

# VENICEPROJECTS

## **CRYSTAL CITY PERSONAL SHOW OF HYE RIM LEE**

Venice / from 24 April to 23 May 2010  
Venice Projects / Dorsoduro 868, 30123 Venice

The initiatives of the new gallery Venice Projects continue with a show by the Korean artist Hye Rim Lee.

The exhibition consists of a series of large diasec-mounted photographs and a video. The highlight of the show is the video installation entitled Crystal City, which premiered at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Venice Biennale; it is the evocative name given by the artist to an ideal representation of her imaginary world, presented again in the gallery's exhibition space. The show unfolds as the retelling of a fantastic story, the result of an intermingling of Eastern and Western popular cultures and of a study of new technologies and their impact on customs. The artist has given life to her cybernetic alter ego, TOKI, the heroine of her creations who constitutes a reflection on the female identity that is today increasingly "mutant" due to cosmetics, plastic surgery and genetic manipulation. The dragon YONG, another central character in her work, traveling companion of TOKI, is the symbol of Asian culture and identity. Unlike in the West, where the dragon is associated with negative values, in the East it is a symbol of courage, loyalty and strength. Crystal City, with its sugary colors and rubbery forms, evokes a longing for childhood, yet it is also a world filled with obsessions and insanities. It is an artistic design "in progress", a reflection on how, at a global level, female sexual identity is perceived and used. Hye Rim Lee's style inevitably shows influences of the manga tradition, but it is mixed with Western aesthetic ideals, giving life to trans-gender and trans-cultural characters who live in an imaginary world ruled by testosterone. Through her many works, Hye Rim Lee's shows that the exploitation of the female body and the stereotypes related to it are still a very current topic.

**Hye Rim Lee** was born in Korea but lives in New York and New Zealand. After receiving a degree in Fine Arts and a career as a singer, she became interested in the development of video games and in new 3D technologies as fundamental tools in the development of her art. With a talent for setting her work at the limits between East and West, between popular culture and contemporary myths, she has achieved great visibility and had numerous exhibitions in the U.S., Australia and Asia. In the near future, she will participate in the II Poznan Biennial, *Beyond Mediations*.

**Venice Projects:** Venice Projects promotes both internationally recognized contemporary artists as well as young emerging ones, brought together by a common interest in experimenting with different materials and in their innovative use in unique contexts. It is especially interested in those artists who, either regularly or occasionally, use glass as a medium of contemporary expression. The artistic content and international range of the proposals developed by Venice Projects are highly distinguished, thanks to its relationships with both public and private institutions. Through its cultural planning activities and site-specific projects, it develops interesting opportunities for dialogue and experimentation in the use of glass in contemporary art. The gallery officially opened in Switzerland in 2007 but moved permanently to Venice in 2010.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Show:** Crystal City / **Artist:** Hye Rim Lee

**Location:** Venice Projects, Dorsoduro 868, 30123 Venice / **Duration:** 24 April - 23 May, 2010

**Opening:** 24 April 6:00 p.m. / **Gallery Hours:** daily from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.