

young-jun tak  
**street religion**

august 17 - september 30

palace enterprise

Young-jun Tak's exhibition aptly titled "Street Religion" opens with the sculpture "Their Presumption of Our Filling," a work that holds common and religious symbols, with the intention of welcoming passersby into the gallery. The sculpture of two røde pølser (red sausages, or hot dogs, to this American) bear the hand-carved visages of Saint Nicholas in early and old age. Originally the patron saint of ending hunger, Saint Nicholas in many contexts of course also implies the patron saint of milk, cookies, and the raging capitalism of Christmas presents. The two Saint Nicholases nuzzling together with ketchup and mustard in their metal cradle bring this beloved childhood street food, its attendant local nostalgia, and an introductory queerness into the gallery.

Once inside, the visitor encounters a second sculpture, "Our Holding in Their Gaze," Tak's metal and ceramic Christmas tree that dominates the space.

\* \* \*

When I was a young child, my family would drive across what felt like an interminable swath of the eastern United States to visit extended family for Christmas. We would pack up suitcases and bags of beautifully wrapped presents, each labeled for the branch of the family we were going to visit—Grandma & Grandpa, Uncle or Aunt so-and-so, Cousins such-and-such.

I remember my parents' stress at buying the right presents, and my own anticipated comfort at the familiar decorations in each house, the Christmas tree taking central pride of place with gifts abounding underneath, always the same year after year.

A true carefully orchestrated American dream.

\* \* \*

"Our Holding in Their Gaze" is a different kind of Christmas tree—a bare metal frame echoing orthodox crosses, from which hang pine green cast ceramic body parts, instead of decorations and living greenery. His tree speaks to the interruption of queer experiences—intimacy, celebration, protest, marriage—by religious groups convinced that the control of others will lead to their own righteousness. Individuals who take ancient texts read through the lenses of zealots and myopic scholars to hand pick the list of those who are allowed into society and salvation from the fear of death—and those who are not.

\* \* \*

I remember the time there was no Christmas tree at my one house on our Christmas pilgrimage. Whether it was the first time I noticed—my expectation of presents and decorations surpassing the attention of my cousins—or the first time it had been absent, I'm not sure. But I do remember my uncle's disdainful explanation that the Christmas tree was a pagan symbol that distracted from the true message of Christ's birth.

I was shocked—at first, at his refusal to participate in this ritual I had never before seen rejected. And then at the possibility that this simple tree had a much more complicated history than I had yet imagined. Where, actually, did this "pagan" ritual come from that made its way to every living room and shopping mall I had ever visited in suburban America?

As we know well, the symbols of most religions can be wielded to welcome some, while casting others out. Over centuries, each branch of the major monotheistic religions we live with today have found their ways to create codes, hierarchies, and outsiders. Today is no different, with political and economic interests casting allegiances with religious ones to determine the legal and social structures within which we are all permitted to live.

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In all of his works, Tak imagines the ways that different shared spaces impact the queer body. These spaces can be domestic, religious, or civic—all overlapping forms of public and private that play out opportunities for control in different ways. Tak has said that the queer body is particularly attuned to the social, political, and moral structures embedded into architectural choices, be they public or domestic, and the edges of these spaces—as they are not commonly built for the queer body. It is easier to see the embedded choices if it is not built for you.

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Young-jun Tak  
*Our Holding in Their Gaze*, 2023  
Ceramics, rusty metal, brass wire, oil  
Approx. H255 x Ø155 cm

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Young-jun Tak  
*Our Holding in Their Gaze*, 2023  
Ceramics, rusty metal, brass wire, oil  
Approx. H255 x Ø155 cm  
Detail



Young-jun Tak  
*Our Holding in Their Gaze*, 2023  
Ceramics, rusty metal, brass wire, oil  
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Young-jun Tak  
*Our Holding in Their Gaze*, 2023  
Ceramics, rusty metal, brass wire, oil  
Approx. H255 x Ø155 cm

