

Portfolio

Nikolai Gumbel





the inner edge (a provisional non-archive), 2023
research project and installation

Joseph Schneller, born in 1878, trained as a draughtsman and worked for the Royal Bavarian Railway Company. In 1907 he became a patient at a sanatorium near Munich, where he remained until his death in 1943. During this time he produced finely rendered drawings which became part of the Prinzhorn Collection in Heidelberg. After revisiting Schneller's work in the archive several times, the symbols and traces in his drawings led to this work as an attempt to give a voice to Schneller as an artist, but also as a contextualisation of the institutional settings surrounding his work, the psychiatry and the archive.

One of his works is called Leiterfalle and depicts a detailed construction of a trap placed on top of a ladder. Using the exact measurements, Leiterfalle is taken from the drawing into the room, becoming one element of the installation.

The inner edge was conceived in close collaboration with the Prinzhorn Collection in Heidelberg.

left and previous page
Leiterfalle, 2023, cast aluminium, fabric, screw, 100 x 60 x 5 cm

Installation view: Diploma exhibition, Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, 2023



the inner edge – a provisional non-archive
2023
Installation view, Academy of Fine Arts Munich









Explanation! (Intensives Kratzen der Augennerven von innen heraus)

2023
1080p, 2:31 min

<https://vimeo.com/803925396>







Monstra Astra
cast aluminium, mdf
20x15x10 cm, 15x10x5 cm
2022

The first images to appear on Plate I of Aby Warburg's ‚Bilderatlas Mnemosyne‘ are four photographs of Babylonian sheep liver models. These clay objects, covered with a codified geometric structure, were central to Mesopotamian divination practices. Using a clay model, fortune tellers could learn how to read a real sheep's liver. On the one hand, the reading of the organs, the view into the intestines, made it possible to predict the future or even artificial situations, such as the outcome of a game of chance. On the other hand, sheep livers were used to observe astronomical phenomena, constellations, solar and lunar eclipses, and even meteorites. In these objects, anatomy and astronomy meet and overlap in a paradoxical double image in which the palpation of the innermost is superimposed on a view of the distance. This work translates some of the ancient models into possible contemporary artefacts, bridging cultural narratives and potential uses.

Installation view: Januar, group show, class of Alexandra Bircken, Goldberg Galerie, Munich, 2022



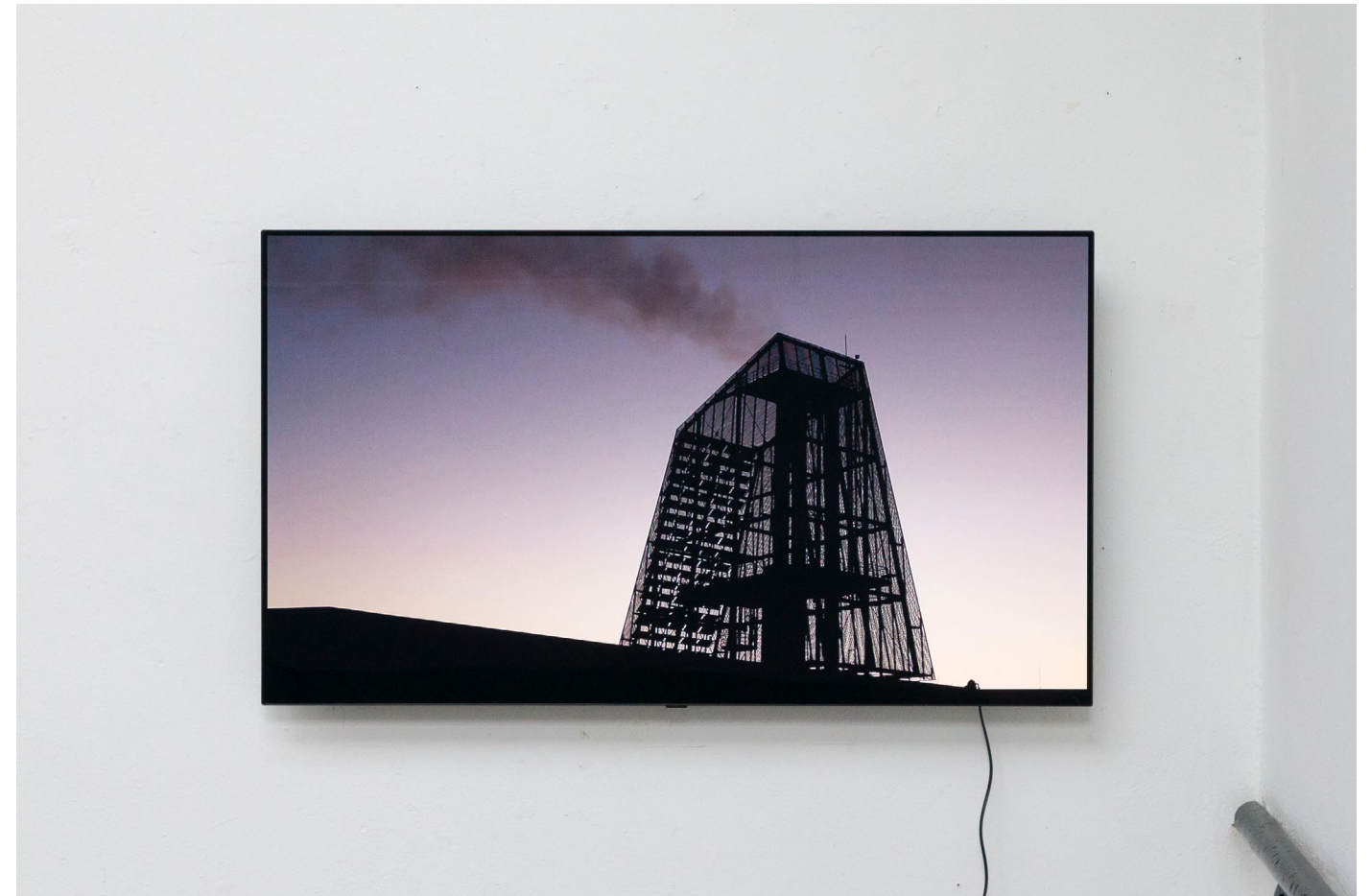
Monstra Astra Podium, 2022, mdf, 140 x 120 x 50 cm

