

COMA

Young-jun Tak  
Selected Press



## Berlin Art Week Journal 2023 — Questionnaire

### 1. Woran arbeiten Sie gerade? /

#### What are you working on at the moment?

The second work of the choreography film series is on the way. The first film *Wish You a Lovely Sunday* (2021) has the German premiere at Julia Stoschek Foundation in Berlin and Dusseldorf from this September. Both films juxtapose, alternate and daringly try to merge two drastically distinctive situations through queer bodies and dance: the first was shot at the church Kirche am Südsterne and the queer club SchwuZ in Berlin; and the second triggers the hypermasculinity glorified by Spanish legion soldiers' annual Catholic ritual during the Holy Week and the hyperfemininity worshiped by numerous male dancers lifting up and carrying a love-thirsty female protagonist in Kenneth MacMillan's ballet *Manon* (1974). In this new film *Love Your Clean Feet on Thursday* (2023), which will be premiered this winter in Seoul, six male gay dancers fill the gap between the conventional hyper binarity of gender presentations by materializing intimacy with their new choreography in Berlin-Grunewald.

Such haptic visuality in the immaterial medium and interest in beliefs are continued by my sculptural practice on the other hand. I try to build my imaginary temple with the sculptures and films and in this context I am currently working on a new series such as a monumental gay Christmas tree and Saint Nicholas the sausage following Saint John the white asparagus, known as *Spargel* in German.

### 2. Was lesen oder hören Sie gerade? /

#### What are you reading or listening to right now?

I am reading *Gender, Nation and Religion in European Pilgrimage*, edited by Wily Jansen and Catrien Notermans, while listening to NewJeans' new album. It is interesting that one tends to feel somehow dislocated either in one's original community or in a resited surrounding and then in compliance with the needs one builds around oneself a mobile fortress made of certain beliefs in order to carry around and seek for the desired sense of belonging. It is not only limited to religions but also about collective culture, customs, norms and political inclinations.

### 3. Was braucht es für gute Kunstvermittlung? /

#### What does it need for a good mediation through arts?

When the art suggests or invites viewers to its own immersive parallel or multiplied realities and this experience makes their engagement to the (whatever) reality more meaningful.

### 4. Haben Sie ein Lieblingsgebäude? /

#### Do you have a favourite building?

Churches in general rather than a specific building. Whenever I visit a new city, I get sucked into them as if I accidentally fell into sink holes. They often stand out with their own extravaganza, and almost force the visitor negatively or positively to adjust oneself for specific behavioral patterns, mindsets and moods. Their architectural design and configuration of objects formulate our postures in different styles from the daily routine such as looking up in awe or kneeling down. This urges us more actively to become involved with the objects and surroundings. Many people in the world have quite concrete (or at least vague) perceptions about the interior and exterior structure of churches. I like to embed these characteristics within my work: for instance, I would let viewers conceptually build a shrine in my exhibition by arranging my works, which are often inspired by church items or furniture, according to the religious architectural grammars. Furthermore, during the church visit I enjoy looking for quirky paintings and sculptures that differently minded artists in the distant past managed to create in spite of the centuries long rigid form of Christian arts. As a non-believer I consider this as my spiritual linkage.

### 5. Wen würden Sie gerne einmal kennenlernen? /

#### Who would you like to meet?

Cady Noland. I am still relatively a beginner, and she is a deliberate ender. I understand her frustration about the somewhat flimsy role of arts in suffocating societal issues, and I would like to hear how her life has been without producing works anymore since the powerful good-bye manifesto. Her legal battles now and then are well known, and her retrospective at MMK in Frankfurt in 2018 that basically shook me from head to toe was a big surprise to the world, so some might be wickedly excited to blemish her as a very calculated player, but regardless of the claim her determination, words and visualizations are still firmly impactful and valid. I do not know if this wish about meeting her is to defend myself still "doing" it with more passionate excuses that I would counter-learn from her or if I want to become a better bad news consumer with life lessons from her, but I have a little hope that I might be able to provide myself with a room for enjoying the bitterness of the vicious circle of human history like biting a piece of 90% dark chocolate. I am also curious whether she would ruthlessly cut this little sprout or rather encourage me for now until I would start banging my head against the same wall that she confronted.

**6. Haben Sie ein tägliches Ritual? /**

**Do you have a daily ritual?**

Duolingo: I am the happily abandoned husband when America Ferrera spontaneously travels to Barbieland.

**7. Welcher Gegenstand darf nicht fehlen? /**

**What accessory or object could you not be without?**

I am quite self contradictory: I love pervertedly feeling the goose bumps on my skin when I am in the middle of a maximalist lavish baroque church, but I also feel very mesmerized when I stroll along the Frankfurt airport in its clinically dry sublime. I never wear any accessory, but I keep around me a variety of things in the most efficient way like an alerted parent. Therefore, I do not have such a thing in the question as it can be nothing or everything.

**8. Was ist Nachhaltigkeit für Sie? /**

**What is sustainability for you?**

When it is not narcissistic in the name of one's own feelings.

**9. Was wünschen Sie sich für Berlins Kunst- und Kulturlandschaft? /**

**What do you wish for Berlin's art and cultural environment?**

Please bring back affordable studio spaces.

**10. Was machen Sie nach getaner Arbeit? /**

**What do you do when the work is done?**

Daily cozy dinner with my partner. I appreciate details of repetitions in life, and all laughter, complaints and silence at the dinner table with him nourish and reset me for the next leap.

# Young-jun Tak



*Doubt*





Many queer individuals are not given this love. They are ridiculed, bullied, insulted, demeaned, and dehumanized in the name of Jesus. Why has the primacy of Jesus' call to love your neighbor been ignored? What is loving about disrupting a peaceful march and disseminating hateful, scientifically inaccurate literature? In this way, when many Christian extremists engage in hate, they prove the emptiness of their own personal relationship with Jesus. The emptiness of this church speaks volumes. Many of us in the LGBTQIA+ community regard these fanatics as empty hypocrites.

If we painstakingly engage with the original Greek, love is not a precise enough word for articulating this commandment. It is customary to render Mark 12:31 in English with the word "love," or in Danish with the word "elske," or Korean with "사랑" (*sarang*). All three translations in their respective languages are too romantic and erotic to effectively render the cooler "Ἀγαπήσεις." This Greek word never migrated into the Old Norse, which would eventually become modern Danish. Nor did proto-Germanic pick up this word on its way towards evolving into modern English. Ἀγαπήσεις basically means "you shall ἀγάπη," and that root "ἀγάπη" is often rendered in English as "agape." Much new age fluff circulates on the internet about this Greek word "ἀγάπη," which traces back to C.S. Lewis' interpretation in *The Four Loves* (1960). However, when we look at the ancient sources that suggest how Mark and his first audience understood "agape," it is not nearly as dreamy or mushy. In its original context, the emphasis is on a love that is not an enthusiastic emotional response, but is rather a conscious commitment to undertake right and just deeds, even if it is contrary to one's own desires, even if the other is your opponent, or even if there is no reasonable expectation of reciprocity.<sup>3</sup>

The point here is that even if a zealot does not approve of homosexuality, they are called as Christians to treat LGBTQIA+ rightly and justly with this commandment that you shall love (Ἀγαπήσεις) your neighbor. This Greek exegesis may seem like a departure from a focus on Tak's work, but my point is that many Christian fanatics have actually departed very far from the radical call of Jesus Christ to love, with the full meaning of this word being lost in translation. In this empty church space in Kirche am Südster, it is hard not to see a searing indictment of the empty and broken promise of Ἀγαπήσεις.

In a pair of works, *Knocked* (2023) and *...Knocked* (2023), Tak uses drainage pipes to explore metaphors of exclusion. The white ceramic body parts loosely allude to gargoyles from Gothic churches. Gargoyles were elaborate decorations for spouts that provided the exit point for water that would collect in the gutters of church roofs. In this work, Tak is using the spout as a metaphor for how queer bodies are kept out of the church, just as water is kept out of the church. With this title *Knocked*, the artist is playing with the English expressions of "knocking on the door" and "knocked out."

