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Germany

Westfälischer Kunstverein

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Press Release, 24 June 2026

Steffani Jemison
Augur
27.6.–20.9.2026

Press Tour:
Thu, 25 June, 11 am (or by appointment)

Opening:
Fri, 26 June, 6 pm

A leap – and a void. An augur imagines the future, finding inspiration in the unpredictable gestures of flight. In Steffani Jemison's expansive exhibition, conditions of endurance and escape are linked in a continuous installation of sound, sculpture, drawing, and video.

The idea of moving within conditions of constraint strongly informs the practice of Steffani Jemison. Fugitivity has been a recurring concern in her visual and textual work, where flight does not appear as physical escape, but as a shifting condition of language, body, and thought. "[W]hat it is to flee and what it is to stay are entangled with what it is to fight".[1] The point of departure for her solo exhibition in Münster is the 'language of the birds', a concept found across spiritual, mystical, and literary traditions that describes a divine and perfect language accessible only to the initiated. What begins as a symbolic figure gradually unfolds into method – a way of listening for meanings and gestures that remain volatile.

The exhibition's title, for instance, invokes the ancient practice of reading meaning through the calls and trajectories of birds – forms of interpretation grounded in opacity and signs that elude (human) legibility. In resonance with Steven Feld's research on birdsong, voice, and ritual, the artist interrogates sound as a way of knowing and inhabiting the world. Bird calls emerge not simply as natural signals, but as sonic forms echoing human voices.[2]

This attention to forms of communication and movement is closely linked to the artist's engagement with hostile architecture. Through the inversion of mechanisms of deterrence and control – such as anti-bird spikes or bird-repelling devices – her work refunctions instruments of exclusion as tools for navigation. That which is carried as a burden might not be resolved but allowed to inhabit and utilise space differently. Conceived as a choreographic structure, the exhibition itself mirrors that dynamic, proposing a spatial arrangement that simultaneously restricts and demands mobility.

Augur is Steffani Jemison's first institutional solo exhibition in Germany. It is accompanied by a comprehensive public programme including workshops, readings, and screenings. The exhibition marks the second project within the Kunstverein's year-long research, exhibition, and discourse programme *The Puzzle's Pulled Apart*.

Curator: Theresa Roessler
Assistant Curator: Vivien Kämpf
Project Assistant: Ellen Feldmann

[1] Fred Moten, interview by Emmanuel Olunkwa, *November Magazine*, November 2025 https://www.novembermag.com/content/fred-moten/ [accessed 14 May 2026].

[2] See Steven Feld, *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression*, 3rd edn (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012).

Performance *Flight Theater*

In close collaboration with writer Quincy Flowers, Steffani Jemison will also develop a new iteration of the work *Flight Theater*, which was first presented in 2025 at the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver. *Flight Theater* is both a performance and an ongoing practice that formulates a poetic, multi-layered reflection on the desire to escape the earth – both figuratively and literally.

The performance at the Westfälischer Kunstverein will take place on Sun, 6 September. Further details will be announced shortly on the website. In addition, further presentations in an adapted form are planned for 2026/27 at The Kitchen in New York, where Steffani Jemison will open a solo exhibition at the end of the year.

Biography

Steffani Jemison (b. 1981, Berkley, California/US, living and working in Brooklyn, New York, US) is an interdisciplinary artist and writer. In dialogue with interlocutors (living and ancestral), her work connects mark-making, gesture, proposal, projection, movement, and document.

Steffani Jemison has presented solo exhibitions and commissioned performances at Lafayette Anticipations, Paris, FR; CAC Geneve, CH; JOAN Los Angeles, US; Mass MoCA, North Adams, US; Jeu de Paume, Paris, FR; CAPC Bordeaux, FR; MoMA, New York, US; LAXART, Los Angeles, US and other venues. Significant group exhibitions include *New Humans*, New Museum, New York, US, 2026; *Flight into Egypt*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US, 2024; *Greater New York*, MoMA PS1, New York, US, 2021/22 and the Whitney Biennial, New York, US, 2019. Steffani Jemison's work is part of many public collections, including the MoMA, the Guggenheim Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum, the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, US; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., US; the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL; Castello di Rivoli, Turin, IT; and the Art Institute of Chicago, US. Her novella *A Rock, A River, A Street* was published by Primary Information in 2022; she has also written for Artforum and The Brooklyn Rail.

