

The object—in particular the intersection of body horror and sexuality—is integral to Seoul- and Amsterdam-based artist Mire Lee’s exploration of the 21st-century human condition. Challenging aesthetic conventions with her use of heavy-duty materials such as chains, motors, and pumps that cause her forms to writhe and discharge fluids, Lee presents the grotesque as part machine, part animal, and part human.

Since her first solo exhibition in Korea in 2014, Lee has gained increasing international attention for her transgressive, carnally violent sculptures. In the Arsenale at the 59th Venice Biennale (4/23–11/27), Lee presented *Endless House: Holes and Drips* (2022), an installation resembling a drying rack for entrails that consists of tubes hanging on a metal scaffold and leaking ruddy, iron-pigmented glaze. Her solo exhibition “Look, I’m a fountain of filth, raving mad with love” (5/21–9/4), at the Museum für Moderne Kunst’s Zollamt space in Frankfurt, featured walls of scribbled writing, half-built rebar structures and concrete mixers in a dystopian scene. “As We Lay Dying” (7/9–10/16), Lee’s solo exhibition at Kunstmuseum Den Haag, in the Netherlands, explored the process of death and decay with



Portrait of MIRE LEE. Photo by Christian Werner.

bone-like clay sculptures placed above a metal grate, underneath which pooled viscous, unfired clay resembling liquefying flesh. The exhibition “Carriers” (9/15–10/22) at Tina Kim Gallery in New York centered around the theme of vorarephilia, a fetish that involves the sexual desire to consume or be consumed by another person or creature, which she evoked in her dripping tangles of tubes, concrete casts, and hanging net sculptures.

Along with being featured at Venice, Lee was commissioned to create new works at several mega-exhibitions. In Korea, Lee participated in the 11th Busan Biennial (9/3–11/6) with her site-specific installation *Landscape with Many Holes: Skins of Yeongdo Sea* (2022) in an abandoned factory building. Resembling rotting flesh, as if it had been consumed by the factory, the installation was damaged by Typhoon Hinnamnor, poetically accelerating its decay. At the 58th Carnegie International (9/24–4/2/23) in Pittsburgh, *Untitled (My Pittsburgh Sculpture)* (2022) featured viscera-like forms entangled in turning machinery with red liquid pooling underneath. While often graphic, her works breathe new life into the exploration of bodily death.

Mire Lee

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Installation view of MIRE LEE’s *Endless House: Holes and Drips*, 2022, rope, bisque-fired ceramic, liquid glaze, peristaltic pump, silicone tubes, metal scaffold and metal receptacle, dimensions variable, at “The Milk of Dreams,” 59th Venice Biennale, 2022. Photo by Sebastiano Pellion di Persano. Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York.