Many queer people are tired of knocking on the door and asking to be accepted. Many of us have experienced being bullied at school, at work, at church, so there is a recurring story of feeling knocked out of the ring and beaten up, as in boxing or wrestling. Many queer people can struggle with internalizations of this hatred and can develop fragmented relationships with their body, to which this sculpture's discombobulated body parts allude.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus specifically condemns bullying during his famous opening speech known as the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5:22, Jesus says:

*Whereas I say to you that everyone who becomes angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever says "raka" (foolish) will be liable to the Council; and whoever says "worthless reprobate" will be liable to enter Hinnom's Vale of Fire.<sup>4</sup>*

The long tradition of insulting, excluding, and bullying LGBTQIA+ individuals, of knocking us out, is totally incompatible with Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. *Knocked* concretizes this contradiction into sculpture.

*Your Anticipation* (2022) is a unique sculpture with several layers of metaphors. Two slender but juicy pieces of limewood have been carved to resemble stalks of white asparagus with heads on top. This is a particular reference to a unique species of white asparagus known as "Spargel" in German, the traditional final day of harvest of which is the feast day of Saint John the Baptist in Germany (June 24). Although this asparagus is cherished, it is labor-intensive to grow. It was banned during the Second World War to conserve resources, and also during economic hardship in East Germany.

As an homage to the unique art history of Germany, Tak commissioned a master religious wood carver from Oberammergau in Bavaria to carve these white stalks out of limewood, which is the quintessential German wood.

On the tip of the asparagus, there are two male busts with faces of agony and ecstasy. On one level, this is a reference to John the Baptist himself, who dramatically oscillates between agony and ecstasy in the gospels. The sculptural busts are based on Old Master paintings of John the Baptist. These male faces also refer to the long history of martyrs who suffered immensely in the name of God, but also benefited from moments of ecstasy because of their intimacy with God.

With the metal band, Tak adds an additional element of being bonded together. Just as stalks of asparagus are bundled together at markets, these two stalks are banded together. In this way, Tak develops a metaphor for intimacy between queer men. How can we remain together through the ecstatic ups and the agonizing downs?

In the sculpture *One More Please* (2022), Tak presents a wooden milking stool. On its top, he has placed two votive candles as well as three silicone casts of his own nipple. This piece contains an elaborate set of metaphors around sensuality and Christianity. In a Catholic context, nipples are a symbol of Saint Agatha whose breasts were torn off with iron shears after she rejected a governor's advances. In Sicily, ironically and problematically, there is a dessert called Minne di Sant'Agata that resembles severed breasts and reeks of misogyny. The nipple as votive candles are intended to resemble this treat.

The pedestal for this mix of candles and nipples is a stool used to milk cows. When one prays before candles in church, it is customary to kneel down. In gay sex, there are several acts that likewise involve kneeling. So the milk stool is a visual joke about the similarity of movements and the rebelliousness of gay eroticism despite the Church's teachings.

There is an additional layer of irony in *One More Please*, involving the Greek of the Gospel of John. For several centuries, the homoerotic salaciousness of a scene during the Last Supper (John 13:23) has been played down and its translation has been sanitized in ways that stray far from fidelity to the original Greek. In the flow of the narrative, this moment takes place after the meal and the foot washing of the disciples (John 13:1-20). Jesus then announced to the disciples that one of them will betray him. At this moment, the focus turns to the enigmatic, unnamed, beloved male disciple of the Gospel of John. The Greek of John 13:23 reads: "ἦν ἀνακείμενος εἷς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς." The literal translation is "there was reclining one of the disciples of him in the bosom of Jesus, who loved Jesus."<sup>5</sup> In essence, a male disciple was cuddling with Jesus against his chest and nipples, sitting in his lap, and in his bosom. In Koine Greek, this is an unambiguous expression for intimacy.<sup>6</sup> Yes, it may well seem like a radical claim that Jesus' nipples were pressed up against the back of a male disciple he is said to love, but that is exactly how the Greek of the Gospel of John reads. So when Tak presents his own nipple in *One More Please*, it brings forth the long tradition of pretending that Jesus did not bring his nipple close to another man.

The biblical case against homosexuality comes down to condemnations of gay sex in Leviticus (18:22), as well as disparaging remarks about gay sex by St. Paul in his undisputed letters to the Romans (1:26-27) and First Corinthians (6:9-10). In addition, there is a negative remark about homosexuality in the First Letter to Timothy (1:9-10), however, it is now a matter of debate as to whether St. Paul actually wrote it. Today's Christians do not keep kosher kitchens or adhere to every decree in Leviticus, so the enforceability of Leviticus 18:22 is an open question. In the United States, St. Paul's words were once invoked to justify the enslavement of the African-Americans, so it is becoming an axiom that some of St. Paul's claims might be "canceled out" by other controlling principles.

It is a matter of heated debate among theologians about how to navigate the contradiction between Jesus' call to love your neighbor, as well as the evidence of a homoerotic relationship between Jesus and the beloved disciple, with these condemnations of gay sex. There is no statement directly condemning homosexuality in the canonical gospels. Instead, there is beloved discipline and a moment of homoerotic intimacy that makes an indirectly affirmative case. The biblical justifications that Christian zealot claim for oppressing LGBTQIA+ individuals are far weaker than their rhetoric lets on.

It is a great contradiction that, in spite of this message of love, Christianity remains a global driver of LGBTQIA+ oppression. It is a tragedy that many LGBTQIA+ people internalize this hate and misconceptions of themselves as abominations when an honest engagement with the gospels leads a different way. In his clever works on view at O—Overgaden, Tak exposes these contradictions and challenges us to dwell upon how we might integrate them. Exploring a contradiction does not need to be a depressing endeavor. In the work of the great Black lesbian American poet Audre Lorde, facing contradictions can be an energizing enterprise:

*The tensions created inside me by the contradictions is another source of energy and learning. I have always known I learn my most lasting lessons about difference by closely attending the ways in which the differences inside me lie down together.<sup>7</sup>*

3. George Keerankeri, *The Love Commandment in Mark: An Exegetico-Theological Study of MK 12:28-34* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2003), p. 144.

4. Hart, p. 8.

5. For a literal word-for-word translation of the Greek, see [biblehub.com/text/john/13-23.html](http://biblehub.com/text/john/13-23.html), accessed February 12, 2023.

6. Theodore W. Jennings, *The Man Jesus Loved* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2003), pp. 16, 21-24.

7. Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light and Other Essays* (Mineola, NY: Ixia Press, 1988), p. 116.

# DOUBT & DESIRE: THE NEED TO BE SHATTERED & REBUILT

Övül Ö. Durmuşoğlu

*The pain was so great, that it made me moan; and yet so surpassing was the sweetness of this excessive pain, that I could not wish to be rid of it. The soul is satisfied now with nothing less than God. The pain is not bodily, but spiritual; though the body has its share in it. It is a caressing of love so sweet which now takes place between the soul and God, that I pray God of His goodness to make him experience it who may think that I am lying*

– Teresa Santa Ávila,  
*The Life of Teresa of Jesus (1515–1582)*

Doubt is fundamental to critical thinking. It desires a universe of the incomplete beyond the polarization of black or white, beyond the Cartesian separation of mind and body. For Young-jun Tak, doubt faces the norm and explores the codes of transgression. It looks for the changing set of affects and desires that were shaped while the disciplinary society, with its repressive norms and bodily regulations, left its place for the current pharmaco-pornographic one with its immaterial labor, electronic sexual surveillance, and psychotropic and chemical regulation of subjectivity. Doubt is a baroque trigger of imagination to expand the visual semiotics of the queer body and bodies in desire. In that playful space of semiotics, norms of masculinity are shattered and brought together as different constellations, with doubt as the deviating splinter into the classical ideals of symmetry, naturality, musicality, and balance.

Though many LGBTQIA+ vocabularies and definitions in common use are from Anglo-American-shaped identity politics, Tak's splintering humor in critical distance reminds us that there are many queer worlds, experiences, and situations shaped in diverse cultural paradigms and yet against similarly homogenizing normative institutions of racial capitalism. Whether he looks at South Korea or Germany, the analytical gaze he enacts is an editorial one that searches for the performance between language and image, between what is written and what is seen.

