

# Yona Lee

## *Wall, Floor and Ceiling*

Gertrude Contemporary  
24 June – 27 August 2023

*Wall, Floor and Ceiling* is a new ensemble of sculptural works developed by South Korean-born, Aotearoa-based artist Yona Lee. The artist is known for her site-responsive stainless-steel sculptures and installations that question notions of place and transit, migration and belonging, public realm and private space.

It could be suggested that her project for Gertrude riffs on the oft noted quote of revered Swiss architect Le Corbusier – ‘A house is a machine for living in’. Wall, floor and ceiling takes form as a reductive presentation of three distinct sculptural works, one presented on the wall, one on the floor and one affixed to the ceiling. These forms play with the notion of functionality familiar within Lee’s practice, exalting seemingly commonplace forms within domestic or industrial environments and rendering their functionality almost perfunctory. Of importance to the artist is a questioning as to how objects within a space may create their own interactions between each component, and the spaces in which they are presented.

In this environment, the three elements perform as if to reflect a highly aestheticised, minimalist interior, with an open plan layout, and floor to ceiling windows flanking the street frontage. Initially unbeknownst to the artist, the project draws connections to the building, prior to Gertrude’s occupancy from 2017, during which time it was a furniture showroom, brimming with couches, settees and mattresses of a non-descript suburban style of the 1970s and 1980s, now very much fallen out of favour. Furniture Warehouse – Direct to Public, for many years emblazoned with window signs

Gertrude acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters on which we operate. We pay our respects to the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and their ancestors and Elders - past, present, and future.

announcing cut-price discounts, now a contemporary art centre, arguably contributing to furthering a process of change, cultural evolution and locale gentrification.

Yona Lee was born in 1986 in Busan, South Korea and is based in Auckland, New Zealand. Lee’s work has recently been the subject of solo museum exhibitions at the Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand (2022); Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (2018–2019); City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand (2018–2019); and Dunedin Public Art Gallery, New Zealand (2020). She has featured in large-scale thematic exhibitions including the Busan Biennale, South Korea (2020); 15th Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art, France (2019); and Changwon Sculpture Biennale, South Korea (2016).

Yona Lee is represented by Fine Arts, Sydney.

Yona Lee’s project has been generously supported through a residency at the Norma Redpath Studio. The Gertrude Contemporary Studio Residency Program is organised in conjunction with the Norma Redpath Studio, which is facilitated by the Centre of Visual Art (CoVA), The University of Melbourne.

## List of works

1. Yona Lee  
*Lamp, 2023*  
Lamp, stainless steel  
48.5 x 37.5 x 46 cm
2. Yona Lee  
*Clock Bench, 2023*  
Wood, stainless steel, clock  
110 x 63 x 59.5 cm
3. Yona Lee  
*Bus Chandelier, 2023*  
Stainless steel, bus handles  
54 x 58 x 76.5 cm

All works courtesy of the artist and Fine Arts, Sydney

