

Takahiro Kudo
Waltz of the Flowers
28 Nov–7 Dec 2024

In *Waltz of the Flowers*, Takahiro Kudo brings together works from previous shows alongside new pieces. His works consistently reference concepts of interpersonal relationships, intimacy, and the tension between closeness and distance.

At the center of Kudo's new work is an installation featuring an LP player and three recordings of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* Op. 71, *Waltz of the Flowers*, each performed on a single instrument and pressed onto separate discs, reflecting Kudo's ongoing fascination with the individual and his role. "As someone who went through the Japanese education system, there's a standardized process of making an individual, someone who is good at almost everything but lacks individual strengths."

The individual is portrayed as a single instrument within a bigger and broader orchestra. We're invited to engage with the artist's externalized inner dialogue, through which he invites us to explore the connections between individualism, collectivity, and the concept of imposed selection, allowing for a study of the individual's ever-present dilemma of availability—both timely and physical while linking this to his own exploration of monogamy, polyamory, and open relationships. Kudo recounts: "I recognized a pattern in my past relationships, particularly after I defined my sexuality as gay. I've always needed a period of monogamy with one person, just to get to know them, to get to know my partner. But eventually, I started to wish for more. It's not that I'm unhappy with my partners, but I realize I have a certain need for contact with other people. This is why I find the idea of imposed selection interesting, the idea that only one player is chosen, and the recording that is played has to be actively selected."

Hidden in plain sight, concepts of closeness and distance serve as a narrative line to help us navigate between the artists' own debate of what is right and what is wrong. In *Untitled (Thin Soft Lies)*, 2018, he touches on the use of lies, as a tool or an instrument of protection. Recalling whether or not to tell his grandma about his sexuality during what would be his last visit to her, he says: "I didn't tell her. I don't necessarily regret it, but since then, the question of what I choose to share with others has stayed with me, especially in intimate relationships. I wonder if it's a lie, or more of a soft shell, like an *oblaat*. It's very much a Japanese expression, but by wrapping bitter medicine in *oblaat*, a thin sheet of starch, it doesn't taste as bad when you put it in your mouth."

These same protective mechanisms are recognizable, maneuvers of sorts, used to navigate vulnerable situations and maintain stability within our own emotional framework. Gathered by his own experience of navigating the gay dating scene, the artist highlights how these mechanisms are used as a way to distance ourselves, maintaining social distance by solely seeking the sexual market as a protective measure, instead of aiming for genuine human contact. These intricate fine tunings of morality brought forward by the artist, form a pattern, a carrying vessel through this particular body of work.

Rodrigo Costa Ribeiro, Freelance journalist
Born Torres Vedras, Portugal, 1997

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10997 Berlin Kreuzberg

● Buzzer Reeves



- 1) *Untitled (Whenever We Kiss)*, 2021
Acrylic glass partition with glory hole, fake flowers, chains
Dimensions variable
(Acrylic partition 210 × 100 × 0.8 cm)

2) *Untitled (The Creation of Adams)*, 2024
Video installation with mirror balls
Dimension variable, 4:45
- 3) *Untitled (Beautiful Days)*, 2024
Sun-bleached wooden plate, anti-UV varnish
62 × 42 × 3 cm

4) *Untitled (Life Itself)*, 2012–2024
Milk, freezer
100 × 61 × 56 cm

5) *Untitled (Thin Soft Lies)*, 2018
White curtains
Dimension variable
- 6) *Untitled (Love in C Minor)*, 2024
Sun-bleached wooden plate, anti-UV varnish
62 × 42 × 3 cm

7) *Untitled (It's Complicated)*, 2024
Mount on 2 sheets of newspaper
124 × 79 × 4 cm

8) *Untitled (No One Like You)*, 2024
3 LP records and LP player
Dimensions variable

9) *Untitled (Midnight's Door)*, 2024
Sun-bleached wooden plate, anti-UV varnish
62 × 42 × 3 cm