The way he handles mass-produced or second-hand found objects materializes cracks and breaches of collective cultural imagination. In film, he plays with exercises of limitation and transgression, for he is curious about that endless yearning for unifying belief, love, or desire and the spaces of existence constructed to reinforce that belief. Is it possible to de-canonize that yearning and its institutions by expressing different ways to desire?

In this artistic universe, ecstasy is a form of tension that reforms narration and clarifies vision. That is the reason “Baroque”—historically or stylistically identified with the Counter-Reformation of the Catholic Church in the 17th century—is a productive and playful path from which to approach Tak's practice. In its materiality and bodiliness, baroque undermines resolution, gropes toward fragmentation, overgrows, and exceeds. Artistically, it moves in the field of complexity and deformity, exuberance and chaos, tension and distress, exhilaration and perplexity. Historically, it permits a liberation from periodization and linear time, as well as from historicism. Mieke Bal has argued that baroque epistemology permits a “hallucinatory quality” of relation between past and present, that also allows a release from a supposed academic objectivity while insisting that engagement with the past should remain discomfiting and profoundly disturbing.<sup>1</sup> Instead of repressing the past and time, creative retrospection allows its implications to emerge. No wonder baroque is embraced in the field of queer aesthetics to explore intersectional identities, challenge master narratives, and politicize sexuality.

Every 15 minutes, LED lights flicker “doubt” in morse code over the work *Chained* (2020; commissioned by the 11th Berlin Biennale), which consists of ten life-sized statues of the crucifixion, fabricated in Italy, installed in a circle on the ground, their arms overlapping. On closer look, they are seen to be covered with anti-LGBTQIA+ propaganda material produced by South Korean churches and some medical institutions, collected by Tak.<sup>2</sup> The lights are aligned in a circle just like the Jesus bodies themselves. The motif of overlapping arms references the way South Korean Christian fanatics once formed a human circle around the Pride walkers in order to block them. South Korea has a particular adoption of Christianity, interpreting or rewriting its codes in accordance with the local beliefs and mythologies. Christian leaders and mega-churches have risen to dominance in the fields of politics, economics, and journalism, despite the fact that the majority of the population is non-religious. Their anti-LGBTQIA+ propaganda, like many post-truth, alt-right politics around the world, desires to reinforce heteronormative family morals in the face of fast-changing and fluid narratives of gender and identity among new generations. Through instrumentalizing affect, such politics dangerously come together with anti-feminist, anti-migratory, and (with Covid-19) anti-vaccine scapegoating for a close-circuited, conservative, and polarized world order. In this kind of environment religion, once again, becomes an aggressive caricature of itself, just as *Chained* suggests.

Baroque projects doubt on the smooth surfacing and containment of desire in the form of facades, interfaces, algorithms, images, and products. Contemporary culture manages to generate its own ritualistic environments or behaviors. Reactionary politics are created in the space of likes, dislikes, and emoticons. Narcissism becomes a consistent mental condition and freedom is downgraded to a matter of choice. In his new Berlin environment, Tak follows a powerful exercise that plays with a binary between a church, Kirche am Südsterne, and a queer club, SchwuZ, reflecting on the nature of community-oriented spaces and contemporary rituals of the LGBTQIA+ scene in Berlin. To some, the film work *Wish You a Lovely Sunday* (2021) may be reminiscent of *Five Obstructions* (2003), an early film of Lars von Trier's where the director challenges Jørgen Leth to remake his well-known *Perfect Human* (1968) with different obstructions.

In Tak's film, the two choreographers and two dancers were paired up to create a new piece of choreography, for the church and the queer club in Berlin respectively. (After all, Sundays are clubbing days for Berliners as they are traditionally church days for others.) Each pair was assigned a different Bach piano piece for four hands. After days of rehearsals and when the choreography was complete, their designated venues were then swapped with no prior warning. In a powerful cross-editing, we watch the conversations between dancer and choreographer to adapt their work and the outcomes that transgress the spaces. Film scholar Saige Walton's analysis of the work of French film director Claire Denis might also apply to *Wish You a Lovely Sunday*. Saige proposes that the baroque “looks to the skin/surface of the body as well as the surface textures of the world to couple materiality with movement. Baroque figures are often captured in states of bodily transition, suspended mid-flight or mid-gesture.”<sup>3</sup> Tak's dancers are caught suspended mid-flight or mid-gesture as they try to change their choreographies.

Duality in relation or reciprocity is a repetitive visual and conceptual pattern in Tak's practice. The form of the male body with mouth open in desire for another is explored in the new pair of works, *Knocked* and *...and Knocked* (2023). Ceramic body parts, cast from Tak's own, are hung and sewn with ropes around the different elements of water infrastructure, in an architectural intervention that redefines the exhibition space. They mimic gargoyles, the eccentric water drainage features of Gothic churches, which were added primarily to introduce pagans to the church and then became a free space of artistic expression to ornament the building. “Gargoyle” comes from the French “*gargouille*”, meaning throat, which clearly calls for an erotic, almost pornographic connotation for fellatio alongside the functionality of water drainage. In connection with the discussion around *Chained*, Tak thinks the queer body is often used by religion as water drainage, to maintain its position as a societal institution. As they take over the exhibition space from above one cannot help but ask, might the exhibition space re-paganize our beliefs?

The male faces of agony and ecstasy of the two attached asparagus in *Your Anticipation* (2022), phallic in form, hand-carved by an old craft master, bring to mind a Baroque-era masterpiece, *The Ecstasy of Santa Teresa* (1647–52) by Gian Lorenzo Bernini in the Cornaro Chapel of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome. Bernini's creation was inspired by the mystical ecstasy of Santa Teresa as described in her writings. The convoluted movement of the whole sculpture and the vivid expression of desire, on the edge of pain and ecstasy, leave a deep imprint on a personal encounter. The sensuous body comes in small fragments in *Your Anticipation* and *One More Please* (2022), criticizing the sublimation of the human body in Christian culture and the perverse way it relates to earthly desires. They function as punctuation marks in the dense narrative of *Doubt*.

There are many stories of pain, passion, and transgression in the LGBTQIA+ underground that mostly survive by word-of-mouth. Translating them into the visual generates a kind of de-canonized gay folklore that goes beyond Tom of Finland. The two tendencies of the modern, on the one side, posit a longing for wholeness in desire, a yearning that cannot be fulfilled within the contemporary socio-cultural context of advanced racial capitalist societies and, on the other side, fractures the wholeness and insists on a radical reorientation of desire itself. In his 2016 collection *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*, the poet and novelist Ocean Vuong writes, “I don't know/ desire other than the need/ to be shattered & rebuilt.” Tak employs a Barthesian toolbox of analysis and imagination not only to reorient but also to reshape desire so that a de-canonized LGBTQIA+ mythology and folklore of subversion is activated. He invites his public to join in this playful and passionate act of rewriting and reimagining.

