

KUKJE GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE

a'strict Solo Exhibition *a'strict*

Press Conference: August 13 (Thurs.), 2020, 11AM at Kukje Gallery K3

Exhibition Dates: August 13 – September 27, 2020

Venue: Kukje Gallery K3

Kukje Gallery is pleased to announce the inaugural exhibition of a'strict, the media artist unit by the acclaimed digital design company d'strict, running from August 13, 2020, through September 27, 2020. The exhibition marks a'strict's first gallery presentation and will showcase an immersive multimedia environment that transforms the gallery's K3 space. Driven by a relentless interest in the interaction between mankind and technology, along with the ever-burgeoning importance of digital transformation in light of the global pandemic, the full sensory, immersive installation continues to push the innovative user experiences (UX) that d'strict is known for, while at the same time raising the stakes of digital projects in a fine arts setting.

Upon entering the exhibition space—transformed into a black box—the audience will find themselves in a surreal landscape of luminous, surging waves resembling a brilliant, starlit night. Titled *Starry Beach* (2020), the installation that has been designed specifically for Kukje Gallery's K3 space instantly provides a multisensory experience for the viewer. Accompanied by the sound of crashing waves, the high definition projections of waves rushing up and down the 6-meter high walls punctuate the pitch-black surroundings with a unique visual rhythm. a'strict takes inspiration from the infinite complexity of nature, in particular the diverse visual and sonic characteristics of water. The unit's unprecedented digital interpretation of waves and ability to powerfully choreograph water within an interior architectural space successfully envision the marriage of contemporary art and technology at its finest, stimulating the viewer's subconscious and evoking our shared associations with and reliance on water. The synesthetic qualities of *Starry Beach* transcend elements of mere visual spectacle or sentimentality by reinterpreting the physical properties of water, effectively transforming both the viewers' perceptions of the space and their bodies.

Earlier this year in May, d'strict received resounding praise in both Korea and abroad for their public art project titled *WAVE*, an immersive video art installation that replicated a massive wave crashing onto the large-scale wraparound LED display atop Coex Artium in Seoul's Gangnam district. Employing anamorphic illusion, a type of projection technique used to highlight the illusion of depth and three-dimensionality, d'strict transformed the flat exteriors of the screen into a self-contained space unveiling a constant rush of massive waves. Displayed within the busy city center of Seoul amidst the global pandemic and guised as a uniquely intuitive and enthralling visual encounter, *WAVE* provided an otherworldly experience and a source of public solace in the least expected of locations. As a public media art project, *WAVE* was immensely popular and cathartic, championed for its ingenious use of site and technology as well as its compelling visual experience.

Recognizing the boundless possibilities of technology within the field of contemporary art, d'strict decided to form a'strict, a media artist unit consisting of a new group of creators focused exclusively on visual art, independent from d'strict's existing commercial ventures and signaling its commitment to creative expansions. The name "a'strict" derives from the unit's exclusive commitment to art (art + strictly), an idea founded upon d'strict's two founding philosophies: "to endlessly polish and hone the strict practice of design (design + strictly), yet remain unhindered by and traverse the discrete fields of art, design, and technology with exceptional creative freedom (de + strict)." In order to facilitate a flexible yet highly professional production environment, a'strict will maintain its organization as an open collective, encouraging collaboration with a wide range of creators, from current to former members of the company.

The bold attempt to blur the boundaries between d'strict and a'strict is a noteworthy feat of experimentation that parallels d'strict's reputation as a company that transcends the perimeters of art, design, and technology in order to explore the boundless potential of media. a'strict's debut solo exhibition will highlight the growing connection between design and art, catalyzing more public projects that generate a sense of community and place, ultimately signaling the birth of a new generation of media artists.