Programme

Wed, 24 June, 6 pm
Lecture by Steffani Jemison as part of the *Münster Lectures* at the University of Fine Arts Münster

Fri, 26 June, 6 pm
Opening with an Introduction by Theresa Roessler

Wed, 8 July, 6 pm
Curator's tour

Fri, 10 July, from 5:30 pm
Introductory tours as part of *Museumsfest an der Pferdegasse*

Sat, 11 July, 11 am–1 pm & 2–5 pm
Children's workshops (ages 8–12) by Sophie Isabel Urban (Registration required)

Mon, 20 July, 9 pm
Screening of *La noire de…* (1966) by Ousmane Sembène
In cooperation with *filmclub münster* at Schloßtheater Münster

Thu, 30 July, 6 pm
Through the Eyes of … Nicholas Grafia

Sun, 2 August, 6 pm
guesting [ˈgɛstɪŋ] no. 5

Sun, 6 September, 4 pm
Performance ***Flight Theater*** with Quincy Flowers

Press Images

Press images are available for download at the following link:
https://t1p.de/r00i6

Press Contact

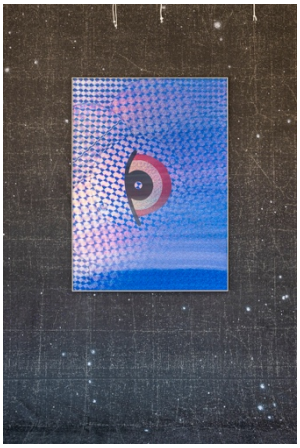
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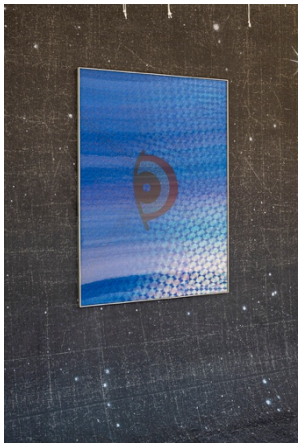
Steffani Jemison, *Black Utopia (Roots)*, 2017/2022
Courtesy the artist and Consonni Radziszewski (Lisbon, Milan, Warsaw), Annet Gelink (Amsterdam) and Greene Naftali (New York)



Steffani Jemison, *Augur*, 2026, Installation view, Westfälischer Kunstverein
Photo: Thorsten Arendt



Steffani Jemison, *Untitled (Same Time),* 2025
Courtesy the artist and Consonni Radziszewski (Lisbon, Milan, Warsaw)
Photo: Thorsten Arendt



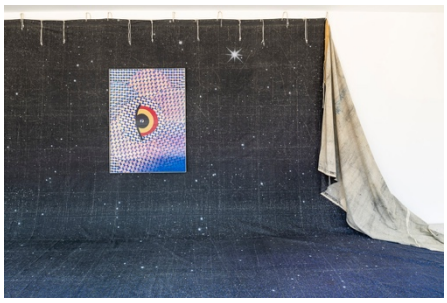
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Steffani Jemison, *Untitled (Abode)*, 2026
Foto: Thorsten Arendt



Steffani Jemison, *Augur*, 2026, Installation view, Westfälischer Kunstverein
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Steffani Jemison, *Untitled (Way in the middle of the air),* 2026
Foto: Thorsten Arendt



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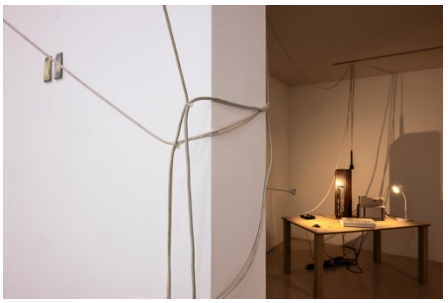
Steffani Jemison, *Augur*, 2026, Installation view, Westfälischer Kunstverein
Photo: Thorsten Arendt



Steffani Jemison, *Untitled (Broken Fall)*, 2008
Courtesy die Künstlerin and Consonni Radziszewski (Lisbaon, Milan, Warsaw), Annet Gelink (Amsterdam) und Greene Naftali (New York)
Photo: Thorsten Arendt



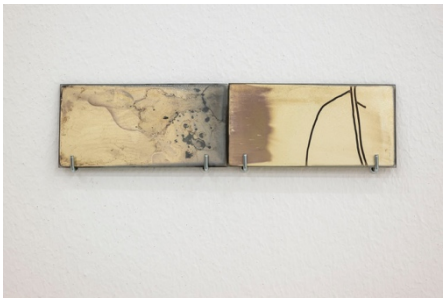
Steffani Jemison, *Untitled (Broken Fall),* 2008, Video still
Courtesy die Künstlerin and Consonni Radziszewski (Lisbaon, Milan, Warsaw), Annet Gelink (Amsterdam) und Greene Naftali (New York)
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Steffani Jemison, *Untitled (Way in the middle of the air),* 2026
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