

press release

**A Solo Exhibition by Dongwook Lee**  
**Love Me Sweet**



**DONGWOOK LEE**  
Love Me Sweet

**Period: Thursday, May. 24 – Saturday, June. 30, 2012**

**Venue: Arario Gallery Seoul samcheong**

**149-2 Sokyuk-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul**

**Arario Gallery Seoul Samcheong will be hosting a solo exhibition by Arario's resident artist Dong Wook Lee under the title of <Love Me Sweet>, from May 24<sup>th</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. Lee, who has been showcasing a unique aesthetics of cool violence through small, precise humanoid sculptures, will be presenting installations consisting of twenty new sculpture works and objets.**

As figure who represents the Korean new wave sculptors early in the new millennium, Lee has contrasted perfect beauty to the violent, uncanny situations that lurk beneath through elaborate and realistic sculptures made of a material called Sculpie. The composition of his works, perfectly modeled and exposed under precise containment, reflect Lee's tendency to push himself to the very boundaries of controllability. The viewers, faced with the sculptures born of such control, are first amazed by the miniscule size of the works, and are again surprised by the realistic, life like form, color, and tactility of these pieces. The new works presented at this exhibition embrace Lee's signature traits, but the small stages each piece encounter have been expanded, growing out of human-centered forms and moving on to installations of greater variety and depth.

Breeding, a theme he has been continuously focusing on since his first solo exhibition in 2003, originates from his personal interest in collecting and breeding animals. Lee captures the overall structure of those who breed and those who are bred, and the system that governs the relationship between the two.

One example would be a piece called <Good Boy (2011)>. At the center of the work we see a man, precariously standing. His two hands holds on to multiple threads of rope, which reminds the viewer of the food chain, and the ropes are in turn tied to thirty or so dogs. The man and the dogs are retaining a delicate balance, which can fall apart any moment due to any one of the components' unexpected move. The dogs, looking oblivious to the situation, are staring away in disparate directions. "Good Boy" is a compliment one utters when his or her dog complies with one's will. However, it is ambiguous whether this "good boy" refers to the dog, or the man tied to the top of this chain. The phrase may imply a situation where both parties are taming each other, or an unspoken order based on various social customs and taboos. The subject can be the victim, the assailant, or even both depending on his posture and form.

Meanwhile, <Love Me Sweet (2011)>, serving as an antipode of perfect beauty or a sweet dreamlike sensation, shows a honey-like sweet substance dripping down as a trophy-shaped structure falls apart. The viewers cannot tell whether the trophy, which looks as if it is built with beehives, had crumbled down due to an external force, or simply ran down with the honey. But what is clear here, is that any moment of glory, as

sweet as honey, may collapse in a mere second.

In line with the above piece, <Honor to Defend and Past to be Erased (2012)> is an installation consisting of a birdcage, trophies and actual birds. The gleaming trophies, and the birds caught in the cage and bred with the feed in the trophies. The trophies gradually grow dim, as their surfaces are soiled with bird droppings and various other wastes. The caged birds, rubbing against each other in the confined space, eventually die out.

This contrast between victim and assailant, glory and decline can also be applied to the humanoid sculptures made in a mosaic figure. A part of each human figure is obscured by square pieces that look like the mosaic processing that blocks out violent or undesirable scenes on TV screens. The viewers can deduce that a violent act such as murder or assault has occurred, based on the blood and flesh-like hues glimpsed through the pieces. However, there is no device with which one may determine whether the figures are victims or the assailants in the given situation. With all possible interpretation removed, the figure is merely a neutral, sole witness of the situation, despite the violence dripping through the scene.

Such observations on people in ambiguous and absurd circumstances persist, but whereas the 2006 solo exhibition transformed the Arario Seoul Samcheong Gallery into a giant fish farm, this event presents an even more dramatic situation as seen in the huge birdcage. The devices are amplified, and the works show further progress.

### **Artist Info**

Dong Wook Lee studied art at Hongik University, and completed his graduate work in the same institution. His solo exhibitions include <Love Me Tender> (Doosan Gallery, New York, U.S.A., 2012), <Cross Breeding> (Avante Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland, 2008), <Breeding Pond> (Arario Gallery, Samcheongdong, Seoul, Korea, 2006), and <Mother Breeding> (Brain Factory, Seoul, Korea, 2004). He has also participated in many group exhibitions, for instance at Sweden's Uppsala Gallery in 2011, the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Gwacheon in 2009, and London's Saatchi Gallery in 2009. He will be holding a solo exhibition at Stockholm, Sweden, next January.

