

YOUNG JOO LEE

*LIZARDIANS*

OCHI AUX

SEPTEMBER 10 – OCTOBER 22, 2022

OCHI is pleased to present *LIZARDIANS* a solo exhibition of new and recent videos and sculptures by Los Angeles-based artist Young Joo Lee. This will be the Artist's second solo exhibition with the Gallery. *LIZARDIANS* will be on view at OCHI Aux, located at 3305 W Washington Blvd in Los Angeles, California from September 10 through October 22, 2022. An Artist's Reception will be held on Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 8:00 pm PST.

With a multi-faceted practice spanning animation, sculpture, painting, and performance, Young Joo Lee makes work that ruptures common understandings of reality by distilling personal, political, and socio-economic perceptions of existence into distinct visual languages. Across disciplines Lee's work features narratives that examine and challenge systems of power, exposing the machinations and consequences of colonialism, xenophobia, capitalism, racism, and classism.

*Lizardians* (2021) is a 3D computer-animated short set in a bio-capitalist factory owned by the RENEW corporation in a dystopic future. Having harnessed the axolotl salamander's genetic powers of regeneration, RENEW harvests human body parts—selling a desire for eternal youth while profiting from ableism and trans-humanism.

Inside a parafictional retail-style display complete with RENEW commercials repeating on multiple television screens, Lee presents ceramic iPhone sculptures. *Anonymous Worker 1-14* (all 2022) are handheld works that each display an oil painting where a screen might be, featuring portraits of present-day Chinese and Vietnamese factory workers and Congolese conflict minerals miners—the exploited laborers of multinational smartphone conglomerates.

*Lizardians* is inspired by the 2010 media coverage of two factories: a series of employee suicides at the Foxconn facility in Shenzhen, China and revelations that dozens of employees from a South Korean Samsung computer chip factory had been diagnosed with or died from nonhereditary diseases and rare illnesses due to unsafe working conditions. Drawing from life, Lee exaggerates and fictionalizes the brutal tactics of capitalism, but also finds poetry in the mundane of horror. Creative expression—freedom of the mind—is not a substitute for bodily autonomy and with *LIZARDIANS*, Lee illustrates the power and precarity of artistic production in the face of the global industrial complex.

*Young Joo Lee (b. 1987, Seoul, Korea) received an MFA in Sculpture from Yale University and an MFA in Film from Städelschule in Frankfurt, Germany. Lee's work has been exhibited internationally at venues including the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Seoul, South Korea; Medrar for Contemporary Art in Cairo, Egypt; Curitiba Biennial for Contemporary Art in Curitiba, Brazil; Kunsthaus Bregenz in Bregenz, Austria; Artspace New Haven in New Haven, CT; and Zero Field in the 798 Arts District of Beijing, China. Lee is the recipient of various awards and grants including a 2020 Seoul Foundation for the Arts and Culture Artist Grant; 2018-2020 College Fellowship in Media Practice at Harvard University; 2015-2018 Fulbright Scholarship in Film & Digital Media; and a 2010-12 DAAD Künstler Stipendium. Lee currently lives and works between Los Angeles, CA and Cambridge, MA where she is a Visiting Lecturer in Animation at the Department of Art, Film, and Visual Studies at Harvard University. Lee is represented by OCHI in Los Angeles, CA and Sun Valley, ID.*