



Mire Lee (*b. Seoul, Korea, 1988; based in Amsterdam*) is a sculpture who mainly produces large scale installations featuring machinery, engineering, traditional sculptural materials, and video. Mobilizing a combination of heavy and fluid materials—motors, pumps, steel rods, scaffolds, pipes and more on the one hand, and clay, resin, silicon, plaster, glycerin among others on the other—Lee’s studio practice involves close physical relationship with works’ materiality, scale, and movement. Lee’s kinetic and biomorphic installations are questions the notion of linearity, progress, contained selfhood, and social acceptability, while engaging with visceral sensations that surpasses the realm of intellect and language.

Mire Lee has earned a bachelor’s degree from the Department of Sculpture at the Seoul National University College of Fine Arts. Her institutional solo exhibitions were held at venues such as the New Museum, MMK Frankfurt, and Kunstmuseum Den Haag. Lee has also participated in major international exhibitions including the Gwangju Biennale Pavilion Project (2018), 59th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale (2022), the 58th Carnegie International (2022), and Busan Biennial 2022.

1 *Black Sun*
2023
New Museum, New York, U.S.

Presented in the New Museum’s Fourth Floor gallery, Mire Lee: *Black Sun* is the artist’s New York debut solo exhibition. A new site-specific installation features an architectural environment, kinetic sculpture, and fabric works. Composed of materials that include low-tech motors, pumping systems, steel rods, and PVC hoses filled with grease, glycerin, silicone, slip, and oil, Lee’s animatronic sculptures operate both like living organisms and biological machines. Drawing references from architecture, horror, pornography, and cybernetics, and evoking bodily functions and environmental decay, Lee offers a visceral means to describe properties that exist between the realms of the technological and the corporeal. Titled after Julia Kristeva’s 1987 book *Black Sun*—a study of depression and melancholia—Lee’s installation is led by concerns of space, atmosphere, and materials including fabric, steel, and clay to suggest emotional voids and psychological tensions.
(courtesy of the New Museum)

2 *Endless House*
2022
Biennale Arte 2022—*The Milk of Dreams*
(Venice, Italy)

Drawing from her interest in organic architecture and viscerality, Mire Lee presented the largest-in-scale and most intricate rendition of her *Endless House* series at The Milk of Dreams. Starting from 2018, the *Endless House* series was inspired by the biomorphic housing model proposed by the architect Friedrich Kiesler (1890–1965) that was left unrealized. Following *HR GIÇER & MIRE LEE* (2021) where she presented a hollow sculpture with wire rope rotating inside it, *Endless House* at *The Milk of Dreams* takes a distinctly architectural turn featuring porous ceramics hang from scaffolds, gradually drenched with blood red slip from intricately designed pumps and motors. The visceral “house” questions the distinction between the inside and outside, the content and its carrier, and the boundary between the self and the other.

3 *Look, I’m a fountain of filth raving mad with love*
2022
MUSEUMMMKFÜR MODERNE KUNST
(Frankfurt, Germany)

Tubes, chains, and wires seem to resemble organic contraptions as they loop, glide, and snake around and into each other. These appliances are stiff or pliable when tension is applied, moving slowly yet fitfully. The water, oil, and grime flowing all around emphasizes the angular rigidity of the metal, while the plastic takes on a blurred appearance.

In a pretechnological sense, Mire Lee’s installations recall a utopian horror that we seem to have long since rendered obsolete; they come across as humane in a way that contrasts with the cold, clean, digital technologies of the present day. People are more absent than ever in the face of these digital technologies, which makes the way they function even more brutal and inhuman. While the industrial nightmare seems increasingly to have faded out of sight in the West, it has become ever more ubiquitous in the Southern Hemisphere. (Courtesy of MMK)

4 *Carriers*
2020
Art Sonje Center, Seoul, Korea

In her sculpture and installation work, Mire Lee uses machinery that operates by simple principles, along with materials that can be felt with the hands. For an artist who regards it as important to touch materials by hand as she works, machinery is a key element that contributes propulsion and repetition to the movements of the substances she touches. Her new work *Carriers* (2020), which is being shown for the first time in this exhibition, is a large kinetic sculpture that uses a hose pump, with a form resembling an animal’s digestive organs. The installation/sculpture work repeats movements as it sucks up, transports, and extracts viscous matter. As the substance moves through the sculpture’s structure, sounds are produced at odd moments along with the rhythm of the machinery movements.
(Courtesy of Art Sonje Center)



1 Installation view of Miree Lee: Black Sun, 2023.
Image courtesy of artist and the New Museum.
Photo: Dario Lasagni



2 Installation view of Endless House: Holes and Drips, 2022. The Milk of Dreams, La Biennale di Venezia.
Image courtesy of artist and Venice Biennale.
Photo: Sebastiano Pellion di Persano.



3 Installation view of Miree Lee, Look, I'm a fountain of filth raving mad with love, 2022.
Image courtesy of artist and ZOLLAMTMMK, MMK Frankfurt. Photo: Avel Schneider.



4 Installation view of Carriers, 2020.
Image courtesy of artist and Art Sonje Center.
Photo: Yeonje Kim.

이미래 MIRE LEE

Born in 1988, South Korea

Education

BFA in Sculpture, Double Major in Media Art,
College of Fine Arts, Seoul National University,
Seoul, South Korea, 2013

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 **Mire Lee: Black Sun**, New Museum, New York, USA
2022 **Look, I'm a fountain of filth raving mad with love**, ZOLLAMTMMK, MMK Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany
As we lay dying, Kunstmuseum Den Haag, Netherlands
2020 **Carriers**, Art Sonje Center, Seoul, South Korea
2019 **Het is of de stenen spreken** (*silence is a commons*), Casco Art Institute, Utrecht, Netherlands
2014 **War is Won by Sentiment Not by Soldiers**, Insa Art Space, Seoul, South Korea

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2022 **We, on the Rising Wave**, Busan Biennale, Busan, South Korea
The Milk of Dreams, 59th International Art Exhibition, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy
Is it morning for you yet? 58th Carnegie International, Pittsburg, USA
2021 **Kunsthal Light Program**, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands
TECHNO, Museion, Bolzano, Italy
Contamination, Kunstverein Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany
HR Giger & Mire Lee, Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin, Germany
Chapter 4OUR, Het HEM, Zaandam, Netherlands
2020 **Breathing through skin**, Antenna Space, Shanghai, China
It is very difficult to be an islands of perfection in a sea of misery, but please do not doubt our sincerity, W139, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Born A' Woman, Suwon Museum of Art, Suwon, South Korea
2019 **In Between Uneven Stairs**, Tunnel Tunnel, Lausanne, Switzerland
Where Water Comes Together With Other Water, 15th Biennale de Lyon, Lyon, France
iwillimediavalfutureyou1, Art Sonje, Seoul, South Korea
Surface Tension, Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE
2018 **Double Negative**, Arko Arts Center, Seoul, South Korea
Today Will Happen, Gwangju Biennale Pavilion Project, Gwangju Civic Center, Gwangju, South Korea
Fictional Frictions, Gwangju Biennale Pavilion Project, Mugaksa, Gwangju, South Korea

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