Images



Good boy\_2012\_mixed media\_20x120x80cm



Good boy\_2012\_mixed media\_20x120x80cm\_detail



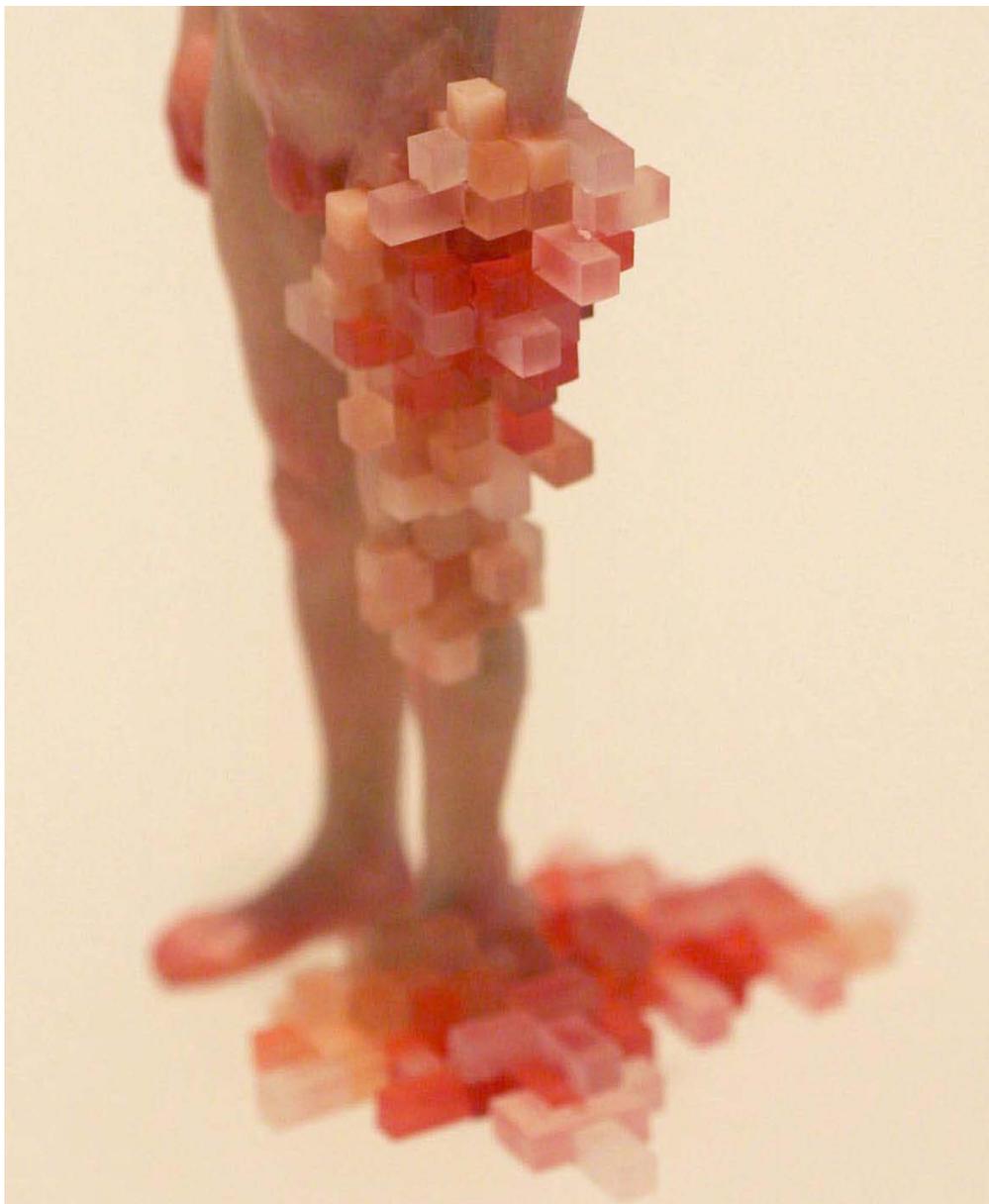
Love Me Sweet\_2012\_mixed media\_dimensions variable



