



Benedikte Bjerre, *EatPrayLove*, 2021, Miele washing machine, bronze casts, 35 x 25 1/2 x 30 3/4".

COPENHAGEN
Benedikte Bjerre

PALACE ENTERPRISE
Vester Farimagsgade 6 street level
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Work is ubiquitous but, for the most part, invisible. Production processes and their impact on social inequality and the global ecology tend to vanish into the objects that make up our everyday life. In particular, the reproductive labor of childbirth and nurturing—types of care typically associated with women—remains a persistent blind spot of Western political economy. In Benedikte Bjerre's first show at Palace Enterprise, aptly titled "Works," the artist investigates the complex dynamics between structures of production and reproduction and the effects of their various symbologies on artistic practice.

The exhibition is staged in two acts, each presenting a single sculpture. The first, *Working Girls in the Age After Reproduction*, all works 2021, replicates an earlier piece by the artist so that it appears now as a monozygotic pair. A single portable archival shelf hosts two identical office-storage units, each crowned by Melitta coffee machines that busily brew coffee throughout the hours the show is open to the public. Reproduction factors in here literally, in the sense of copying an existing work, but it can also be read into it symbolically, in the sense of mitosis. Bjerre thus picks up questions regarding an artwork's authenticity first raised by Walter Benjamin, but she adds a feminist perspective that proposes reproduction as an act of care.

For the second sculpture, *Eat, Pray, Love*, Bjerre has attached several bronze casts of used diapers to a Miele washing machine. While the coffee machines were active, churning out a beverage symbolic of productivity, the appliance in this second part of the show lies dormant. The bronze objects clamp onto the gleaming surface like parasites, seemingly attacking its optimized German efficiency. Through these gestures, the artist accords the dedicated, reflective, and arduous processes intrinsic to care the value traditionally reserved for the (male) stroke of genius, reclaiming reproductive labor as a method of artistic production.

— Francesca Astesani