Image & Film Festival, Seoul, 2014,  
Best Experimental/Documentary Award

Videoholica International Video Art Festival, Varna, Bulgaria, 2014,  
Bronze Videoholica Award

## **Credits**

### **Directed, photographed, edited, animated and produced by:**

Heidi Kumao

### **Sound composition, design, edit and mix:**

Heidi Kumao

## **Thanks**

Michael Flynn  
Alia Malley  
The Arctic Circle 2013 Summer Solstice Expedition  
Virginia Center for Creative Arts

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Light Work's Artist-in-Residence Program

### **About the filmmaker**

Heidi Kumao is a media artist who creates video installations, experimental, animated short films, and kinetic sculpture. She has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions in the USA and internationally. She has received grants/fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, Creative Capital, and the New York Foundation for the Arts and her work has been reviewed in *Artforum*, *Art Papers*, *Sculpture Magazine*, and *After Image*. Her sculptural and photographic work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Arizona State University Art Museum, and Light Work.

More information: <http://www.heidikumao.net>

### **Filmography**

Kumao's previous films for video installations include: *Egress* (2014), *Transplant* (2010), *Tether* (2010), *Trace* (2010), *Correspondence* (2008). Other single channel works include: *Hole in the Floor* (2008), *Zapped!* (2005), and *The Load* (2000).

Heidi Kumao  
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