Love Me Sweet\_2012\_mixed media\_dimensions variable\_detail



Untitled\_2011\_mixed media\_17x5x5cm



Untitled\_2011\_mixed media\_17x5x5cm\_detail



Untitled\_2011\_mixed media\_17x5x5cm



Untitled\_2011\_mixed media\_17x5x5cm\_side view



Wolf attack\_2011\_mixed media\_19x10x15cm



Wolf attack\_2011\_mixed media\_19x10x15cm\_detail

[Image courtesy of the Artist and Arario gallery](#)

**DONGWOOK LEE** (B. 1976, Seoul, Korea)

Lives and works in Seoul, Korea

### **EDUCATIONS**

2003 M.F.A Dept. of Painting, Hongik University, Seoul, Korea

2001 B.F.A Dept. of Painting, Hongik University, Seoul, Korea

### **SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

2012 Love Me Sweet, ARARIO GALLERY, Seoul samcheong, Korea

Love Me Tender, DOOSAN gallery, New York, USA

2008 Cross Breeding, Avanthay Contemporary, Zurich, Switzerland

2006 \*Breeding Pond, ARARIO GALLERY, Seoul samcheong, Korea

2004 Mouthbreeder, Brain Factory, Seoul, Korea

2003 Inbreeding, KEPCO Plaza, Seoul, Korea



### **SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

2011 Upsala Art Museum, Upsala, Sweden

38N Snow South: Korean Contemporary Art, Shalott Lund Galerie, Stockholm, Sweden

2010 Artists with Arario, ARARIO GALLERY, Seoul samcheong, Cheonan, Korea

Made in Popland, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea, Gwacheon, Korea

2009 Resonance Green Korea-Climate Change in the Bosom of Culture, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul Korea & Fredericksberg Townhall , Copenhagen, Denmark

\*Peppermint Candy: Contemporary Art from Korea, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, Korea

Conflicting Tales - Inaugural Exhibition of the Burger Collection, Zimmerstrasse, Berlin, Germany

\*Ultra Skin, Space C Coreana Art & Culture Complex, Seoul, Korea

\*Korean Eye : Moon Generation, Standard Chartered First Bank, Seoul, Korea & Saatchi Gallery, London, UK

2008 Daily Life in Korea; In Commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Diplomatic Relationship Between Korea and Thailand, The Queen's Gallery, Tailand

Hyunjhin Baik, Donghee Koo, Dongwook Lee Group Show, ARARIO GALLERY, Beijing, China

\*Peppermint Candy: Contemporary Art from Korea, National Museum of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires, Argentina

2007 Contemporary Korean Art: Wonderland, The National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China

Disturbed : New Art from Kroea, Peres Project, Berlin, Germany

\*Peppermint Candy: Contemporary Art from Korea, Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago, Chile

- \*Skin of/ in Contemporary Art, The Osaka Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan
- 2006 Give me Shelter, Union Galley, London, UK  
Egomania, Civica Gallery, Modena, Italy
- 2005 \*Beautiful Cynicism, ARARIO GALLERY, Beijing, China
- 2004 Alchemy of Daily Life, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Gwacheon, Korea  
New Face 2004 : Art in Culture Emerging Artist Competition, Dukwon gallery, Seoul, Korea
- 2003 A Slice of Contemporary Art, LCM gallery, Ilsan, Korea
- 2002 Dream of Butterfly, Hongik University Contemporary Art Museum, Seoul, Korea

\* Catalogue Published

### **ARTIST IN RESIDENCE**

2011 Jul 01 ~ Dec 31, DOOSAN Residency New York, USA

### **PUBLICATIONS**

2006 "DONGWOOK LEE : Breeding Pond", published by ARARIO, Korea / ISBN 89-92262-05-1 93620

### **COLLECTIONS**

Burger Collection, Germany

Rubell Family Collection, USA

Lohengrin Enterprises, USA

The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea

Today Art Museum, China

Arario Collection, Korea

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**Image**

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Exhibition Hour : Tue - Sun 11:00 am - 07:00 pm (closed on Mondays)

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