About the Artist

a'strict is a collaborative media artist unit formed by the digital design company d'strict, which defines itself as an "Art Tech Factory" that has built an international reputation on an ambitious conceptual model integrating art and technology, successfully executing visually compelling interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary content for more than a decade. Recognized for their cutting-edge hybridization of art, design, and technology, d'strict creates site-specific, user-focused content that brings together architectural and environmental considerations with various audiovisual interfaces and displays. Grounded in d'strict's longstanding commitment to both cultivating new areas of digital content production and fostering dialogue within contemporary society, a'strict is a collective of d'strict's past and present. Comprised of professionals who specialize in content design and development, along with visual/video/spatial/system/operational design, a'strict is structured as an open unit that brings together a group of creators who have garnered expertise in generating compelling visuals and interest in media art. Rather than unilaterally convey a subjective message from an artist to the audience, a'strict will produce a body of work that fosters discourse on our world today, concentrating on subjects that the larger public can identify with.

d'strict will operate using its original name when conducting commercial projects, but will use "a'strict" when committing to artistic practice without commercial restraints, thereby liberally shifting the company identity in order to further explore the aesthetic potentials of multimedia art. Currently, d'strict is in the final stages of preparation for the inaugural showcase of ARTE MUSEUM in Jeju Island, Korea. Titled *ETERNAL NATURE*, the museum will open its doors to the public on September 25, 2020, signaling the launch of the country's largest permanent exhibition space devoted to immersive media works.

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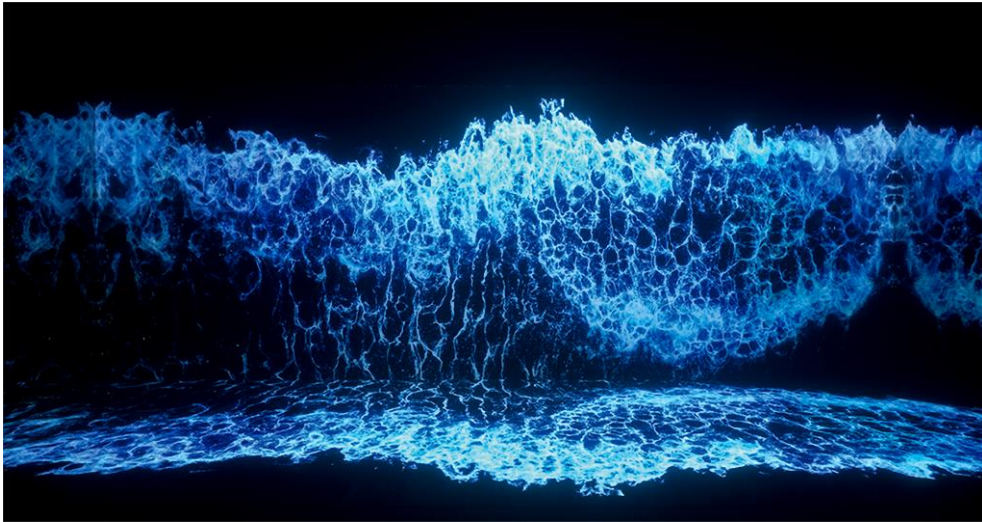
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a'strict

Starry Beach

2020

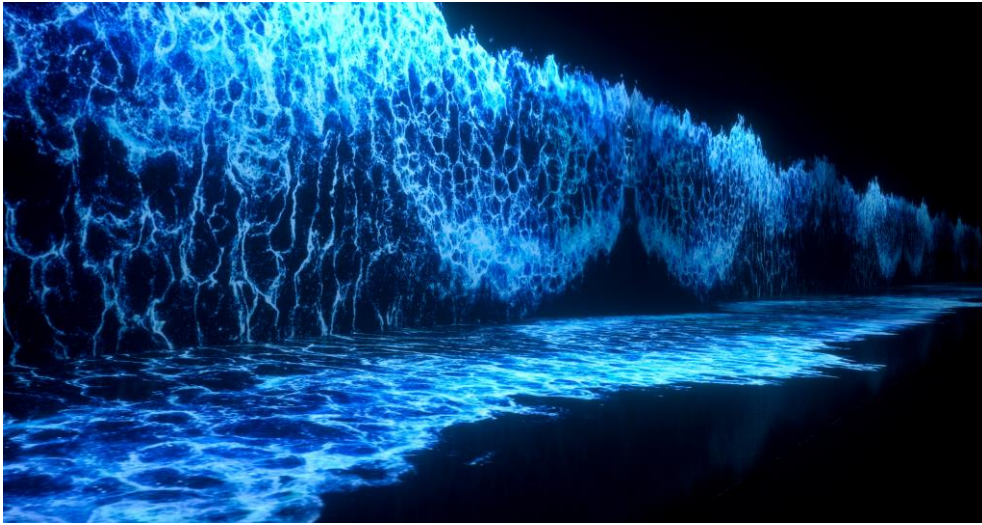
Multi-channel projected installation with sound

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery

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