

GLADSTONE

Claudia Comte

Marine Wildfire & Underwater Forests

May 25 – July 22, 2023

760, Samseong-ro, Gangnam-gu

Seoul, 06070, Republic of Korea

Gladstone is pleased to announce *Marine Wildfire & Underwater Forests*, an exhibition of new works by Claudia Comte, and the artist's first exhibition with the Gallery in Seoul, Korea. For the first time, the artist will present a series of relief sculptures alongside an expansive and immersive new wall painting designed specifically for the Gallery space. Through an interdisciplinary approach, Comte applies a carefully considered palette of material to create forms in space that suggest both playful and deeply political, socially engaged narratives.

Having employed the practice of sculpting with wood and marble since the earliest moments of her career, Comte has distinguished herself as an artist with an uncanny ability to transform dense material into delicate and awe-inspiring forms. From large-scale outdoor installations to small sculptures that sit atop slender pedestals, she incisively and instinctually carves and melds the solid matter she chooses. Here, the artist presents her first foray into the ancient practice of relief sculptures, a practice linked to the art techniques of ancient Egypt and Assyria in their depictions of leaders and representations of fertility. Protruding from the smooth Carrara marble and hanging along the walls of the gallery, Comte's amorphous, organic forms resemble plants, cacti, leaves, or corals. The choice of marble highlights its use for centuries as an artistic material to depict ephemeral forms, like human bodies and natural elements, with a seemingly permanent and immortal medium. Created by nature itself, there is a deep-rooted conversation between the marble and the carved form, reinforcing one another through the remaining components left behind once sculpted. Each framed work bears the title of a newspaper article about climate change, highlighting how these works appear as memorial plaques for the elements depicted and highlight the severe danger to species and the natural world we so often take for granted. One particular headline, "Even the Cactus May Not be Saved from Climate Change," wraps around one of the reliefs, and reinforces the fragility of the elements depicted.

In her new wall work, *Underwater Wildfire (blue gradient)*, Comte continues upon her recent exploration of paintings on walls that extend beyond single rooms. Traveling from the main level up to the second floor, the installation demonstrates the artist's continually evolving approach to creating immersive environments to showcase her art. Bold, thick, curvy lines slither up the walls, change in density and gradient from bottom to top. Appearing to relate to the air and sky, or the frequency passing through air or water, Comte suggests a visible compositional form for the invisible light and air waves that envelop our existence as humans and living creatures. The rhythmic, repetitive presence of this dynamic motif enlivens the space, bringing forth a visceral energy to the ecosystem Comte presents.

Claudia Comte was born in 1983 in Morges, Switzerland and is currently working and living in Basel, Switzerland. Recent solo and group exhibitions include Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg (2023); LagoAlgo, Mexico City (2023); Casa Wabi, Puerto Escondido (2023); Desert X, AIUla (2022), Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2022), 58th October Salon - Belgrade Biennale (2022), Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (2021), Kunstraum Dornbirn (2020); Castello di Rivoli (2019), Copenhagen Contemporary, Copenhagen (2019); MOCA Cleveland (2018); Kunsthalle Basel (2018); KölnSkulptur #9, Cologne (2017); Basement Roma (2017); Messeplatz, Art Basel (2017); Kunstmuseum Luzern (2017); Desert X, Palm Springs (2017); Public Art Fund, New York (2016); Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2014).

For further information, please contact press@gladstonegallery.com