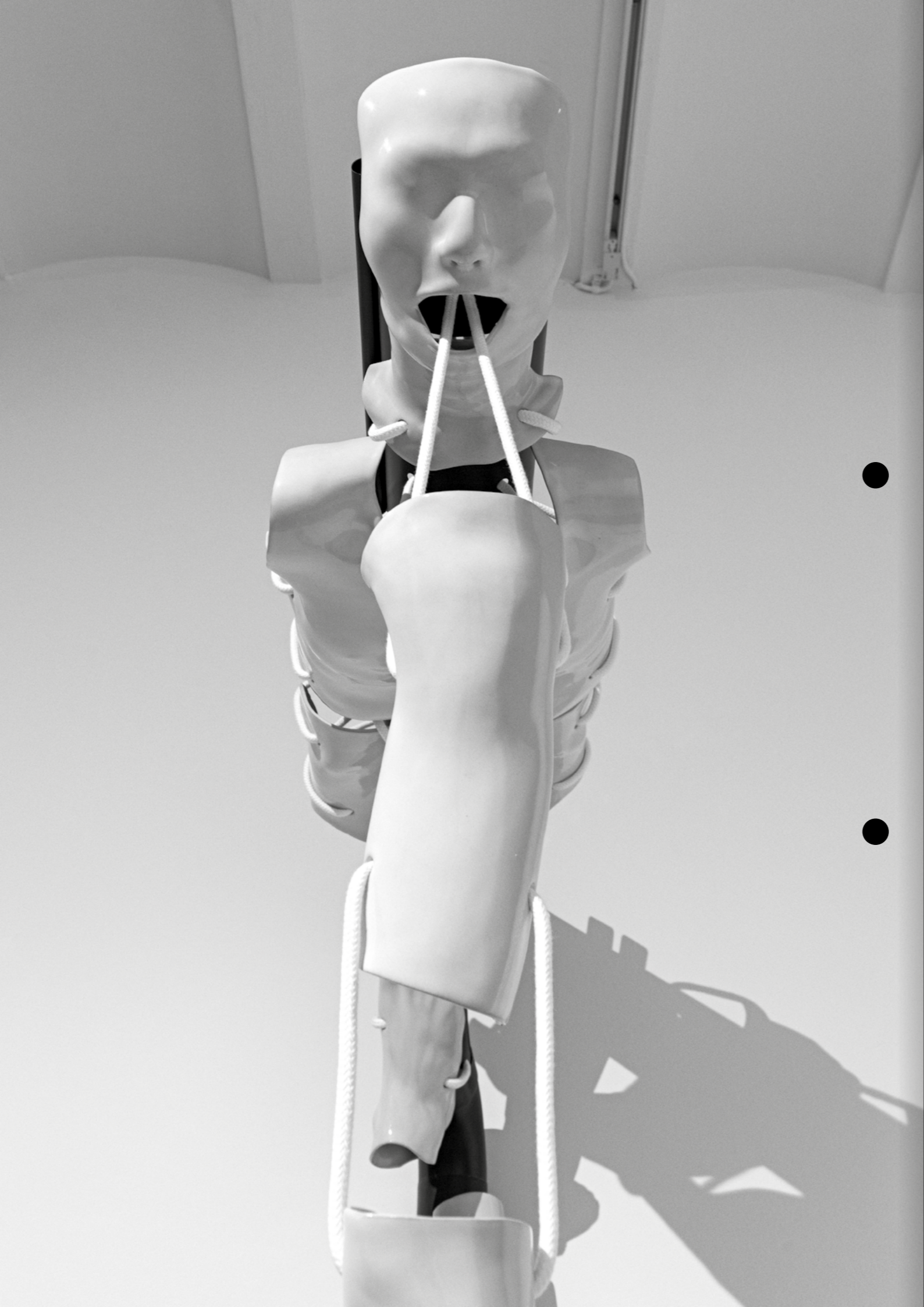
1. Mieke Bal, “Baroque Matters,” in Helen Hills (ed.), *Rethinking the Baroque* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 183–202.

2. In February 2023, a South Korean court ruled that a same-sex couple, So Seong-wook and Kim Yong-min, should receive the same benefits as different-sex couples through the National Health Insurance Service (NHIS). It is the first time a court has recognized the rights of a same-sex couple in South Korea.

3. Saige Walton, “Fabricating Film—The Neo-Baroque Folds of Claire Denis” in *Neo-Baroques. From Latin America to the Hollywood Blockbuster*, eds. Walter Moser, Angela Ndaliansis, and Peter Krieger (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 76–99.







NAME Young-jun TAK  
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 BIO Young-jun Tak was born in Seoul and lives in Berlin. He examines the socio-cultural and psychological mechanisms that shape belief systems. Blurring the lines between media, techniques and subject matter, the artist pursues obfuscation as a tool of critique. In his sculptures and installations, he often exposes the human body in the context of polarizing norms and conventions. His solo exhibitions were held at Fragment (Moscow, 2021), Sox (Berlin, 2022), Efremidis (Berlin, 2022) and O—Overgaden (Copenhagen, 2023). His work has been internationally presented at the 15th Istanbul Biennale (2017), the Seoul Museum of Art (SeMA) Bunker (2019), the 11th Berlin Biennale (2020), the 9th Berlin Masters (2021), KINDL—Center for Contemporary Art (2022) and the 16th Lyon Biennale (2022), among many others.



Photo by Elmar Vestner.

HB As I mentioned when we met, I was biased because I knew you as a journalist before. I suppose you've been dealing with different preconceptions as an artist with a 'different' background—you identify as queer and live as an Asian in Europe. Can you tell us what the word 'prejudice' means to you? And what were you aiming for when you started your career as an artist?

YT No one can be free from prejudices, and it is not my ultimate mission to fight back against particular perceptions or fantasies about me shaped by others. My sexual identity and my previous career as a journalist affects how I approach certain subjects. My editorial background keeps me curious and engaged in social issues. Being an East Asian gay man and living in Berlin as a non-believer makes my Christian art tourism in European cities 'exciting' in a special way—I often visit churches when traveling to other cities. This all gives me a distinctive sense of belonging as a half-member wherever I am, and I enjoy this half-distanced perspective. It is like when one can suddenly teach one's mother tongue to others after being relocated outside one's given, natural context. That is also how I started coming across beliefs. Why are my (non-)beliefs so different from others? How do we convince each other with such beliefs? What is the logic behind them? How does it contribute to shaping our societal and cultural structure?

*Holy Water*, 2022, marble, silicon, polyurethane, 13×16×22cm.  
 Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Manjorie Bunet Plaza.



HB Can you tell us about your most significant work or exhibition so far?

Installation view of *Chained*, the 11th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, 2020. Courtesy of the artist and the Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art. Photo by Silke Briel.



YT I presented the sculptural installation *Chained* (2020) at the 11th Berlin Biennale in 2020. It consists of ten life-sized crucified Jesus sculptures arranged in a circle on the ground, their arms overlapping. The

*Chained (detail)*, 2020, resin, paper, glue, 400cm in diameter.  
 Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Elmar Vestner.



work was placed in the middle of the main hall of the KW Institute for Contemporary Art, and this four-meter-diameter structure created a barricade where visitors could not enter or freely move around.

The entire surface of the sculptures was collaged with black and white copies of flyers and booklets that I collected in Seoul. They were all produced and distributed by conservative South Korean Protestant organizations, and the textual and pictorial contents were filled with homophobic messages and advertisements for so-called conversion therapy don't really need to define this, as I think it's common knowledge. I encountered these hostile groups at the Seoul Queer Culture Festival in 2014. It was the first Pride parade I attended and the first edition at which homophobic Christians finally revealed themselves. A swarm of people from this counter-protest appeared in front of the parade, and they laid down on the ground by locking themselves arm-in-arm in order to create a human chain to halt the Parade. The police did not really cooperate with the parade organizer, and this confrontation lasted more than four hours. The furious Christians were crying loudly and praying upwards to the sky together. They shouted that homosexuals would ruin the future of our country. On one of the propaganda leaflets scattered on the street, a cartoon showed that (male) soldiers in their two years of compulsory **military service** would not be able to protect our country because they would have to go to the toilet more than twelve times a day due to their broken anus damaged by homosexual anal sex habits. I was standing still and stunned, completely overwhelmed by a complex mixture of emotions.

The absurdity of their logic made me very curious about the structure of their strong belief. In the following year, I visited homophobic Christian organizations to talk with them and collect propaganda materials. I was quite afraid of stepping into the field of the enemy, but surprisingly they truly welcomed me when I disclosed that I was gay. They told me this was the very right place for people like me to come. I was even fascinated by how manipulative they could be.

I moved to Berlin in 2016 and brought all the papers with me. Later I learned that the first Protestant missionary who visited

the Korean peninsula in 1832 was Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff who studied in Berlin.

Chained is a sort of mirror. Its core is the quintessence of Christian belief. Its skin is one of the practices of their belief. When one looks at the work, one can easily notice that the former and latter are not coherent. It rather seems that those half-naked men are tortured by wearing that skin. It reveals self-contradiction in itself.

