

For Immediate Release:



Space 776 (229 Central Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11221), Proud to present the Solo Exhibition "Boyoung Lee: Greenery in Urban Scenery" Curated by Suechung Koh. The show will run from September 27 - October 3, 2019 with an opening reception on September 27th from 6-9 pm.

Free and chaotic, yet simple, Boyoung Lee reminisces and wishes to revert to a world in which elements of natural beauty were more involved in urban cultures. Things that grow out of the ground become one with architecture, and man-made products are dispersed in nature. Yet despite the nonsensical 'natural yet unnatural' atmosphere, these images are rooted to a serene message. Humans have pushed the natural world aside to create their own world, failing to realize both are necessary. It is our duty to not only embrace both sides, but to embrace others to achieve a balanced lifestyle. The buildings often presented in her work are symbolic of a person's privacy and individuality, showing that one can look through the windows and gain a better understanding of each person. In this way, the giraffe, who is able to view society from every perspective, represents the connection between people as well as nature.

Boyoung Lee who lives and works in South Korea, is gaining popularity for her career as a young artist. She has been exhibited in many prestigious galleries in Korea such as Yeon Seok San Museum, Chonbuk National University Exhibition Center, and Elga Wimmer PCC. This is her second solo show in NY.

For More Information:

Space 776 (229 Central Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11221): [info@space776.com](mailto:info@space776.com) / 718-578-1195  
Curator Suechung Koh: [pariskoh@gmail.com](mailto:pariskoh@gmail.com) / 201 724 7077

# LEE BO YOUNG

2008 Graduated from Chonbuk National University, Department of Fine Arts (B.F.A.)

2010 Graduated from Chonbuk National University, Graduate School of Art Education (M.F.A.)

2014 Pursuing doctorate at Chonbuk National University, Graduate School of Fine Arts

## Solo Exhibitions

2018 Lee Bo-Young Solo Exhibition, Yeon Seok San Museum, Jeonju

2017 Lee Bo-Young Solo Exhibition, Yeon Seok San Museum, Jeonju

2017 Art World Gallery Invitational Exhibition, Art World Gallery, Seoul

2016 Gallery Sum Invitational Exhibition, Gallery Sum, Jeonju

2015 Lee Bo-Young Solo Exhibition, Chonbuk National University Exhibition Center, Jeonju

2015 Lee Bo-Young Solo Exhibition, United Gallery, Seoul

2014 The topsy turvy world, Elga Wimmer - Hyun Contemporary, New York

2013 " in nature", Chonbuk National University Exhibition Center, Jeonju

2012 Jeong Art Gallery Planning & Invitational Exhibition, Jeong Art Gallery, Gunsan

2012 "Expressions outside the Windows," Gyodong Art Studio, Jeonju

2011 Casa de Lago Invitational Exhibition, Casa de Lago, Gunsan

2011 Lee Bo-Young Solo Exhibition, Space Sharing Gallery, Jeonju

2011 Gyodong Art Center Planning & Contest Invitational Exhibition-"Growing," Gyodong Art Studio, Jeonju

## Awards

2010, Art INCULTURE "Eastern Monsters" Selected

2009, 2010 Hanseong Baekje Art Competition Participation Prize

2005, 2006 Ongoeul Grand Art Competition Submission Acceptance

## Collections

Jeollabuk-do Jeonju City Hall

Chonbuk National University Main Hall, Library, Jeonju

Choi Buk Art Museum, Muju

Gyodong Art Gallery, Jeonju

Private Collectors

## ***BoYoung Lee's Solo Exhibition***

**Robert C. Morgan** (Art Critic, Professor at Pratt Institute, NY)

The carefully constructed ink colors on Hanji paper by the artist Lee Bo Young reveal a profound and exuberant imagination at work. They exude an authenticity of inquiry into the lifestyles of urban-dwellers, which have become signs of Korean culture often associated with a younger generation of artists. For an artist, such as Lee Boyoung, to assert one's imagination at a time when social media have taken over the art world represents an exceptional and courageous point of view. Her recent large-scale drawings of simulated urban apartment buildings combine occasional greenery and wavering cypress trees with a perennial giraffe.

Together these diverse elements offer an allegorical narrative as to the persistence of nature in the most unlikely circumstances. Her point of view as an artist is her own. Rather than the urban environment intervening on nature, nature intervenes on the presence of static appearance of urban buildings. Her drawings suggest humor and ease, occasionally touching on irony, but also without concession. They represent the potential to live the life of art and to embrace her role as an artist with a soft critical edge. In essence, her drawings are a commentary on life in urban centers, such as Seoul and New York, where nature is too often pushed aside. Lee Boyoung attempts to set the balance in motion – that nature is essential to our lives.

