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# Annesta Le: Eternal Current at Yi Gallery, NYC (Review)

42 MINS AGO by [GEMMA CIRIGNANO \(HTTPS://ARTEFUSE.COM/AUTHOR/GEMMA-CIRIGNANO/\)](https://artefuse.com/author/gemma-cirignano/)

## Annesta Le: Eternal Current at Yi Gallery

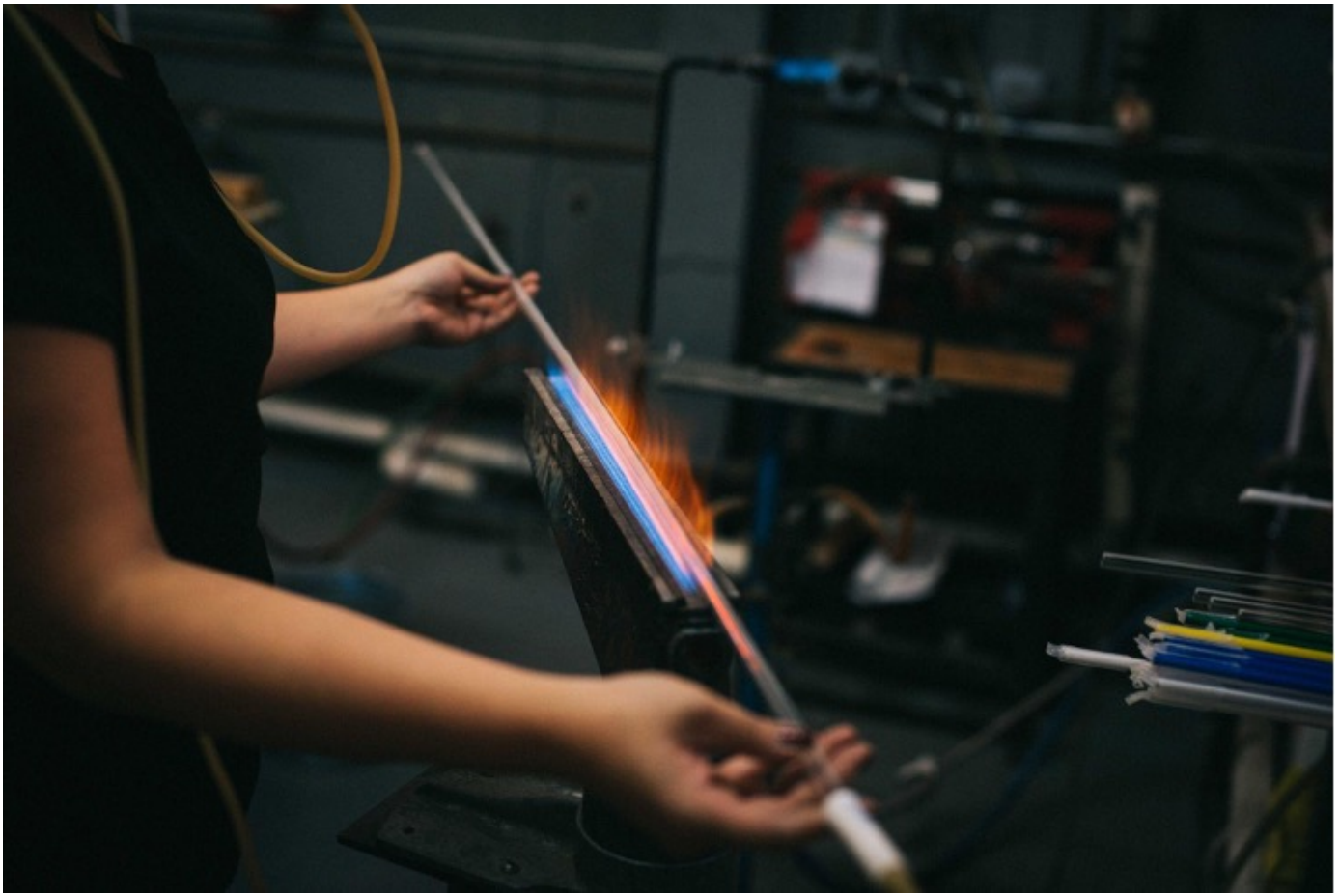
Annesta Le: Eternal Current

September 16 – November 4, 2023

Images are courtesy of the artist and Yi Gallery

As unconscious and intuitive as an ocean or electrical current, Annesta Le's body responds to the glass neon tube as it melts over her ribbon burner. In the