

Mire Lee

*59th International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia
23 April - 27 November 2022
The Milk of Dreams
Curator: Cecilia Alemani*

ANTENNA SPACE

About

Mire Lee presents *Endless House: Holes and Drips* (2022) as part of the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. The work takes its name from the premise of Fredrick Kiesler's manifesto-like architectural drawings and models, exhibited at MoMA in 1958-9, which offer a drastic, radical vision of reimagined ecological thinking. The Austrian architect, active in the Surrealist scene in New York during the 1920's, prized continuity, a pronounced endlessness that involved spaces transitioning fluidly from inside to out, undulating light without the sharp breaks of corners, and almost biomorphic spheroid forms that emerged more clearly in Kiesler's drawings than models. Endlessness is defined as a core condition of life in Kiesler's attempt to think a re-worlding, a proximate position to the marginal "lives" of Lee's sculptures on view, themselves the latest iteration of her ongoing *Endless House* series. Lee's forms evolve in state almost continuously - they undulate with rubber tubes and motors, spitting liquids, in this case glaze, and sometimes contain the recycled components of prior work.

In this current iteration of *Endless House*, glaze spurts over bisque-fired ceramic pieces, tied with rope amongst a tall metal scaffolding, the sticky liquid splashing into a metal repository below. Nearby, a pump akin to a dialysis machine ensures a consistent flow of glaze. A form on the ground writhes. Bisque-firing leaves ceramic brittle, yet hardened and a ready recipient of glaze, which is applied before a final firing. *Endless House: Holes and Drips* exists in a liminal state, elongated throughout the duration of the show - as time goes on, glaze will further accumulate over the bone-like ceramic, until it is fired after the duration of the Biennale exhibition.

In the meantime, Lee's alchemical forms hold on to the brink of their current state, a sometimes agonizing elongation that is notable less in terms of the technologies she uses to achieve her biomimicry but rather in the intense affective responses her work offers. Lee has spoken eloquently on her fascination with fetish cultures and taboo desire, particularly with vore, or

vorarephilia, a conspicuously violent, Utopic vision in which one desires to consume another in their entirety. While the desire is rooted in a relationship to another, it conjures a grander wish for a shared, impossible experience, a desire for continuity between self and other, inside and outside, through a breaking of boundaries that it acknowledges would be necessarily violent.

Endless House: Holes and Drips comes to its audience in fragments, constantly in motion, accumulating new, sedimentary glaze without end: its relationship to a grand form of violence is less clear, but in its partiality begins to fulfill some of the leftover promise of both vore and Keiser's own endless house, a continuous state of becoming open and interlinked by being born into fragmented openness. Lee's work could be seen as growing its own skin without end by way of a pump system normally used to sustain human life, echoing Keisler's remark that his own *Endless House* was "endless like the human body."

That the work will be later cast into a sedimentary form, left as a trace carcass, is further evidence to its alternative relationship to time and the physics which govern life as we know it, something akin to an ontological re-ordering, a place with rules we can't quite fathom and yet strewn with glimpses of the familiar.

The dawn of surrealism in the 1920's, and Kiesler's adjacency to its practices, poses a counterpart context to the daily apocalypse of the world Lee's sculptures find themselves installed within, though her gestures are intentionally flayed where a historical surrealist would perhaps lean into the baroque. Kiesler writes, "the coming of the *Endless House* is inevitable in a world coming to an end," and yet Lee's work demonstrates there is no prized state in realization, only a glazing that looks forward, and a fired shell which points backward, the house being truly endless, after all.

Text courtesy of Tina Kim Gallery

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Mire Lee, exhibition view from *Venice Art Biennale 2022: The Milk of Dreams* Photo: Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano



Miree Lee

Endless House: Holes and Drips, 2022

Multiple ceramic sculptures on a scaffold, lithium carbonate and iron oxide glaze liquid, pump, motor, and other mixed media

180 x 20 x 400 cm

Photo: Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano



Mire Lee, *Endless House: Holes and Drips* (2022), details Photo: Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano



Mire Lee, *Endless House: Holes and Drips* (2022), details Photo: Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano



Mire Lee, *Endless House: Holes and Drips #1-4*, 2022, Concrete, liquid glaze, peristaltic pump, silicone tubes, metal scaffold, metal receptacle, Dimensions variable Photo: Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano



Mire Lee, *Endless House: Holes and Drips #1-4* (2022), details Photo: Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano



Mire Lee, *Endless House: Holes and Drips #1-4* (2022), details Photo: Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano



Mire Lee

Mire Lee (b. 1988, Seoul) currently lives and works in Seoul and Amsterdam. She received both her BFA in Sculpture in 2012 and her MFA in Media Art in 2013 from the Seoul National University College.

Originating in the interaction between the Mire Lee and her created bodies of work, the sculptures of whom are formed from materials such as steel, silicone, and clay, and function with low-tech kinetics and animatronic-like technology. Lee testifies that her affective sculptural dedication can easily slip into fondness, fetishistic obsession, voyeurism, violation, or violence. Thus, her practice revolves around an abusive, almost masochist, relationship in which Lee explores the tense, uncertain zone between love and hate.

In 2018, Mire Lee participated in the residency program at Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in the Netherlands. She has recently been shortlisted for the Future Generation Art Prize 2021.

Selected solo & dual exhibitions: *Look, I'm a fountain of filth raving mad with love*, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany (2022); *HR Giger & Mire Lee*, Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin, Germany (2021); *Mire Lee*, The Pitcairn Museum of Contemporary Art, Groningen, The Netherlands (2021); *Carriers*, Art Sonje Center, Seoul, South Korea (2020); *Words Were Never Enough*, Lily Robert, Paris, France (2020); *Het is of de stenen spreken (silence is a commons)*, Casco Art Institute, Utrecht, The Netherlands (2019) among others.

Selected group exhibitions: *The 59th Venice Biennale: The Milk of Dreams*, Giardini della Biennale and the Arsenale, Venice, Italy (2022); *Future Generation Art Prize 2021*, Pinchuk Art Centre, Kiev, Ukraine (2021); *Techno*, Museion, Museo d'arte Moderna E Contemporanea, Bolzano, Italy (2021); *Contamination*, Kunstverein Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany (2021); *Breathing through Skin*, Antenna Space, Shanghai, China (2020); *(Im)Possible Bodies*, Niet Normaal Foundation, Den Bosch, The Netherlands (2020); *As time went on, a rumor started*, Gianni Manhattan, Vienna, Austria (2020); *Other. Worldly*, Friesmuseum, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands (2020); *The 15th Biennale de Lyon: Where Water Comes Together With Other Water*, Lyon, France (2019); *Surface Tension*, Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE (2019); *Lubricated Language*, AKINCI, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (2019); *The 12th Gwangju Biennale: Imagined Border*, Gwangju, South Korea (2018); *Double Negative*, Arko Arts Center, Seoul, South Korea (2018); *Moving/ Image*, Arko Art Center, Seoul, South Korea (2017); *SeMA Biennial Mediacity Seoul: NERIRI KIRURU HARARA*, Seoul Museum of Arts, Seoul, South Korea (2016) among others.

ANTENNA SPACE

天线空间 Antenna Space

W: www.antenna-space.com

E: info@antenna-space.com

T: +86 21 6256 0182

上海市莫干山路 50 号 17 号楼 202 室
202, Building 17, No.50 Moganshan Road, Shanghai

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