

Works

Solo exhibition by Benedikte Bjerre

August 19 – October 2, 2022

Benedikte Bjerre works. Machines work and when they don't work anymore, you buy new machines that work. In order to buy machines you have to work. We color our air.

Doesn't a clock employ any working person and doesn't a person employ a machine and don't machines employ incredible amounts of people. The straight road to time on your hands is paved with domestic appliances and paved with time from the hands of others.

Works is an image of work and in shape of a physical movement (the replacement of one work for another during the exhibition) a life trajectory is exposed. Routes between work and home, from working girl to home girl can be traversed with joy or devastation and when isn't this girl at work. What is more invisible, her work or her works.

Working girls are their own free girls, they're oppressed girls and 'undomesticated' too. They can still look like harassment or killjoy erotique. Supposedly, working girls are a societal goal, but they're also a certain enemy of world-subverting dollar growth since their bodies often grow new bodies. If this is not ultimate and actual productivity then what is. United uteruses worldwide facilitating stock markets and board meetings and factories and unimpressive CEOs until the actual end of time. A working girl is never not a working girl, no amount of won/claimed hedonism or alleged liberation can end her workday.

This space is a space of employees and employers and value. It shuttles between potential careers or fatiguing household lives. Automatized substitutes of manual labor inhabit the floor as introverted testimonies to the fact that a human being is not cut out for intense maximization. Things with buttons are, however: 'on' is global economy's kink. Melitta knows just how to brew your mandatory production liquid, she does it faster and tastier than your egoistic hands and she is a she because what name is Melitta and who brewed the executives' coffees before her. And so the exhibition smells like a fast morning and a job while also being an actual job: whose work is the coffee.

An image of primarily paid productivity is replaced with an image of primarily unpaid productivity. And indeed, both productivities are hyper-reproductive. After office days laundry nights arrive, laundry eternities of keeping up with a never not dirty existence. Miele is always better, this high-end German godfather of mechanical home staff. Hamster wheel galore wrapped in reliable design and this particular Miele is even flashing homeware like jewels or a disease. When bronze diapers sprout from the machine surface like art, the prefab atmosphere receives another quality. Is it an aura.

How easy to imagine these two displays as a dream of blurring distinctions between production and reproduction. How convenient to perceive secretarial office-core and tidying home-core as two opposite ends of a hardcore spectre in which any life takes place. Production is eternal and it's deeply shared, it's a persistent circuit of maintenance and downfall, yet we bulge with attentive desire as soon as production is white-cubed.

Someone's work is always other people's work and where is the artist when her machines work.

By Nanna Friis