

From 6 February to 24 April 2016 the kestnergesellschaft presents a new project by the artist Tobias Madison (\*1985, lives in Zurich and Los Angeles) with the exhibition *»das blut, im fruchtfleisch gerinnend beim birnenbiss«*.

Madison's artistic practice resists simple categorizations; he acts as a curator, author, and operator of exhibition spaces and cinemas, among other pursuits, and often works in different collaborative constellations. His work as an artist focuses on fundamental questions of self-determination and the freedoms of art, the individual, and institutions today.

The exhibition at the kestnergesellschaft is centered on a video work with the same title which was created at the kestnergesellschaft in close cooperation with Marin Eze, a drama teacher, Renate Dressler, director of the Protestant nursery in the Hainholz district of Hanover and a group of children who previously attended the nursery.

Madison's video work is based on the film *»Emperor Tomato Ketchup«* by the Japanese director Shuji Terayama, which was created in 1971 as a reaction to and critique of the political dogmatism of the burgeoning Maoist student movement. By depicting a revolution by children over adults, the film uses political satire to expose the movement's stated goals as a repetition of the historical roots of totalitarian systems. In Terayama's film, ideology and depiction exist as separate entities, as an image and a marginal commentary, and one becomes a medium on which the other is projected.

*»Das Blut, im Fruchtfleisch gerinnend beim Birnenbiss«* at first presents itself as a remake of the original film, but it actually follows the logic of an experiment in which a group of children and the political concepts projected onto them are measured against each other. Through the interwoven family structures of the children and the teachers, who are also part of the film, the discussion necessarily also expands to include approaches to education and the life paths that they produce.

The contrast between the two films results in a form of narrative that highlights questions and dependencies between the formation of identity, the teaching of ideologies, self-presentation, and possibilities of misuse – tropes that are central to both the art institution and the institution of education – without resolving them.

The interior designer Mathias Renner (\*1983, lives in London) is responsible for the set design of the film and also for the design of the exhibition spaces at the kestnergesellschaft for this specific exhibition. His design is based on Madison's catalog of works as well as the structural logic and economy of the film.

To accompany the exhibition, Madison also commissioned a series of portraits from the photographer Mathilde Agius (\*1988, lives in Zurich) which circulate as press materials, advertisements, and posters. The pictures show a professional child model in various poses presenting a banner with »LUSH« printed on it. These pictures are the continuation of an early viral marketing campaign by the band »Lush« for their album »*Loveline*« (1996). The band is associated with the musical genre »shoegaze«, a movement from the late 1980s and early 1990s that advocated introspection as well as ambiguous views of experiences and resisted a clearly identifiable attitude with loud volume and dense, effect-laden sounds.

Tobias Madison (\*1985 in Basel, lives in Zurich and Los Angeles) graduated in 2011 from the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). Already during his studies, he exhibited in renowned international art institutions, including the Kunsthalle Basel (2007, 2010), The Modern Institute (Glasgow, 2013, 2014), Kunsthalle Zürich (2013), Fridericianum (Kassel, 2013), Carnegie Museum of Art (Pittsburgh, 2013).

Tobias Madison will leave a Coptic death mask at the kestnergesellschaft for the duration of the exhibition. This »Extra« will provide another lens through which to view the core themes of the exhibition and will be integrated into the accompanying public outreach programs at the kestnergesellschaft.

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