

PRESENTING NEW WORK BY

LEE BUL

AUGUST 26 – OCTOBER 14, 2023

LEE BUL | AUGUST 26 – OCTOBER 14, 2023

BB&M is pleased to announce its second solo exhibition of Lee Bul. The works on view, comprising a sculptural installation and a series of paintings on panel, extend the artist's inquiry into the central subject of her oeuvre over the past two decades: the fraught legacy of the historical avant-garde in art and architecture as it intertwines with utopian aspirations and failures in the formation of the modern world.

Hovering in the gallery's double-height space is a large silvery dirigible titled *Willing To Be Vulnerable – Metalized Balloon V6* (2023). Earlier versions of this work have been shown in Lee's solo exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery, London, and Gropius-Bau, Berlin (both 2018), in the context of her other works revolving around utopian modernity under the rubric *Mon grand récit* – the artist's self-conscious tweaking of the term made famous by Jean-François Lyotard. The evocative form of *Willing To Be Vulnerable* speaks of both the promise and the betrayal of technological rationalism as a tenet of progressivist projects to reinvent the world. While its reflective, aerodynamic profile stands in for all things brilliantly futuristic, it also casts a long shadow of historical trauma, of the inevitable fallibility of all things manmade.

Echoing these themes, recent examples of Lee Bul's *Perdu* series of paintings on panel integrate motifs alluding to the fractured tropes and narratives of the historical avant-garde. Created with mother-of-pearl inlaid amid layers of acrylic paint repeatedly applied and sanded down to bring forth sensuous, vibrant forms, these works reflect in material and method the artist's longstanding interest in the interplay of the natural and the manmade, the traditional and the modern. In these increasingly abstract works, contours both sinuous and geometric emerge from vibrant strata of exploded colors, freely elaborating on the ideas and architectonics of landscapes and built environments in the modern utopian imagination.

The title of the series, *Perdu* (which literally translates to "lost" in English), gestures distantly toward Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*, with its meditation on the persistence of memory, the ineluctable pull of the past. But as the artist has noted, it's also an arcane military term for soldiers sent out to perilous vanguard positions, a reference resonating with the sociopolitical formation of Korea, positioned at the last demarcation of the Cold-War world.

Taken together, the works in this exhibition speak insightfully and poetically to our contemporary condition in an age of endless denouement, long after the purported end of history. Solipsistic and disenchanted of any visions of utopias, we may be lost perhaps, but these works demonstrate that the consolation of beauty still remains, if we're willing to be vulnerable.

LEE BUL

Widely recognized as the leading Korean artist of her generation, Lee Bul has been the subject of solo shows at institutions throughout the world, including the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2002); Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney (2004); Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris (2007); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2012); Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg (2013); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015); Vancouver Art Gallery (2015); Hayward Gallery, London (2018); Gropius-Bau, Berlin (2018); Manege Central Exhibition Hall, St. Petersburg, Russia (2020); Gothenburg Museum of Art, Sweden (2023).

Her work is in prominent public collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Tate Modern, London; British Museum, London; Musée d'Art Moderne Grand Duc Jean, Luxembourg; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; M+, Hong Kong; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa; Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; Amorepacific Museum of Art, Seoul; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul.

Lee Bul is the recipient of an honorary doctorate from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2022); the prestigious Ho-Am Prize in the Arts (2019); and the insignia of Officier, Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, presented by the Ministry of Culture, France (2016). Lee Bul was awarded a Menzione d'Onore (1999) for her contribution to the 48th Venice Biennale.





Exhibition view, *Lee Bul*, BB&M, Seoul, 2023. Works by Lee Bul.



Exhibition view, *Lee Bul*, BB&M, Seoul, 2023. Works by Lee Bul.



Exhibition view, *Lee Bul*, BB&M, Seoul, 2023. Works by Lee Bul.



Exhibition view, *Lee Bul*, BB&M, Seoul, 2023. Works by Lee Bul.



Exhibition view, *Lee Bul*, BB&M, Seoul, 2023. Works by Lee Bul.



Exhibition view, *Lee Bul*, BB&M, Seoul, 2023. Works by Lee Bul.



Exhibition view, *Lee Bul*, BB&M, Seoul, 2023. Works by Lee Bul.



ABOUT THE GALLERY

Beginning in 2009 as an art consultancy, BB&M has been instrumental in the ascendance of some of the most acclaimed contemporary Korean artists now on the international stage, including Lee Bul, Minouk Lim, Park Chan-kyong, and Bae Young-whan. BB&M's current iteration as an independent gallery is a joint effort between James B. Lee (Founding Principal) and Si Young Hur (Principal), who brings decades of experience in the commercial sector as Director at Gallery Hyundai and PKM Gallery and as Partner at Gallery Baton. In her previous posts, Ms. Hur was responsible for organizing and overseeing exhibitions of such artists as Liam Gillick, Olafur Eliasson, Thomas Struth, Robert Rauschenberg, and Yun Hyong-keun, a key figure in *Dansaekhwa*.

BB&M inaugurated its gallery space in October 2021 with a solo exhibition of Lee Bul, widely recognized as the leading Korean artist of her generation. Encompassing over 2,500 square feet (233 square meters) of exhibition space over two levels, including a double-height space with a 17.5-foot (5.4 meters) ceiling, BB&M is located in the culturally storied district of Seongsu-dong, in the vicinity of Gansong Art Museum, established in 1938 as the first private art museum in Korea.

In addition to Lee Bul, the gallery's roster includes such prominent, critically important Korean figures as Minouk Lim, Bae Young-whan, and Heecheon Kim, working across a range of genres and shaping contemporary Korean art in an international context. The gallery also represents younger international artists rising in recognition and spanning different visual cultures, among them Alex Dodge and Miko Veldkamp.

From the outset BB&M has also sought to introduce curatorial perspectives from outside the commercial sector to ensure its program is intellectually expansive, inviting, for instance, Dan Cameron, the former New Museum curator, to organize an exhibition. These efforts reflect the gallery's long-term mission of building an exhibition program that engages both critically and aesthetically with contemporary visual ideas.

ABOUT THE PRINCIPALS

James B. Lee, Founding Principal, brings decades of varied experience in the art world, as a writer for such international magazines as ARTnews (New York), Flash Art International (Milan), and Art AsiaPacific (Hong Kong); in institutions, as the Head of Exhibitions at Art Sonje Center, Seoul, and the Director of Exhibitions at the Gwangju Biennale Foundation; and in the commercial sector as Partner at PKM Gallery, Seoul. Mr. Lee was trained in finance at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, before earning a master's in writing from Columbia University, New York.

Si Young Hur, Principal, earned a BFA in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from Hong Ik University, Seoul, where she studied with major figures in the Dansaekhwa movement, notably Park Seo-bo. Ms. Hur went on to study art management at ICART, Paris, and embarked on a career in the commercial art world, first working at a Paris gallery that exhibited Lee Ufan. Upon returning to Seoul, she served as Director at Gallery Hyundai and subsequently at PKM Gallery.

For further press inquiry, please contact:

Yeonjoo Yu, Associate

yu@gallerybbm.com +82 2 3674 7773