tradition of Surrealist Automatism, Le omits predetermined stencils from her neon bending practice. Instead, clear glass tubes serve as her graphite, and her final image takes shape from iterations of bent tubular sketches. The harmony between her breath and her hands, as she blows into and manipulates the glass over an open flame, creates an irreproducible form that reacts to the gravitational pull of glass as it slowly transitions into a liquid state.

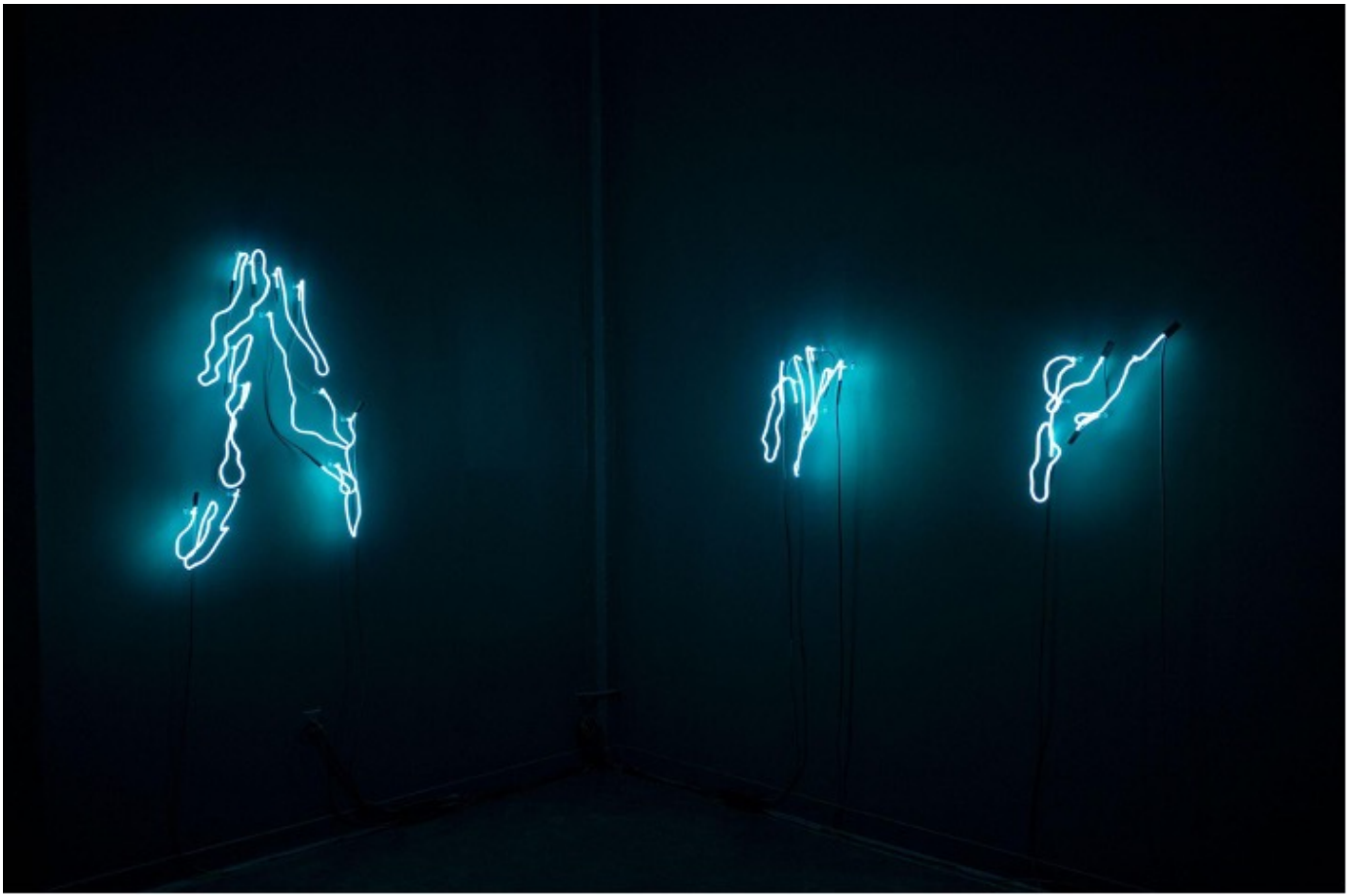
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Annesta Le bending glass at Brooklyn Glass.

