

PICKS 5 May 2009

## Nora Schultz

KÖLNISCHER KUNSTVEREIN

Die Brücke, Hahnenstraße 6

April 3–June 7

Nora Schultz's exhibition is littered with optical tricks. The title, "10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0," is a case in point: not so much a verbal handle as a numerical pattern to be recognized instantly, rather than read. Photographs, slides, and found objects are presented upside down or back to front, estranged by simple acts of misuse. *Fernrohr* (Telescope), 2009, is a section of a spiral staircase that Schultz salvaged from the demolition of the neighboring building. It rests on the curved edge of two steps with the cross section of the central pole pointing out at the window, as if to spy on the heavy equipment at work.

Metal poles (some also salvaged) have been cut, bent, and strung from a series of walls with black rope. They stretch out and curve around the space like a disjointed balustrade. Each sculpture is titled with museological language adopted from James Clifford's critical study of ethnography *The Predicament of Culture* (1988). *Always Hold On*, 2009, quotes an image from the book, drawing parallels with archaeological digs and anthropological expeditions.

While numbers, letters, units of measurement, quantifying and classifying systems are recurrent themes, Schultz's work exhibits a gravitational pull toward the antirational. Objects, images, and symbols are estranged and translated, inverting the cognitive process and interrogating its linguistic basis.

— Michelle Cotton



**Nora Schultz, *Zwangslagen (Hergestelltes Gleichgewicht) (Predicament [Produced balance])*, 2009**, chromed steel tube, rope, found object, dimensions variable. Installation view.