In a certain respect, Boyoung's art implies a kind of ironic shamanist point of view – that she (her persona) is the giraffe observing the rhythmic waves of the cypress trees as they bend in sequence across the facade of a calculated and non-descript form of architecture. The intervention of the imaginative persona is important as it offers a sense of dignity to those who live, sleep, and eat within this structure. This long-necked creature verges on fantasy and carries a sense of lightness. The giraffe is tall, with a high neck; thus, it is capable of observing through the windows from an aerial perspective. Concurrently, the rhythmical cypress trees bend with the breeze. They give assurance that nature remains present, though occasionally hidden from view. The omnipresence of the gentle long-necked guardian plays an instrumental role in such an environment. It forms the basis of an animal/human allegory, acknowledging the potential for joy and happiness and a willing to see the balance between nature and culture.

Tracing the origin of the voyeuristic scenes in which, as viewers, we see inside various windows of an apartment complex is shown in *Apartment - See* (2009). Concurrently, the drawings of giraffes begin to appear around the same time, but do not come together later that year. Suddenly the giraffe become the voyeurs making use of their extended necks to view the goings-on inside the habitat cubicles. One of the earliest and most revelatory works related to this theme, titled *Giraffe* (2009), shows two green-spotted giraffes in front of an apartment façade. On the left side we see only the upper neck and head of the animal peering into a window on the seventh floor. On the right, another giraffe is seen standing on the ground in full view. His head has disappeared into a window on the fifth floor of the same building.

The scene articulates Boyoung's fascination with a most unlikely encounter. Clearly there is no rational answer as to how these extra-tall, green-spotted animals found their way to this building. Her depiction of this rather enticing and humorous caper continues over the next three years and into the present. In *View* (2012), the image of a single enormous giraffe appears as a mirage, possibly painted on the façade of an apartment complex. In this case, the giraffe is painted is covered with red spots and rises up more than ten stories from ground level.

Yet one may sense that Lee Boyoung's drawings in colored inks do more than simply offer an allegory on the human condition in which people are interested in what others are doing and the giraffe becomes the artist's stand-in protagonist. On a subliminal level, these works form a subtle critique of the sameness of architecture, usually for cost effective purpose, that orders the way in which people are expected to live in urban centers. This critique is not a new one, going back at least to the 1950s in the work of architectural critic Lewis Mumford. Lee Boyoung's point of reference is unique. First of all, she is an artist who looks at this phenomenon from the point of view of nature that is, taking a broader view than simply the problem of sameness. The ultimate message in these extraordinary and delightful drawings is that nature plays a necessary role in terms of how human beings deal with their living conditions. Perhaps, the giraffe and the cypress trees offer a symbolic way to understand the manner in which cost effective motivations for building living environments can be taken into account in applying ways of allowing plants and animals to become integrated into the way urban environments are designed.

## *The Ghost of Marius? Boyoung Lee*

Article by Daniel Gauss

In 1984 E.O. Wilson wrote the book *Biophilia*, which theorized that there was an inherent attraction that humans felt toward the natural world. This need to experience nature – even in the depths of the most crowded city – would help to explain why our cities are not completely concrete and steel aggregations of buildings and thoroughways like Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*. Boyoung Lee, whose current show is at Hyun Contemporary, seems to focus on this type of biophilia in the 'topsy turvy' world she depicts.

Lee's very sensitively drawn and captivating images show that nature is something literally transported into the city and that it serves a peripheral, decorative function, feeding our biophilia demons. You may not know that 70 – 80% of the oxygen we breathe is actually created by photosynthetic ocean dwelling algae, so the practical oxygen-producing function of trees is basically nil in the city. Even the flora of Central Park was imported into New York by Frederick Law Olmsted. Central Park, as you may know, is a work of 'landscape' art.

The most salient feature of Lee's buildings would be the windows, through which you see little details denoting middle class, urban, professional life. Through the windows everything seems perfectly in place and immaculately tidy. The units seem to be empty, the places of solace and comfort we seek to get to after work to get away from each other in order not to go completely nuts. The windows become symbolic of our inability to really mesh emotionally with each other – we live separate and secluded, surrounded by the best stuff we can buy, in lieu of feeling a meaningful sense of community. Nature seems to serve its function in this scheme – in one drawing the roof is overrun by vegetation and the stuff used to enjoy such outcroppings is strewn willy nilly. In another building nature asserts itself by growing wildly from some upper floors. Perhaps biophilia has morphed into some stronger form of dedication to the world we abandoned.