Liver Poster, 2022, digital print on paper, 59,4 x 42 cm

In response to an invitation to design a podium, a wooden structure was conceived as a platform for writers to read their poetry. Two cast aluminium objects appeared to be paperweights, but closer inspection revealed their structural quality, derived from ancient sheep liver models. In Mesopotamian divination practices, the liver was considered to be directly connected to the tongue, or to say that the liver was the tongue. Speech, as the act of speaking, could not be separated from its visceral components. Therefore, in divination, the liver served as an indicator for „telling the truth“, i.e. the truth of one’s feelings, which can be traced back to the German proverb „frei von der Leber weg reden“. The series takes place in the public archive of the Kunstverein München. Two posters depicting one of the livers marked the transitional zone of the setting between the entrance and the archive.

Installation views: meine drei lyrischen ichs, 27. Ausgabe, mit Wolfram Lotz, Sibylla Vricic Hausmann, Jennifer de Negri, Kunstverein München (Archivraum)





Mnemosyne memory space (for Monstra Astra)

2022

3:07 min, 1080p, sound

<https://vimeo.com/670648521>

Installation views: Januar, group show, class of Alexandra Bircken, Goldberg Galerie, Munich, 2022



untitled (mobile), 2022, metal, 500 x 200 x 50 cm

Installation view: fruit of the gloom, annual exhibition, Academy of Fine Arts Munich, 2022



untitled (mobile), 2022, detail

untitled, 2022, inkjet print and pencil on paper, mdf, cardboard, glue, metal, screws, 35 x 27 x 5 cm



if my schoolbook didn't look the way it used to, if my tongue didn't feel what I was told

2022

digital print, wax

10 x 10 cm, 24 pages, edition of 20

Installation views: hollow shells, shallow holes, group show, kunstverein circolo, ortisei (IT)