HB Christian or protestant beliefs in South Korea seem to have become radical or distorted. I suppose it mirrors Korean society which is polarized. I also find it interesting how your recent works such as *Once in a While* (2021), *My Expectation* (2022) and *My Anticipation* (2022) deal with our belief system by taking the form of the white asparagus (*spargel* in German), which originally came from non-European countries. What brought you to make this series?



*Once in a While*, 2022, limewood, rusty metal, beeswax, oil, 12.5x37.8x14.5cm. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Elnar Vestner.

YT I am generally interested in human beliefs, ranging from religions as their sophisticated realization to simple objects worshiped by many. Both have close relationships with our politics, economy, society and culture. German culture is deeply rooted in Christianity, though one feels emancipated from any suffocating beliefs in Berlin. That trace could be found even in a vegetable: the white asparagus, or *spargel*. The agricultural calendar must have aligned with Christian celebrations. Farmers traditionally finish the harvest of *spargel* on the 24th of June, the feast day of Saint John the Baptist. As a newcomer in Germany, I was amused by how people go through an immersive experience of praising this vegetable every year as if it

were a rite of passage. Despite its fame, it was believed that it lacked calories, so cultivation under the Nazi and East German regimes was forbidden. Compared to what one benefits from consuming it, the effort to grow it is very demanding as it requires a lot of time-consuming manual labor. This difficulty became hot news during the pandemic because most *spargel* pickers could not benefit from cheaper labor markets in East European countries. As such, this *Weißgold* (white gold in German) is entangled in numerous stories: one says it was introduced to Germany by Romans two thousand years ago, while another says it was introduced by monasteries in the 16th century. Anyway, one can not be German without addressing this vegetable, and the admiration around it is truly intriguing.



*Your Anticipation*, 2022, lime wood, brass, beeswax, 25.5x10.5x10.5cm. Courtesy of the artist and Erenidis, Berlin. Photo by Marjorie Brunet-Pérez.

I wanted to infuse a totemic value into this complex, admired vegetable. A series of my wall-hanging *spargel* sculptures reveal a contour of the Latin cross when one's eye level meets a certain height. Two wooden *spargel* sculptures are surrounded by a metal ring that imitates a typical rubber band used to bundle the vegetables, which can be found at any German supermarket. In this sculpture, the *spargel* tips transform into two male human heads which are designed on the basis of Saint John the Baptist in historical paintings, and they have ambiguous facial expressions of agony and ecstasy.

Due to the phallic shape of the vegetable, the intimacy of two humanized *spargel* adds a romantic layer to the piece. I commissioned this specific carving work to a Bavarian wood carving master, Mr. Helmut Albl, who was the thirteenth generation of a religious sculpture tradition. His hometown and its inhabitants have run the Passion Play, one of the world's oldest amateur plays, every ten years since 1634. His understanding of Christian iconography—especially shaping it—is exceptional and extraordinary, therefore, creating such a bizarre yet charming new icon was truly joyful for him.

HB Who or what has influenced you the most?

YT I often think about Cady Noland and Charlotte Posenenske. Their tireless effort in dealing with socio-political issues in their own ways has had a big impact on me. However, they ended up terminating their practice. I sometimes think of a moment of such decision-making, even though I am just at the beginning of my career. Their manifestos still resonate a lot in our field. But then what are we doing now? Do we do it differently or better? Giving an answer to this is still too daring, and I am trying to continue questioning for now.

HB Somehow I also sympathize with you thinking of the moment of termination. Perhaps we are all in the process of finding the answer to what we are doing. Since you're influenced by these sculptors, you've mainly used objects as your medium. But in *Wish You a Lovely Sunday* (2021), your interest in the body (materiality) and its representation has been transformed into the format of a film. Can you tell us more about this work and your approach? Do you plan to produce a new work using other media in the near future?



*Wish You a Lovely Sunday*, 2021, single-channel HD video, colour, 5.1-channel sound, 18:38. Installation view of *Wish You a Lovely Sunday*, the 18th Lyon Biennale Manifesto of Fragility, Galerie Museum, 2022. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Vinciane Leblun.

This short film had a European premiere at the 16th Lyon Biennale, and it was projected on a five-meter-wide free-standing wall at the former main rotunda entrance hall of Guimet Museum in the city. This museum was closed to the public in 2007, and it has been a monumental ruin for 15 years since then. The experience of walking through this haunted building to watch the film is quite similar to the way it was shot in the summer of 2021. Due to the pandemic, big communal spaces were shut down, and so were churches and clubs. This extraordinary period that we all went through gave me the opportunity to feel and analyse such spaces in more intimate ways.

Most architecture in human history has been designed dominantly in favor of heteronormativity, and queer bodies have been forced to adapt to this set-up. In this regard, I consider queer bodies as the most sensitive, reactive mediators, catching subtle changes in their surrounding atmosphere, through our responsive attitude and behavior.

I wanted to push this experiment further in the film. I commissioned new choreographies to two queer male pairs, each consisting of a choreographer and a dancer in a church and a queer club respectively. rehearsal and completion, I swapped their designated venues without any prior notice to the collaborators about the changed locations.

The film alternatively shows the two distinctive spaces, and it highlights the protagonists' discovery of the new space, their discussion about redesigning the original choreography, their struggles in the process and the final modified choreography. Whenever the film focuses on their dance movements, details of each architectural interior briefly flash between the scenes. Also, in the finale, the two dancers' movements in the church and the club are slightly synchronized as if they relay their body postures to each other. By doing so, the film attempts a daring—rather impossible—convergence of the church and queer club through queer bodies. Therefore, tangibility, sensitivity and materiality are crucial in the film like in my other works in different media.

I aim to produce this film series as a trilogy, and production for the second film is currently in progress.

Woman? (still), 2022, single-channel HD video  
colour, stereo sound, 08:25  
Courtesy of the artist



HB I look forward to seeing your series. To come back to the issue of identity, as an Asian working and living in Berlin, how would you define contemporaneity or contemporary art as a Korean artist?

YT Especially since 2016, which is when I moved to Berlin, I feel that our life and world have been very topicalized. Hourly and daily topics demand us to immediately respond and take a clear stance often among polarized options. 'Post-truth politics' have been very heavy on me and becoming a Berliner, I have found myself increasingly nosy on troublesome issues from all over the globe. And then, my identity is suddenly defined merely by the collection of my reactions and stances on such topics. This process of positioning has definitely refined what and who I am now, but I did not feel good about it. I thought I would evaporate as quickly as the topics. Categorizing and filtering how real the 'fake' is, how fake the real is, how real the 'real' is and how fake the 'fake' is are significant but eventually pointless.

After I left Seoul, no matter how one specifies 'Koreanness', I lost one identity and amplified another. My national identity is now a combination of inheritance, memories, picked-up stories and expectations. But I know this part of me will be constantly reflected in my practice to certain degrees as much or as little as I (dis) like my home country. I try to acknowledge and contemplate self-contradiction and ambivalent mixtures within myself as well as our society. Contemporary art extends our reality and offers us opportunities to step away and examine ourselves.

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HB Nationality is part of what forms an individual as well as their artistic practice. I suppose what we should deliberate on is the ways in which an artist's work is recognized in the global art scene by their nationalities. Does the recent surge of global interest in **K-culture** have any influence on the way you approach your practice?

For the last seven years of my life in Europe, I have definitely felt more awareness of and interest in South Korea from people here. But this change does not impact my practice. However, people may have a better understanding of what is happening in the country as they want to know why so many Korean dramas deal with corruption and conflicts between social classes, why so many **K-pop** musicians commit suicide, why it is such a huge issue for a couple to have a big age gap and so forth. These revelations may amplify or ruin their fantasy of what South Korea is. Many foreigners often consider this country to be very progressive and forward-thinking because, for instance, K-Pop boy band members easily adopt so-called feminine visuals and wives do not follow their husbands' family names after marriage in TV dramas. But through my works they can realize what is actually happening on the streets between queer people and Christians, why politicians from both conservative and progressive parties publicly denounce LGBTQI+ rights and how gay men have to maintain their discreet double lives strategically.

