

# Lee Bul

*Lehmann Maupin*

540 West 26th Street, Chelsea

Through June 14

The work of Lee Bul, one of South Korea's most prominent contemporary artists, has evolved from statement-making installations involving cyborgs, rotting fish and karaoke to retro-futuristic abstract sculptures. In this show, her first with the gallery, Ms. Lee unites disparate visions of modernity: utopian and dystopian, masculine and feminine.

In the first gallery, Ms. Lee has constructed sculptures of mechanical-looking pieces of steel in shallow, mirrored boxes. From certain angles, LED lights and two-way mirrors create the illusion of infinite space. These devices work well in a gridded floor sculpture, but several vertical variations lack mystique.

In a second gallery a hanging sculpture, "Untitled (After Bruno Taut series)" (2008), is paired with a black, cavelike structure, "Bunker — M. Bakhtin" (2007). (Their titles pay homage to the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin and the Weimar-era architect Bruno Taut.) Within the interior of "Bunker" is a pair of headphones, which emit a loud, screeching noise. The other sculpture, a glittering mass of crystals and chains on a wire armature, is as enticing as "Bunker" is forbidding.

In an earlier body of work, "Live Forever," Ms. Lee ensconced viewers in individual karaoke pods. Here, she has created a sculptural environment that is just as visionary, but less hostile to social interaction.

KAREN ROSENBERG