Technology Drawings

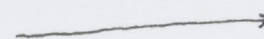
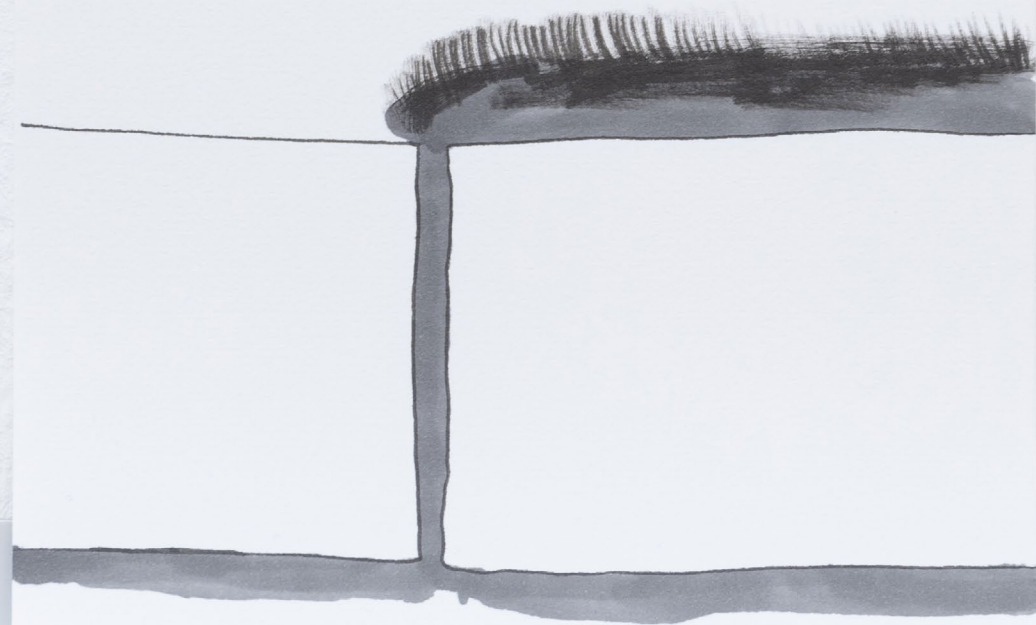
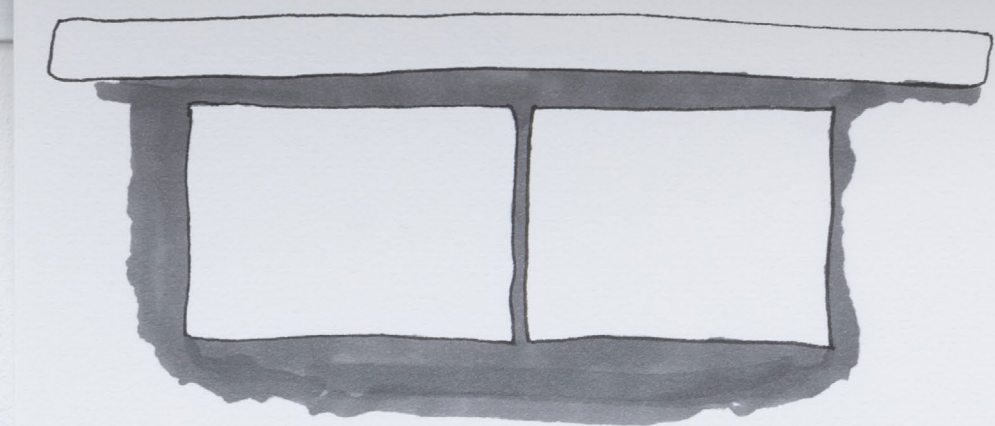
2021