HB Thank you for your answers. Looking forward to observing how your practice will develop. As for the last question, I'd like to ask how you envision your work in ten years.

Installation view of *Miracles and Out of Season*,  
the 9th Berlin Masters, Wilhelm Hahn, Berlin, 2021.  
Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Trevor Good.



I suppose my friends and colleagues are already aware of my obsession with Christian art and architecture. Lots of religious art is rigidly structured in certain conservative grammar, but I try to search for a little quirky twist in it and enjoy such moments and encounters. It is like looking for like-minded people in a hidden history. This thrills me and has certainly laid some bridges for my work. After another decade, perhaps I could build or stage a kind of church with a selection of my works—a church full of doubts rather than beliefs?

# THE LIST

이상한 트리

<Our Holding in Their Gaze(그들이 응시하는 우리의 침)> 2023, 세라믹, 녹슨 철재, 황동철사, 오일, 255x155cm. Courtesy of the artist and palace enterprise, Copenhagen



서울에서는 미술 월간지 에디터였고, 베를린으로 이주하며 자연스럽게 미술가가 되어 유럽 전역에서 활발하게 활동하는 탁영준 작가. 그는 최근작으로 기묘한 모뉴먼트를 선보였다.

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미술을 전공하지 않은, 에디터 출신의 미술가를 한국에서는 별로 본 적이 없는 게 사실이다. 커리어의 이행에 관해 설명한다면? 미술 월간지 에디터 직을 그만두고 베를린으로 이사오기 직전 기독교 연합, 소위 '탈동성애' 단체 등을 방문해 성소수자 혐오 전단지들을 수집했고 이에 관해 글을 쓰려 했다. 언젠가부터 다른 사람의 생각 조각을 꿰어 내 목소리를 간접적으로 드러내는 방식에 답답함을 느꼈던 터라, 또 시각화와 물질화에 점점 더 희열을 느꼈던 터라 이 혐오 덩어리 종이 낱장을 등신대 기독교 성상의 표면에 콜라주하는 조각작품으로 전환했다. 그게 첫 작품 <구원(Salvation)>(2016)이다. 에디터 작업 환경은 작품 제작 과정과 크게 다르지 않다. 개념 발현, 연구, 자료 수집, 시각적 배열, 인쇄를 거쳐 손에 친 책을 냄새 맡고, 만지고, 보고 읽고, 되씹는 전개가 그렇다.

오는 가을 서울의 아뜰리에 에르메스에서 개인전을 연다. '해외에서 먼저 알아본 작가'인 셈인데, 공개 가능한 범위에서 전시를 소개해달라. 아뜰리에 에르메스의 건축 요소를 중심 삼아 필름과 조각작품을 엮어 일종의 순례길을 조성할 예정이다. 안무 필름 연작의 첫 작품 <사랑스런 일요일 되길 바라(Wish You a Lovely Sunday)>(2021)에 이은 두 번째 신작 <목요일엔 네 정결한 발을 사랑하리(Love Your Clean Feet on Thursday)>(2023)를 세계 초연한다. 이 연작은 쿼어 신체를 통해 매우 상이한 두 환경 및 조건의 간극을 좁혀 융화시키는 과정에 주목한다. 첫 작품에는 안무가 한 명, 무용가 한 명으로 이뤄진 두 팀이 각각 베를린 소재 교회와 쿼어 클럽에서 서로 다른 바흐의 네 소를 위한 피아노 소품 두 곡에 맞춰 새 안무를 구성한 뒤 촬영 당일 사전 고지 없이 두 공간을 뒤편했다. 따라서 이 필름은 두 팀이 기존의 안무를 새 공간, 분위기에 맞게 각색하는 고군분투를 다룬다. 신작은, 스페인 외인부대 군인들이 매해 예수 십자가상을 나르는 부활절 목요일 행진 의례가 표상하는 초남성성과 케네스 맥밀란의 고전 발레 <마농>(1974)에서 여러 남성 무용수가 사랑에 목마른 여성 주인공을 계속해서 들어올리고 나르며 추앙하는 초여성성을 뒤엎는다. 6인의 남성 발레 무용수 및 안무가가 후자의 발레 2막 1장에 영감을 받아 남성 '마농'의 발이 단 한순간도 땅에 닿지 않는 안무를 제작해 베를린의 유명한 숲 그루네발트에서 펼쳐 보이고, 이 과정이 스페인 군인의 가톨릭 의례와 시청각적으로 교착하면서 대화, 대치, 이격, 동화, 압도 사이를 오간다.

몇 년 사이에 폭발하듯 작품을 쏟아내고 있는 걸 흥미진진하게 목도하고 있다. 최근 본 작품으로는 신체 부위가 캐스팅된 듯 보이는 오퍼먼트가 달린 에메랄드빛 트리 설치작품이다. 코펜하겐의 갤러리 팰리스 엔터프라이즈에서 선보인 <그들이 응시

하는 우리의 침(Our Holding in Their Gaze)>(2023)으로 신체 세라믹 조각 연작의 최근작이다. 실제 남성 동성애자 연인인 일본인, 스위스인 한 쌍의 신체 각 부위를 머리부터 발끝까지 평판한 점토로 직접 본뒀다. 그리고 탄산구리 가루 유약을 발라 구운 뒤 황동 철사를 엮은 고리에 연결해 2.5미터 높이의 녹슨 철재 구조물에 하나씩 걸었다. 세라믹의 검녹색 유광 표면은 특수 오일로 녹을 흡착한 철재물의 나뭇잎질같이 거친 진갈색 표면과 어울려 크리스마스 트리를 연상시킨다. 이 작품은 기원전 14세기 이집트에서 제작된, 베를린 신박물관의 자그마한 규암 소장품에 대한 오해에서 비롯했다. 함께 맞잡은 두 손을 제외하고 모든 신체 부위가 사라진 이 유물을 목격하자마자 이유 없이 애절한 두 남성의 손일 거라 기대한 채 아래 적힌 설명을 읽으니 왕과 왕비의 것으로 추정됐다. 자명한 고고학적 발굴 조사 결과와 그저 묵묵히 포개진 두 손에 대한 내 인식 사이의 간극에 흥미를 느껴 이를 가장 잘 알려진 종교 상징인 크리스마스 트리와 연계시키고자 했다. 이 상징은 시대를 거쳐 각 사회마다 용납, 금지되기도 했는데, 심지어 미국에서도 초기에는 사치스러운 이교도 숭배물로 간주된 금지였다.



더군다나 상록수에 대한 신비는 기독교 전유물이 아니라 여러 문화권에서 발견됐다. 우리가 너무나 당연하게 받아들이는 이 오브제 도 시간의 흐름에 따라 달리 인식됐듯이 두 동성 연인의 고이 친 손에 대한 우리의 시각도 그러리라는 바람이 담긴 일종의 모뉴먼트다.

매체와 소재는 매우 다양한데 주제는 일관된다. 게이 커뮤니티를 바탕으로 시대의 풍향을 감지

하는 감각과 비판정신 그리고 종교 예술에 대한 애호가 총체적으로 엮여있다. 인간의 믿음만큼 강력한 게 없다고 본다. 사실과 과학을 초월한 믿음은 초월적이기도 파괴적이기도 하다. 작업을 본격적으로 시작한 2015년 말, 2016년 초가 국제적 '탈진실 정치학'으로 점철된 시기여서 더욱 그렇기도 하지만, 인류 역사 전반이 거짓, 허구의 각색과 진실화의 정도를 달리하며 요동치지 않았나 싶다. 다만 지금은 소셜미디어를 타고 그 믿음의 피력이 가열차졌고 매 극단을 내달리는 부류들이 전 지구적으로 가시화되며 분열의 교착은 이제 기반 구조가 됐다. 신체를 두리번거리며 작업하다 보면 인체만큼 서로 제각각인 게 없다. 하지만 우리는 서로의 믿음에 따라 그 구성 요소에 울타리를 지어가며 자기 입맛에 맞는 동질감을 조성하고 저 경계 너머를 손가락질한다. 그래서 나는 매 작품마다 자기모순적 성격을 부여하고자 한다. 그것만큼 실로 인간적인 게 없지 않을까. 같은 맥락에서 역사적 성화, 성상, 종교 건축을 좋아한다. 갑갑할 법도 한 종교 예술의 규격 속에서도 어떤 다름을 비집어 넣은 쿼어적 요소와의 시공간을 초월한 교감이 좋다.

