

MY TWIN DIDN'T SHOW UP YESTERDAY SO I DIDN'T COME EITHER
Hiiona Choi



TIME AND PLACE:

Two different galleries situated in the same block, rue Moret, Paris; 18h.

CHARACTERS:

Yeong
The Twin
Toto

The united show between two different galleries in the same street addresses the animalistic interest of 14 young artists in their early twenties.

Behind the showcase window of the gallery 1. Beheaded small plush animals are spread on a long operation table covered with white curtains. YEONG is sitting on a chair, dressed in lace pants under her skirt and lots of childish pins on her black hair, facing a broad passing by in front of the gallery.

Beside YEONG, her twin, dressed up like a construction site worker, stands closer to the entrance and the window.

YEONG speaks to the public inside the gallery while sewing her animal fluffs on the table.

YEONG:

We are a petit gore show.

This is a petit gore show within the display window of 24 rue Moret and 4 rue Moret, Paris. Viewers walk around naked and interrogated by the bodies my twin and I have stacked. I know you are not that stupid to think that the whole thing and the whole body are 'real' animals.

Can you see my twin here? My twin doesn't want to talk to you.

But there was a man who was caressing his cat. He always forces the cat to stay on his left arm so that it won't leave his physical realm. One day, he ate out his cat and became all of a sudden the fur skin of his cat. In the same posture that he was standing and caressing his cat as usual and then a moment later, in his mouth. My twin found him dead on the ground and took it here.

Is it legal to bring your beloved pets to exhibition places? Is it legal to bring your sensual lovers to art museums? If you say yes to both

questions, is it legal to bring domesticated or captured wild animals here to see a show?

My twin is an actual pathologist. It's been more or less a week since my twin has been dissecting and analyzing dead bodies in the street because my twin has no mortuary at all. A long time ago my twin happened to prepare the body of one called Willhelm Schmitz for his funeral.

In 1992, a private television channel in Germany came under criticism for screening the suicide of one Wilhelm Schmitz. Despite having since remarried, Schmitz, a fifty-year-old electrician, never came to terms with his first wife leaving him. He decided to kill himself. On March 30, 1992, Schmitz prepared his elaborate suicide note. He rigged a video camera in a corner of his bathroom, focused it on the bathtub, and set it to record. He ingested a lethal cocktail of barbiturates, stripped naked, and slipped into the warm water. The tape was an hour long, time enough to capture the twenty-minute demise.

YEONG turns around toward the toilet in the corner of the gallery.

YEONG:

Here, in this place, there's no soap to wash your hands in the toilet. It's been a long time since all the shits got piled up and that little space became a garage. There are even old photos of the people who used to come here. You should know that it's not a very pleasant thing before you go to the toilet next to the transparent butterfly, nailed to the wall for the projection.

Innocent walls, freshly painted white, don't necessarily make a 2D backdrop for a theater scene. Neither theater nor TV shows. A

Wednesday evening in August - some four months after the event of Schmitz - Akut presented tragic highlights of the suicide. Following an announcement, the television screen cuts to the attenuated colors of a cheap home-produced video image. The grey-haired, bespectacled Schmitz lowers himself into a bathtub. At the bottom right of the picture, the camera's automatic clock reads 1:45 pm. Facing the camera, Schmitz explains he has overdosed on pills and that death is his own decision. A television station edit.

The time is now 2:09 pm.

Drifting out of consciousness, his head rolling to the side, Schmitz slips deeper into the water. He has begun to vomit. The network evidently finds this aspect of the suicide unacceptable and blurs the offending part of the screen, thus sparing 1.6 million viewers the sight of retching.

At 2:10 pm, Schmitz is fully unconscious. his head has dipped below the water level in the bathtub and he is inhaling water. his body begins to convulse and it involuntarily jerks out from below the surface. Finally, the spasms cease and Schmitz sinks down and becomes still. ... These are the final pathetic minutes of a human life as television entertainment.

Pause.

YEONG:

A 1-minute walk from here, at gallery 2, there's a life-size metal horse that's lost its legs. We didn't cut them off, we simply forgot to sew him new legs.

In Holland, where assisted dying is not illegal, sixty-three-year-old Cees van Wendel de Joode is suffering from a debilitating nerve disease. That was how he came to find me after spending the past few years wandering numerous different hospices. In my office, he says that he is becoming progressively weaker and has respiratory problems.

So instead of terminating his life, I turn him into a sky blue colored skin seal, entirely covered with fur. He explains he is a burden to his wife and is suffering greatly. I, working to strict guidelines, confirm my patient's condition and receive permission from the authorities, before arranging with van Wendel an operation date. And then I gave him a brand new name as a fluffy doll: Toto.

YEONG caresses softly the beheaded Toto on the operation table.

YEONG:

How far can a grown-ass man go down, getting deprived of his dignity and his own identity? There's a movie titled "Tusk", which is a typical body modification horror film. I won't mention the name of the director. What is more important is that, in ten days we're gonna celebrate the 10th anniversary of this horror movie. The story follows a guy who travels to Canada to have an interview with a boy who accidentally cuts his legs. But the guy fails to get the interview, rather ends up in some garage in the middle of nowhere. He let some random old guy suffering from deep loneliness do a big surgery to turn him into a walrus, with gigantic tusks and pulled out the scalp.

The name of the main character is Wallace.

There, my twin is trying to reproduce Wallace's skin, the skin he got after modification surgery.

This body modification of Toto and its procedure aired in gallery 2 in December 2023 as part of the residency program. Confined to my laps, over the course of a few short weekdays we see Toto, previously van Wendel, lose the power of speech.

He relied on my twin, who was always keeping the seat around us to 'translate' his last will. My twin verified that Toto, previously van Wendel, still wants to go through with the operation. The means of transition was dismembering his head, emptying the pulpit and the organs. As the patient holds his wife's hand, I stick my needle in the edge of his flesh that used to be attached to his neck muscles. My twin explains that he is slipping away, his heart is slowing, and his breathing is stopped.

Pause.

YEONG:

The camera pans from the patient's face at this point.

Pause.

YEONG:

This documentary will give a unique insight which will allow people to make more informed judgments.

YEONG hangs Toto's pink leash on a metal hook. Her twin finishes sewing chicken flesh onto the unknown man's skin.

End.