So what's with the giraffe? Suechung Koh, curator of the show, told me the giraffe could be a type of bridge between the outside and inside. I'm guessing that the long-necked, peeping Tom giraffes are nature looking through the windows at the type of life that we have adopted.

I like to think of the giraffe, however, as the ghost of Marius. Remember Marius the giraffe from the Copenhagen Zoo? The director of the zoo determined that Marius was genetically unfit for reproducing other giraffes. Although zoos around the world implored him to save the young giraffe, the director was resolved on killing Marius, dissecting him in front of school children and then feeding him to the zoo's lions. Using a bolt gun – to ensure the giraffe meat was untainted by poison – Marius was killed, dissected and fed to the lions. I see the giraffe as his ghost coming back to the world that kept him in a cage as a curiosity and killed him because he wasn't 'natural' enough. The ghost of Marius becomes the interface of humanity and nature. We create zoos as places of spectacle, where animals suffer from zoochosis, but we indulge in our biophilia, and we adopt a 'conservationist' justification for the facilities. Don't preserve the environment, preserve the animals. Indeed, to me the ghost of Marius haunts the wonderfully creative and evocative drawings of Boyoung Lee. These are such nicely drawn images on such rich paper that you really should drop by and experience them for yourself.

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Daniel Gauss is the Proletarian Art Snob. He is a graduate of The University of Wisconsin and Columbia University and regularly treks around New York City in his amazing psychotropic art hat looking for meaningful art to share with others. He has worked in the non-profit sector and has worked as a teacher and tutor. Basically he's a do-gooder who also writes about art.

## ***The Topsy Turvy World of Boyoungg Lee***

**Thalia Vrachopoulos Ph.d:** Art Critic, Professor at J. Jay College, NY

As the title suggests Lee's delicately executed ink color drawings depict a world off kilter in which the inside is outside and vice versa; trees sprout from apartment house windows, birds fly indoors, grass grows on roofs and Giraffes live indoors with people. Lee uses this disjunctive methodology with which to comment on our rapidly expanding information driven consumerist oriented society that in its quick change results in conflicted human emotions and psychological stress.

Lee is also interested in the lives of those she draws and in humankind in general while on her journey to express communication among people and animals within and outside their habitats. Her uniform windowed apartment buildings are synonymous to common everyday individuals; proforma on the exterior yet warm and personal inside. Lee's interiors are places where dreams dare to exist growing to become goals that are then somehow realized. In her work entitled *Grow*, 2012 (Ink Colors on Korean Paper, 38.2x51.3cm) we are presented with a series of interiors seen through different size windows giving the impression of an apartment house building. Through one window we see a plain dresser in a bedroom, another shows a table with a fruitier on its top, yet another shows a bannister and another window with a bird cage in the rooms' far left. This window into window effect was also evident in the works of Matisse especially his *Window Collioure* and *Notre Dame*. One could almost say that both artists were searching for another dimension in which people aren't as rushed or hassled, where they could stop and smell the roses sort of speak. One of the windows offers us a glimpse of a Korean apartment's interior balcony in which traditionally clothes could hang to dry, and kimchi jars could stand unmolested. Over the exterior of the building stands a very tall and gentle appearing Giraffe that bends her gracious neck to study the building as if watching over its safety.

Yet another work *Growing Dream*, 2013 (Ink Colors on Korean Paper, 57.3x44.1cm) needs careful attention to see that it is really a jail cell as its bars are white the same non-color as the background so that we don't notice it at first. Inside this marked off space shaped like a square room as a variety of possessions that would ordinarily be part of interiors. A bed, Covers, hanging shelves, a table and chair, nightstand, milkbox, train tracks with a motorized milk truck, a chest of drawers, a lamp on a table, and some brown boxes are strewn in careful disarray all over the room. The top portion that is at once suggested as being void and solid because of the figure ground ambiguity contains free-floating green leaves that mimic birds in formation.

With Lee's *Face Window it's Over*, 2012 (Ink Colors on Korean Paper, 137.4x312.2cm) we are reminded of children on punishment who are sent to the corner, lonely children one lying face down, another one sitting drawn into herself. The child figures that are painted in black and in shadow gray colors for the most part blend into the neutral ground. Like a movie set the scene folds at the corners so that we see Giraffes and children wrapping around the crease. Consequently, a two and three dimensional play occurs between the solidity of some of the figures against the flatness of these. The size difference in the sizes of Lee's characters of a small Giraffe for example near a large child make for an altogether disjunctive experience causing the viewer to rethink his values.