

Under the title *The Wheel of Life* Jasmin Werner will present a selection of new works in the Remise of the Kunstverein Braunschweig. In her sculptures and installations the artist brings together symbols, rituals, and ambivalences from culture, religion, and sexuality in self-designed (reference) systems. The result is a subtle and ambiguous game of codes: disguise and desire, innocence and sin, eternal youth and mortality, rise and fall. The iconologically charged stairway serves as her leitmotif here. Drawing on the tradition of the stairway as an element of prestige and distinction in architecture, Jasmin Werner's modular systems of aluminium and threaded rods symbolise wobbly career ladders, individual life plans, and social status.

Jasmin Werner's research into the symbolism and cultural history of the stairway led her to the field of scalalogy [German: Scalalogie] and its founder Professor Dr.-Ing. Friedrich Mielke. The Friedrich-Mielke-Institut für Scalalogie at the Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule Regensburg is devoted to research and teaching in all areas that are technologically, artistically, literarily, philosophically, historically, or otherwise intellectually concerned with the stairs of our world. The institute presides over a unique and internationally renowned collection of original stairway components as well as numerous models of designs and stairways that have been realized in varying dimensions and materials. Jasmin Werner integrates a selection of these architectural models into the exhibition: modified conveyor belts, seemingly unstable escalators and conveyors made of stamp rolls on which the individual stairway models are presented as part of a production cycle. At its end: a neo-liberal platitude slogan printed on t-shirts. "You were born an original, don't die a copy" recalls a factory of desires and dreams where everything seems possible, namely contemporary capitalism, in which newly won freedoms consist of an abundance of possibilities and culminate in a self-centered drive for personal fulfilment.

Jasmin Werner's *Ambivalent Escalator (Sanssouci)* and *Ambivalent Escalator (Beim Laufen die Schuhe besohlen)* are continuations of her *Ambivalent Ladder* series from 2017. Combined with stairway elements, the conveyor belts, a technology that has been used to transport goods since the industrial era, have been transformed into non-functional escalators. These rolling stairs were developed as a way of transporting people towards the end of the 19th century and soon became common in shopping centers and subway stations, which were supposed to stimulate the economy. The mechanic noises of the conveyor belts on the Remise's ground floor are mixed together with the accompanying soundwork *Stepping Sequence* by Bradley Davies.

The rollers in *The Frightened Gods Of Fortune, Cylindrical Stamps* quote early cylindrical seals.

According to tradition, these were the major kind of seal in the Middle East. The representations engraved into the cylindrical seal's lateral surface are important iconographic sources. They show battle scenes between humans and animals, demonstrating the strength and superiority of their owners. Jasmin Werner has converted the seal into stamps, which appear as part of the conveyor belt and as stamp prints in the exhibition (*The Frightened Gods Of Fortune, Conveyor Belt*). Mounted to the walls vertically, they thus become prayer wheels (*The Frightened Gods Of Fortune, Prayer Wheel I + II*). This series of works draws on Robert Rauschenberg's eponymous work from 1981.

*The Wheel of Life* promises a life in perfect balance. In guidebooks, it often appears as a graphic tool for self-optimization, whereas in Buddhism this depiction presents elaborate symbolic images of the different stages of life, from birth to reincarnation. The exhibition creates a portrait of the subject of capitalism, searching for happiness, freedom, and success somewhere between consumption, creativity, and spirituality, between competition and self-actualization.

## SCALALOGIA

On the occasion of the exhibition, a catalog will be published by the Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König in cooperation with the Friedrich-Mielke-Institut für Scalalogie. Drawing on the format of the book series "Scalalogia – Schriften zur internationalen Treppenforschung" ["Scalalogia – Writings on International Stairway Research"], which was published in 20 volumes in total by Friedrich Mielke, the exhibition catalog will include installation views, photographs of single works, and texts that deal with aspects regarding the history of art and architecture in Jasmin Werner's practice as well as images and descriptions of the architectural models on view.

With contributions by Miriam Bettin (Kunstverein Braunschweig), Philipp Kleinmichel (Zeppelin Universität), Harry Thorne (Associate editor, frieze), Sophie Schlosser (Friedrich-Mielke-Institut für Scalalogie), Chloe Stead (Freelance writer and critic).

Jasmin Werner (\*1987 in Troisdorf) lives and works in Cologne. In 2016 she completed her studies at the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main. Her works have been shown in solo exhibitions at Gillmeier Rech, Berlin (2017), M.I / mi | glissé, Berlin (2016), and RM, Auckland (2014) as well as in group exhibitions at Braunsfelder, Cologne (2018), Saloon, Brussels (2018), and the Folkwang Museum, Essen (2017). In 2017, Jasmin Werner completed a residency at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul. The presentation in the Remise at the Kunstverein Braunschweig is the artist's first institutional solo exhibition.

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