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Detail of **LUO JR-SHIN**'s *Syncing sinks*, 2019, sink, faucet, barrel, pump, pipe, fruit, and iodine solution, dimensions variable, at "Like a Urinal in a Nightclub," Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM), 2021. All images courtesy the artist and TFAM.

LUO JR-SHIN: "LIKE A URINAL IN A NIGHTCLUB"

[WEB REVIEW](#) BY CHRISTOPHER WHITFIELD
TAIPEI FINE ARTS MUSEUM

[TAIWAN](#)

AAP ISSUE 125

An unspoken truth: anyone that you meet in the nightclubs of Taipei would secretly rather be at Berghain. Of course, the things that we would secretly rather be are central to the experience of clubbing and the lives we lead at night. This sense of desirous aspiration saturated Luo Jr-Shin's "Like a Urinal in a Nightclub," wafting in the air and sticking the floors. In his first solo show at the Taipei Fine Arts Museum, the artist briefly paid homage to the inimitable Berlin nightclub via *Blinds (visible)* (2021), electronic slats that sporadically cracked open, mimicking those of Berghain's Panorama Bar, which every now and then—at the plummeting of a perfect beat—drench vampiric revelers in midday sunlight. Meanwhile, the Taipei sun illuminated a nightclub of Luo's own devising, a venue where desire was transformative, and queer alchemy was harnessed to explore the potentials of transmutation.

Luo's multi-room installation was not simply a recreation, but rather a restaging of experiences that resonate with the terms of his work. After all, what force propels one's body through the labyrinth of a party at 3AM, if not the compounding of yearning and alienation? In the belly of his club, Luo erected a tight knot of corridors, invoking the anxious pang of intestines. Thin plastic walls vaguely obscured the other bodies filtering their way through the system, while a muffled and sinister remix of Sister Sledge's disco essential "Lost in Music" played, seemingly always from elsewhere. At the entrance to the show a long crimson throat of a hallway thrummed with an urgent bassline, and threatened the memory of being buffeted between one's own drunkenness and the drunk bodies of others in the process of seeking relief in one form or another. More pertinent than the fidelity of recreation was Luo's effort to reinvigorate the club as a body, a subject through which to analyze the interactions and reactions that occur within.



Installation view of LUO JR-SHIN's *Urinal pavillion*, 2021, stainless steel, pigment made from snail shell, 3D printing, card, image, electromagnet, magnet, wire, and controller, dimensions variable, at "Like a Urinal in a Nightclub," TFAM, 2021.

Luo's fascination with the parallels between the interpersonal and the chemical guide the assemblage of his work. In fact, as testament to the metabolic processes that are always brewing within our bodies, the majority of the exhibition was decidedly lavatorial. The artist scrutinized the chain reaction through which liquor becomes revelry, piss, sweat, pheromones, and desire. In *Urinal pavillion* (2021), imposing steel troughs flanked the walls, their gutters littered with credit cards, photographs, and little orange pills that skittered to the beat. At the time of writing, the artist's website redirected to an online pharmacy pushing identical erectile dysfunction remedies, 84 cents a pop. Down the hall, the basins of bathroom sinks cradled fresh slices of oranges and lime. *Syncing sinks* (2019) appeared serene as juddering plastic barrels pumped iodine solution through their faucets in place of tap water. Together the works charted the self-perpetuating nature of the cycles that suffuse and alter our bodies and our spaces over time, one reaction necessitating another, and even the antiseptic solution eventually coloring the porcelain.



Partial installation view of LUO JR-SHIN's *Message II*, 2021, stainless steel, UV printing, LED light, resin, and cigarette, dimensions variable, at "Like a Urinal in a Nightclub," TFAM, 2021.

A conversation played out on the mirrors above Luo's sinks. *Message II* (2021) screengrabbed an anonymous chat-bubble that admits, "I feel like a urinal in a nightclub." Another replies, "It's been a while since I felt as sexy as that lol. Jealous." Just as the artist plays with the anthropomorphization of the nightclub, so too does he indulge in the objectification of the human subject, probing the ways bodies may be queered in the pursuit of a feeling. Luo's party was packed. Sandbags outfitted in sportswear and leather harnesses propped up the corridors. A ball-gag enjambed into the wall suggested one swallowed up by the pleasure of their own total submission to the club. A

scattering of stickers even introduced a mascot of sorts—a urinal with jovial eyes and wide open arms, their mouth overflowing gleefully with pee. It was a guest list that evidenced the full potential of the interactions that take place when the blinds are shut. Luo savvily framed the nightclub as a space where we are willed into change by longing and lust, human and venue alike forever reconstituted by the fine-print side effects of contact and exchange.

Luo Jr. Shin's *"Like a Urinal in a Nightclub"* is on view at Taipei Fine Arts Museum until November 28, 2021.

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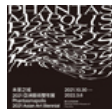
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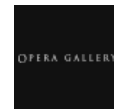
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