A paradox emerges between the fragility of her glass and the plasticity of her forms in *Eternal Current*, Le's second solo exhibition at Yi Gallery on view through November 4th, 2023. Drawing from Jungian dream analysis, Le's allusions to water serve as a symbol for the unconscious. Icy blue argon and mercury flow through the undulating glass tubes of her *Fluid Forms* series (2023) and evoke drops of rain, tears, blood, sweat, and breast milk. Freezing fluidity in time and space, Le participates in the tradition of feminist Post-Minimalist artists like Lynda Benglis and Eva Hesse, who use bodily practices, dripping techniques, and ephemeral materials to examine deeply personal and inherently political notions of femininity. Her vulvic, ovarian, and breastlike bends mirror the body she inhabits. Although cautious not to impose strict meaning on her work, Le confides that she compares the flow of illuminated gas through the glass tube to that of a life force or spirit through the body.

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Annesta Le, *Fluid Forms IV, Fluid Forms II, and Fluid Forms I*, 2023 (left to right).

Aptly titled *Beacon* (2023), a vertically installed tube of light guides the visitor into the second room of the exhibition. A phosphor coating on the argon-filled glass softens the sculpture's white glow, emitting a nourishing, almost celestial aura. Across from *Beacon* hangs the artist's only acrylic on canvas work in the exhibition; a ten-foot-tall vertical painting titled *Flowing* (2023). Its swirling serpentine green, blue, and orange composition suggests a natural landscape, grounding the visitor in the terrestrial realm and making Le's symbolism of water explicit.



**Annesta Le, *Beacon*, 2023, and *Flowing*, 2023.**

The final work in the exhibition, *Labyrinth* (2023), diverges from Le's organic art-making practice. Meticulously researched and iterated in collaboration with a team of fabricators, Le conceived of a black, cylindrical pedestal that appears to hold a neon labyrinth floating in water. The liquid, however, is actually five gallons of mineral oil, a nonconductive alternative that allows the disparate materials to safely coexist. The radiating, almost Yves Klein blue lures the visitor over to peer down at a Cretan-inspired labyrinth. Like Narcissus confronting himself, the glowing pool seduces the visitor into a moment of self-reflection. Unable to see oneself through the narrow neon passageways, Le encourages the visitor to look inward at the irregular ebbs and flows of life echoed in those of the labyrinth.

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Annesta Le, *Labyrinth*, 2023.

*Eternal Current* translates fragments of a profoundly personal dream into a complete exhibition shrouded in mystery yet universally engaging. With liquid mineral oil, solid glass, and gas turned to plasma by an electrical current, Le presents all four states of matter. Here, perhaps another Jungian metaphor arises: matter as transcendental, spiritual, or eternal.

Gemma Cirignano

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