

By Amanda McCorquodale

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At a 2007 performance of inter-disciplinary artist Susan Lee-Chun, 600 people swarmed the space. And last year, the artist inspired 18 Baltimore residents to don gold workouts suits and march down a Maryland street as "Suz-ercisers." The idea of rituals is central to Korea-born, Chicago-raised Lee-Chun, whose art examines the murky waters of identity politics. She performs and constructs the clothing and environments of a trio of alter egos, collectively referred to as The Suz: It's Faux Real!.



**Façade-The Figurative Kind: Installation & Performance**  
Courtesy of David Castillo Gallery

Her thoughtful textile-based installations, where issues of assimilation take a tangible form, inspired us to give Lee-Chun one of our first ever MasterMind genius grants. As she explains, "The art is about deception. About us being able to integrate ourselves into a space but (how we) can't conceal all our characteristics."

She has exhibited in international shows such as the 2008 Vienna Biennale and in galleries from El Salvador to Colorado and Los Angeles. Locally, her work is part of the public collections of the Miami Art Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art, and is represented by the David Castillo Gallery in Wynwood.

In addition to her installation and performance-based work, Lee-Chun keeps busy baking sweet pastries for her side project ,Yummy ChunBuns!. But considering the artist created a faux, live cooking show (*The Suz in da' House*) in 2008, perhaps her tasty ChunBuns are one more experiment in her examination of how we live.



### **Kitchen stage from The Suz in da' House**

Courtesy David Castillo Gallery

#### **1. List five things that inspire you.**

-My Mr. Chun

-Comedians (to name a few: Dave Chapelle, Margaret Cho, Andy Kaufman)

-Artist Do Ho Suh

-Successes and failures (mine and others')

-TED

#### **2. What was your last big project?**

"C'mon Baltimore, Let's Suz-ercise!" happened over the summer in Baltimore, MD in collaboration with Maryland Art Place. Eighteen amazing people from the Baltimore-area were recruited and learned a routine influenced by military and marching band routines. The routine was all choreographed by Miami's dancing extraordinaire Gio Profera. A part of this project was to have the recruits learn how to "Suz-ercise" via [online exercise videos](#) that I created. In June, they all donned custom made black and gold futuristic workout gear and performed the faux workout routine in Baltimore's

Downtown harbor area.

This specific performance was produced and filmed so it could be used as a part of a larger multimedia project titled "Everybody Suz-ercise!," which is work in progress. Last year's *Miami New Times* Mastermind Award was applied to help produce this project! Thanks *Miami New Times*!



**C'mon Baltimore, Let's Suz-ercise!**  
Courtesy David Castillo Gallery

### **3. What's your next big project?**

Not sure what the next "big" project will be, but I am currently working on a few new sculptures in the studio, and filming a series of short videos based on cooking shows for a performance-based exhibition in Berlin. Other projects include producing limited edition art objects for the Bass Museum and Girl's Club Collection in Fort Lauderdale.

### **4. Why do you do what you do?**

I love turning what's in my mind into something real.

### **5. What's something you want Miami to know about you?**

I've always loved cooking and baking. So, I started an online specialty pastry company called **Yummy ChunBuns!**. The sweet pastries are inspired by the famous cream-filled yellow sponge cake and the whoopie pie. And, since it shouldn't be all about sweets, we've got savory flavors, too. Oh, and I love, love hula hooping.

**What's something you don't want Miami to know about you?**

I love watching soap operas (for some reason I find this to be an embarrassing habit of mine, ha ha!). Same goes for Korean dramas found on the internet. So good!