

annet gelink gallery

PRESS RELEASE

TOSS

STEFFANI JEMISON

19 February – 16 April 2022

How do the things we touch, touch us back? How do those exchanges change us? How do objects become extensions of our bodies and our minds? How do the things around us shape our movements?

-Steffani Jemison, 2021

Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to present *Toss*, Steffani Jemison's first solo show at the gallery, following her presentation at the Bakery in 2020.

Encompassing a variety of media including video, performance and sculpture, Jemison's practice is rooted in research. Through time-based, photographic, and discursive platforms Jemison examines "progress" and its alternatives. Her work exists and functions in concomitance with limits and structures of narrative storytelling and linear time, and by keeping in mind the ontological, Jemison explores anew the inherited narratives that form our perception of the world.



Steffani Jemison, *Toss*, 2021

Central to the show is the video work *Toss* (2021), which portrays the gymnast Alexis Page performing a series of actions common to rhythmic gymnastics and tumbling – a flip, a toss, a spin, a roll, a trap. Instead of utilizing the typical props, she uses found and everyday objects including a mallet, a tripod, a branch, and a canvas wig head. Several scenes feature a dizzying classical harp. The protagonist looks directly into the lens and tosses the camera. The narration weaves between describing the qualities necessary for performing the choreography, interspersed with personal reflections and aims at translating the motion behind the physical machine of the body. Through the choreography of the gymnast, Jemison investigates movement outside premeditations and the complex and reciprocal interface between body and object.

The incessant movement of *Tumbler* (2021) changes its contents, allowing them to evolve into smoother and more-refined forms. Here, Jemison projects the ontological question on the object themselves: what is their function? Will their function persist once the form is changed?

The Bakery will be filled with signs and drawings that take shape into a series of works on glass. The glass series derives from the unsolved case of Ricky McCormick, a man found in a Missouri field in 1999 with encrypted notes in his pockets. McCormick was thought by his parents to be illiterate and his notes, as well as his murder, remain yet unsolved. Here, Jemison works with an enlarged section of McCormick's notes and uses artificial intelligence algorithms to speculatively fill missing material in the image, producing a repetitive, layered final picture. Specifically, the prints refer to a section of the note that presents what appears to be the letters 'L' 'A' 'N' 'D'.

Toss encapsulates Steffani Jemison's modus operandi and practice: it exists and develops as a continuous choreography and a vocabulary that constantly needs to be reinvented. Movement evolves into a metaphor for life and about concepts of agility, growth, fluency, balance, and resilience.

From March 3 until March 5 2022, the new contemporary art fair **Art Island** will take place at Fortress Island in IJmuiden. On this occasion, Annet Gelink Gallery will present Jemison's video work *Figure 8* (2021), which is also on view in the group show *Closer* at **Kunstverein Düsseldorf** until April 24, 2022. The video describes the movement of the camera, which moves around the body of the performer, as Pages muses aloud on continuity and fluency of gesture. Until April 2022, Steffani Jemison's *Similitude* (2019) will be on show at the fifth edition of *Greater New York*, a group show organized by **Ps1 MoMA** New York.

Steffani Jemison (1981, Berkeley, California, USA) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Jemison's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Solo exhibitions and performance commissions include the Stedelijk Museum, MASS MoCA, Jeu de Paume, CAPC Bordeaux, the Museum of Modern Art, Nottingham Contemporary, LAXART, and the RISD Museum. Collaborative and group presentations include the Whitney Biennial 2019, MCA Chicago, CAC Geneva, ICA Philadelphia, Brooklyn Museum, Studio Museum in Harlem, New Museum, and others. Her work is in the public collections of the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the Studio Museum in Harlem, and the Kadist Foundation.