<Their Presumption in Our Filling(그들이 추정하는 우리의 속)> 2023, 린덴 목재, 녹슨 철재, 세라믹, 자석, 오일, 5.5x3.5x13.5cm. Courtesy of the artist and palace enterprise, Copenhagen

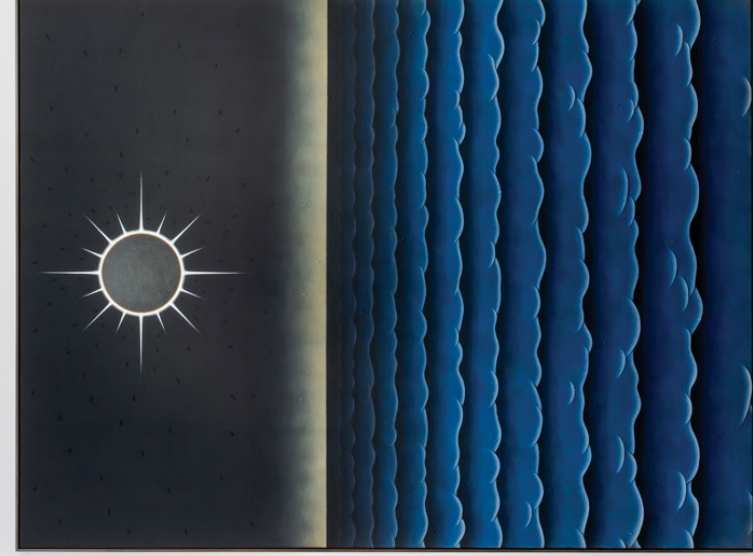


대전 헤레디움은 안젤름 키퍼의 국내 첫 전시를 선보인다. 지난해 베니스비엔날레 기간 동안 두 칼레공전에서 최초로 현대미술 작품을 단독 전시한 안젤름 키퍼는 역사, 문화, 신화 등을 소재로 한 다층적 주제로 논쟁적인 작품 세계를 일구어왔다. 이번 전시 《안젤름 키퍼: 가을》에서는 시인 라이너 마리아 릴케로부터 영감을 얻어 제작한 총 18점의 작품이 공개된다. “나는 시인들과 끊임없이 관계를 맺는다”, “나는 이미지(picture)로 사고하는데, 시는 이를 가능하도록 도와준다”, “릴케의 시는 60년간 내 기억 속에 존재해왔다”라는 그의 말처럼 이번 전시를 관통하는 키워드는 릴케의 시 ‘가을날(Herbsttag, 1902)’, ‘가을(Herbst, 1906)’, ‘가을의 마지막(Ende des Herbstes, 1920)’이다. 어스름한 윤곽의 나무, 갈색 낙엽, 가을에서 겨울로 넘어가는 동안의 회색 등 시간의 흐름에 따른 부패와 쇠퇴의 이미지가 담긴 그의 작품들은 작가 스스로 “인류 역사의 무게를 지탱할 수 있는 유일한 재료”라고 설명한 납의 질은 무거움 속에서 독특한 빛을 발한다. 9월 8일부터 2024년 1월 31일까지.

<Herbst. Für R. M. Rilke>, 2022, Émulsion, oil, acrylic, shellac, lead leaf and rope on canvas, 190×280cm. photo: George Porcet  
<Wer jetzt kein Haus hat>, 2021~2023, Emulsion, oil, acrylic, shellac, gold leaf, dried branches and charcoal on canvas, 190×280cm. photo: Charles Duprat

## 추상의 세계, 구상의 우주

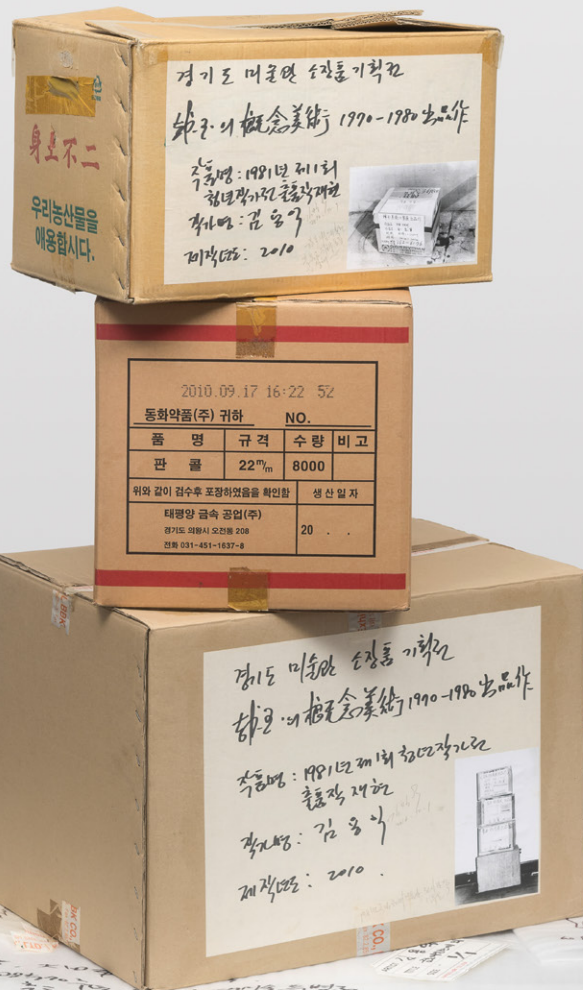
갤러리비토에서 열리고 있는 김재석 개인전  
《Exceptionally  
Complex. Yet  
Elegantly Engineered  
(극단적으로 복잡하나  
매우 우아하게 설계된)》  
전시 전경



화של 갤러리는 9월 23일까지 에이메이 카네야마의 개인전 《Future Days》를 선보인다. 일상의 광경, 사건, 기사를 소재로 그리면서도 어떤 형식과 색에도 구애받지 않으려는 작가의 노력은 캔버스 밖으로 뻗어나간 여러 제스처를 통해 더욱 과감하고 깊은 추상의 세계로 관객을 안내한다. 부산 국제갤러리에서는 1970년대 무렵부터 강렬한 색채의 사용과 대담한 필치를 통해 국제적이며 한국적인 추상회화의 기법을 이끌었다고 평가받는 최옥경의 개인전 《Wook-Kyung Choi》가 10월 22일까지 열린다. 추상회화와 콜라주로 구성된 컬러 작업, 잉크 드로잉이 주를 이루는 흑백 작업 등 총 40여 점의 작품을 선보이는 이번 전시는 특정 사조를 꼽을 수 없는, ‘혼중성의 추상’이라 부를 만한 최옥경의 탐구심적인 실험 전반을 조망할 기회이다. 갤러리비토에서는 이재석의 개인전 《Exceptionally Complex, Yet Elegantly Engineered(극단적으로 복잡하나 매우 우아하게 설계된)》이 열리고 있다. 군 복무 기간 중의 경험 같은 제도권 안 삶의 규격화된 양태를 추상 페인팅으로 그려왔던 이재석은 이번 전시에서 이를 포함해 예술적 상상력과 중력, 우주, 자연 등에 대한 사유를 결합한 정교하면서도 환상적인 작품을 선보인다. 9월 27일까지.