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Young-jun Tak  
*Their Presumption of Our Filling*, 2023  
Lime wood, rusty metal, ceramics, oil, magnets  
5.5 × 23.5 × 13.5 cm



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Young-jun Tak  
*Free Trade (Bent)*, 2021  
Digital pigment print, beeswax, wood,  
acrylic museum glass, lacquer  
54 x 29 x 4 cm

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Young-jun Tak  
*Free Trade (Bent)*, 2021  
Digital pigment print, beeswax, wood,  
acrylic museum glass, lacquer  
54 x 29 x 4 cm

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Young-jun Tak

Installation view, Street Religion  
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Young-jun Tak  
*One More Please*, 2022  
Wooden milking stool, votive candles, silicone, paint,  
aluminum, glue  
38 x 54 x 44 cm

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Young-jun Tak  
*Free Trade*, 2021  
Digital pigment print, beeswax, wood,  
acrylic museum glass, lacquer  
96.5 x 96.5 x 4 cm



Left:

Young-jun Tak  
*Free Trade #02*, 2017

Digital pigment print, wood, glass, lacquer  
54.5 (diameter) x 4 (depth) cm

Right:

Young-jun Tak  
*Free Trade #01*, 2017

Digital pigment print, wood, glass, lacquer  
54.5 (diameter) x 4 (depth) cm



Young-jun Tak

Installation view, Street Religion  
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other works

palace enterprise

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Young-jun Tak  
*Wish You a Lovely Sunday*, 2021  
Single channel HD video, color, 5.1 sound  
18 minutes 38 seconds  
Installation view, 16th Lyon Biennale *Manifesto of Fragility*,  
Guimet Museum, 2022



The video boldly combines and juxtaposes two distinctive spatial settings—a church and a queer club. For this filmic work, two choreographers and two dancers were paired up to create a new choreography, for the church “Kirche am Südsterne” and the queer club “SchwüZ” in Berlin respectively. Each pair was assigned to a different Bach piano piece for four hands. After days of rehearsals and when the choreography was complete, their designated venues were then swapped. The participants did not know the exact location they would perform in until the actual day of filming, and, therefore, they had to reprogram their choreographies according to the new architectural features and atmosphere of the changed location.

Although churches and queer clubs seem to function for starkly different purposes, both spaces share intriguing similarities as they both require specific rituals, behavioral norms, and attitudes closely linked to the space and its role. Both venues could be said to be fundamentally community-oriented spaces, which seek to offer comfort and welfare for either the visitor’s mind or body. In the film, the continuous change of scenes between the two kind of spaces with the dancer’s bodily presence, their movements, and dialogues, aims at achieving a sort of almost impossible mergence or coexistence of religious practice on one side and club culture on the other side. In this 17 minutes video, we follow the protagonists’ struggles, passion, and commitment in trying to adjust their choreographies to fit into the new contexts.

English subtitled version: [vimeo.com/581720894](https://vimeo.com/581720894)

Password: WYLS2021YJT\_EN

Trailer: [vimeo.com/577582959](https://vimeo.com/577582959)

Young-jun Tak

*Wish You a Lovely Sunday, 2021*

Single channel HD video, color, 5.1 sound

18 minutes 45 seconds

Installation view, 16th Lyon Biennale *Manifesto of Fragility*, Guimet Museum, 2022

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Young-jun Tak  
*Wish You a Lovely Sunday*, 2021  
Single channel HD video, color, 5.1 sound  
18 minutes 45 seconds

Installation view, Wanås Konst, Knislinge, 2023



Young-jun Tak  
*Wish You a Lovely Sunday*, 2021  
Single channel HD video, color, 5.1 sound  
18 minutes 45 seconds

Installation view, *Doubt*, O-Overgaden, 2023

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Young-jun Tak  
*My Expectation*, 2023  
Lime wood, rusty metal, beeswax, oil  
25 x 11 x 10.5 cm  
Version 4/5

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Young-jun Tak  
*Once in a While*, 2022  
Lime wood, rusty metal, beeswax, oil  
12.5 x 37.8 x 14.5 cm  
Version 3/5