아보카기이브로

김용익은 1974년 데뷔 후 지금까지 다양한 작품을 통해 한국 개념주의 미술에 굵은 선을 그어온 작가다. 서울시립 미술아카이브는 다양성 속에서도 일관성 있는 예술세계를 선보인 김용익의 재발견을 주제로 그의 회화, 설치, 영상작품, 아카이브 등을 선보이는 《라스트 제너레이션에게, 김용익》전을 개최한다. 이번 전시는 서울시립 미술아카이브의 소장 아카이브를 기반으로 한국 현대미술 주요 작가의 예술세계를 심도 있게 조망하는 소장자료 기획전의 일환이다. 2018년 처음 소장된 김용익 아카이브는 1970년대 작가 노트부터 육필 원고, 이면지 드로잉 일기, 최근의 구상 드로잉까지 총 1천34건의 자료로 구성됐다. 시기적, 유형적으로 빠짐 없이 보존된 아카이브와 1970년대 '평면 오브제' 시리즈, 1980년대 '판지', '조각' 시리즈, 그리고 2000년대의 《양평 프로젝트/프로젝트》, 《날 그냥 흐르게 좀 내버려 둬》 등과 같은 공공·생태미술 작업까지 김용익의 미학과 태도를 조망할 수 있는 이번 전시는 '아카이브를 통한 예술 해석'이라는 새로운 장을 여는 계기가 될 것이다. 11월 19일까지.



<무제(1981년 <제1회 청년작가전>에), 2011(1981년 작 재현).

오늘의 장소

아트선재센터는 10월 8일까지 《오프사이트》전을 선보인다. '어느 특정한 장소에서' 떨어진, '부지 밖의' 같은 뜻을 지닌 전시 제목(off site)처럼 이번 전시는 전시 장으로서만이 아닌 아트선재센터의 공간 구조를 적극적으로 활용했다. 전시에 참여한 그레이코드 지인, 오종, 이요나, 최고은, 현남, 현정윤은 아트홀, 백스테이지, 분장실, 정원, 계단, 기계실, 옥상 등 아트선재센터의 기능적 공간을 전시 장소이자 재료로 삼아 '장소'를 둘러싼 실재와 가상, 현상과 지각에 대한 사람들의 새로운 인식과 태도를 보여주는 결과물을 선보인다. 관객들은 전시 지도를 들고 작품 관람과 아트선재센터 탐험이라는 두 가지 목적을 수행하며 지도에도 상세히 나와 있지 않은 현남의 신작이 위치한 힌트를 찾는 즐거움도 누릴 수 있다. 경기도와 경기관광공사가 경기도 DMZ 일대를 중심으로 개최하는 《디엠지(DMZ) 전시: 체크포인트》는 예술작품을 통해 한국의 분단 상황과 DMZ 접경 지역을 어떻게 바라볼 것인지를 다룬다. 북한의 개성공단이 내려다보이는 도라전망대, 미군이 남기고 떠난 군 시설이자 근대 문화유산인 캠프그리브스, 수천 개의 바람개비로 꾸러진 평화누리, 안보전시관을 전시 공간으로 탈바꿈한 연강갤러리, 북한 원산까지 이어지는 신망리역, 대광리역, 신탄리역 세 역을 엮은 '경원선 미술관'. 27명의 국내의 현대미술 작가들은 이러한 역사적 공간에 '어쩌면 감성적이고 가벼워 보일 수 있지만 이 가벼움 안에 여러 층위의 생각과 상상이 담긴 작품들을 선보일 예정이다. 전시 1부는 8월 31일부터 9월 23일까지 파주, 전시 2부는 10월 6일부터 11월 5일까지는 연천에서 열린다.

1,2 아트선재센터의 《오프사이트》 전시 전경.  
3,4 《디엠지(DMZ) 전시: 체크포인트》 전시 전경.







1

1 구정아, <Density>, 2023, Polyamide, paint, wood, magnetic levitation device, 126.3×43.6×60.8cm, Courtesy of the artist & PKM Gallery.  
2 BB&M에서 열리는 <이불> 전시 전경.



2

한국을 대표하는 중견 여성 작가들의 놓치지 말아야 할 전시가 동시다발로 열린다. 지난 20여 년간 유토피아에 대한 열망과 실패, 예술과 건축의 역사적 아방가르드 유산에 대한 독특한 관점을 담은 작품으로 한국 현대미술의 대표적 작가로 꼽히는 이불. BB&M에서 10월 14일까지 열리는 이불의 두 번째 개인전 <이불> 전에서는 공기역학적 형태와 미래주의를 상징하는 눈부신 표면이 인상적인 <은빛 비행선(2023)>, 기억과 과거를 주제로 강렬한 색상과 유기적 구조가 돋보이는 회화 연작 <Perdu>를 만나볼 수 있다. 유토피아는 여전히 멀리 있지만 이불의 작품이 보여주는 아름다움을 통한 위안은 우리 곁에 있다.

회화용 물감, 가정용 페인트, 색연필, 볼펜, 화장품 같은 다양한 안료를 사용해 동시대 사회문화적 메커니즘을 특유 시스템이 반영된 작품으로 표현해온 박미나는 두 개의 전시를 동시에 열었다. 아뜰리에 에르메스에서 10월 8일까지 열리는 개인전 <아홉 개의 색, 아홉 개의 가구>전에서는 블랙, 블루, 그린, 그레이, 오렌지, 레드, 바이올렛, 화이트, 옐로 9가지의 명칭으로 구분되는 국내 유통 물감을 모두 활용해 1cm 두께로 칠한 스트라이프와 다양한 가정용 가구의 도형을 결합한 작품을 선보인다. 10월 22일까지 청담동으로 이전한 원앤제이 갤러리에서 열리는 <집(House)>에서는 박미나의 고유한 방법론에 따른 다양한 집 외관을 살펴볼 수 있다.

2024년 제60회 베니스비엔날레 한국관 단독 작가로 선정된 구정아 작가의 개인전 <공중부양>은 PKM 갤러리에서 10월 14일까지 열린다. 드로잉, 포스터, 책 같은 다양한 매체를 통해 “그저 평범한 것은 없다”는 태도를 반영한 작품들을 선보인다. 구정아 예술세계 전반의 흐름을 읽고, 작가가 무한히 확장해온 우주론인 ‘O USSS’라는 모티프를 중심으로 새롭게 완성한 대형 회화 <Seven Stars>, 드로잉에서 시작해 AR 작업으로 발전한 입체 조각 <Density> 등 총 20여 점의 작품을 감상할 수 있다.

글/ 안동선

안동선은 컨트리뷰팅 에디터다. 미술관의 투명하게 짙은 고요, 호기심의 불씨를 던져주는 작품들, 그리고 주변의 맞춤 때문에 이불이 멀다 하고 전시를 보러 간다.

As one of the most ancient responses to fear, religion is again being ideologically instrumentalized to feed the populist demand for scapegoating and expedite political polarization. Young-jun Tak analyses the moral mechanizations of societies that are currently echoing each other throughout the world by targeting LGBTQI communities. In the artist's home country of South Korea, Christian leaders and mega churches have risen to dominance in the fields of politics, economics, and journalism, despite the fact that the majority of the population is non-religious. Driven by a belief in "the blessed country" these religious groups direct their patriotic energy towards promoting anti-LGBTQI and anti-migration sentiment and decrying the country's rapidly shrinking population. In a newly commissioned work developed shortly before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, Young-jun Tak draws on the way South Korean Christian fanatics try to block the annual Pride parades by throwing themselves on the ground and forming a human chain by interlocking arms.

*Chained* (2020) consists of ten life-sized statues of the crucifixion, fabricated in Italy, which are installed in a circle on the ground, their arms overlapping. A closer look reveals that the surfaces of the figures are collaged with anti-LGBTQI propaganda flyers promoting conversion therapies and courses, ephemera collected by Tak from churches and medical institutions in South Korea. Most of this material can also be found in the Korea Queer Archive.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the country experienced two contagion cycles: one from the pseudo-Christian group known as the Shincheonji Church of Jesus; the other from gay clubs in Seoul. The religious group suddenly found themselves on the receiving end of the sort of hate speech that they themselves had used for years against the LGBTQI community blamed for the spread of HIV. During the second cycle, these attacks were again directed at the LGBTQI community. (ÖÖD)



Artwork ©Young-jun Tak 2024

Image by Dean Qiulin Li



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