## YOUNG-JUN TAK 탁영준 卓永俊

Born in 1989, Seoul, South Korea  
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

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### EDUCATION

2008–2015 Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul  
BA, English Language and Literature  
BA, Cross-Cultural Studies

### UPCOMING

2024 Young-jun Tak (TBD), Philipp Zollinger, Zurich, CH (solo)  
Young-jun Tak (TBD), Fragment, New York, US (solo)

2023 Love Your Clean Feet on Thursday, Atelier Hermès,  
Seoul, KOR (solo)  
Double Feature: Young-jun Tak, Julia Stoschek  
Foundation, Dusseldorf and Berlin, DE (solo)  
Dancing About Architecture, High Line, New York, US  
(group)  
5th Chicago Architecture Biennial, US (group)

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023 street religion, palace enterprise, Copenhagen, DK  
Wish You a Lovely Sunday, Wanås Konst, Knislinge, SE  
Doubt, Overgaden, Copenhagen, DK

2022 Wohin?, Efremidis, Berlin, DE  
Der Garten, Sox, Berlin, DE

2021 Wish You a Lovely Sunday, Fragment, Moscow, RU

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

2023 Boobs in the Arts—Fe:male Bodies in Pictorial History,  
Dittrich & Schlechtriem, Berlin, DE  
Paperworks, Kunstmuseum Heidenheim / Museum  
Schloss Hellenstein, Heidenheim, DE

2022

CLUBS 2, Sala Apolo, Barcelona, ES  
16th Lyon Biennale, Guimet Museum, FR  
Finger Bang, Perrotin, Paris, FR  
Forming Communities: Berliner Wege, KINDL – Center for  
Contemporary Art, Berlin, DE  
*Megan Dominescu, Lea Draeger, Nika Fontaine, Aviva  
Silverman, Young-jun Tak, Mauer, Cologne, DE*

2021

It's Just a Phase, Kjøpmannsgata Ung Kunst, Trondheim,  
NO  
9th Berlin Masters, Wilhelm Hallen, Berlin Masters,  
Foundation, Berlin, DE  
Erschreckend aktuell / Frighteningly topical, Gabriele  
Senn Galerie, Vienna, AT  
LETTER (to us), a billboard project at Elsenbrücke,  
Diskurs, Berlin, DE  
Round 4, Art for Black Lives, Online

2020

11th Berlin Biennale, KW Institute for Contemporary Art,  
DE  
Szene Berlin, Hall Art Foundation / Schloss Derneburg  
Museum, Derneburg, DE  
Locked in, BKV (Brandenburgischer Kunstverein)  
Potsdam, DE

2019

Show Me Your Selfie, Diskurs, Berlin, DE  
*PRO-TEST*, Seoul Museum of Art, SeMA Bunker, Seoul,  
KOR  
Show Me Your Selfie, Aram Art Museum, Goyang, KOR

2018

Schrein der Freundschaft, BKV Potsdam, DE  
A Strong Desire, PS120, Berlin, DE

2017

15th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul Modern, TR

2016

The Others, König Galerie, Berlin, DE



**YOUNG-JUN TAK** 탁영준 卓永俊

Young-jun Tak is a self-taught artist living and working in Berlin. He has studied English Language and Literature as well as Cross-Cultural Studies in Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul, South Korea. Tak has participated in major international exhibitions such as the Lyon Biennale (2022), the Berlin Biennale (2020), and Istanbul Biennale (2017). He received the TOY Berlin Masters Award (2021).

**AWARDS AND GRANTS**

- 2023  
Experimental Film Funding, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg  
NEUSTARTplus-Stipendium der Stiftung Kunstfonds, NEUSTART KULTUR der BKM
- 2021  
TOY Berlin Masters Award, Berlin Masters Foundation, Burger Collection  
International Exchange Program for Young Artists, Arts Council Korea
- 2020  
International Exchange Program, Arts Council Korea
- 2016–2017  
International Exchange Program, Arts Council Korea