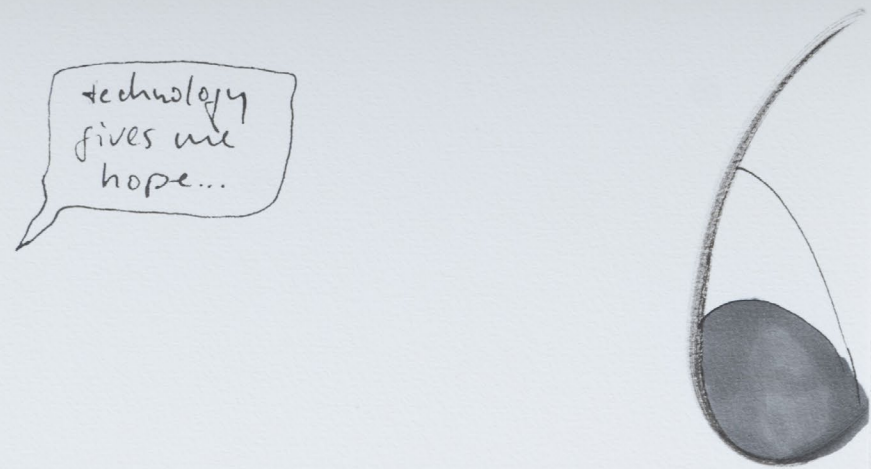
aluminium, fineliner, marker on paper

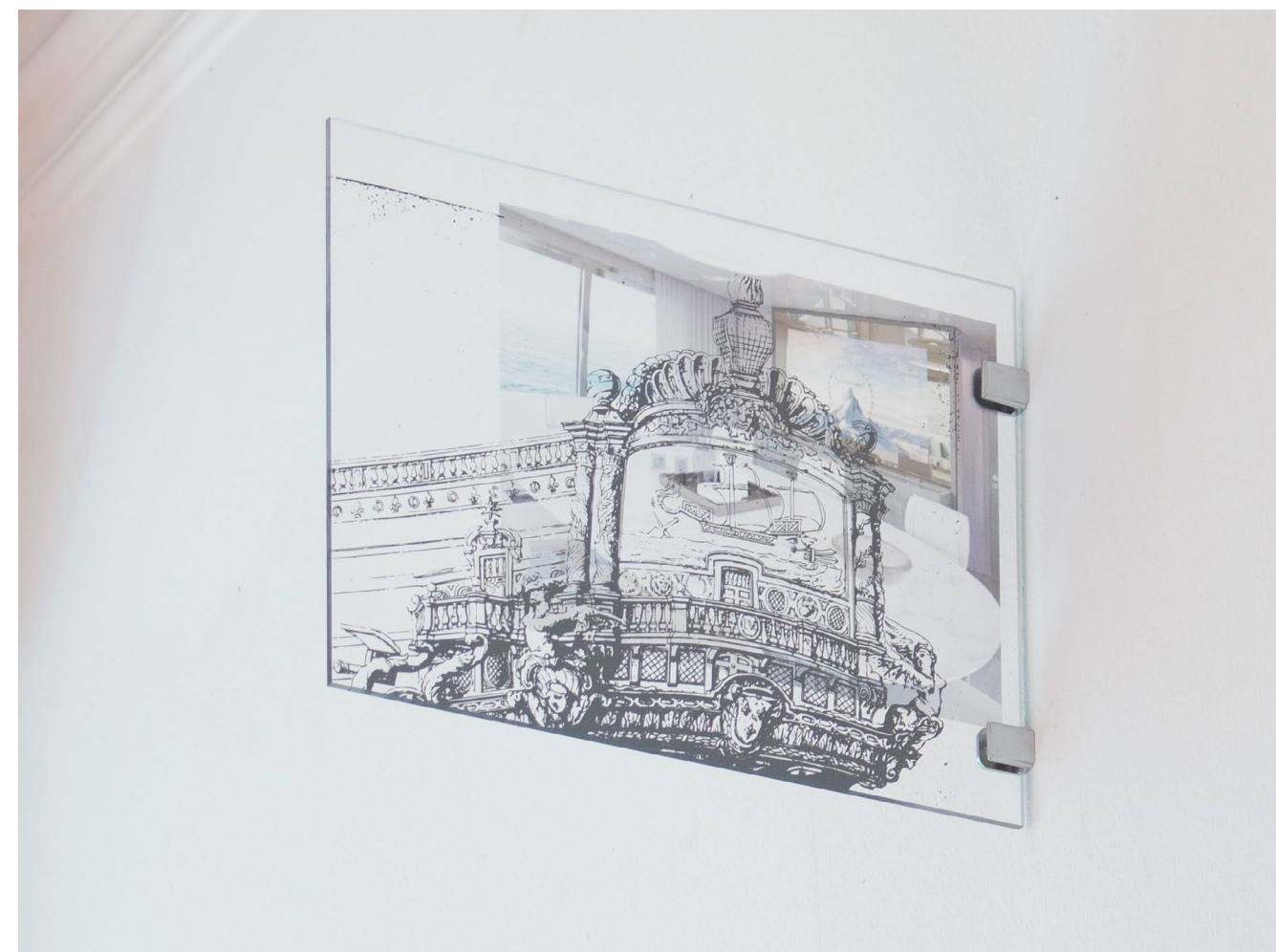
200 x 500 x 21 cm, 21 x 14,8 cm each

Installation views: To be successful in hunting think like a prey, group show, class of Alexandra Bircken, Kunstpavillon München, 2021









old game, new decor

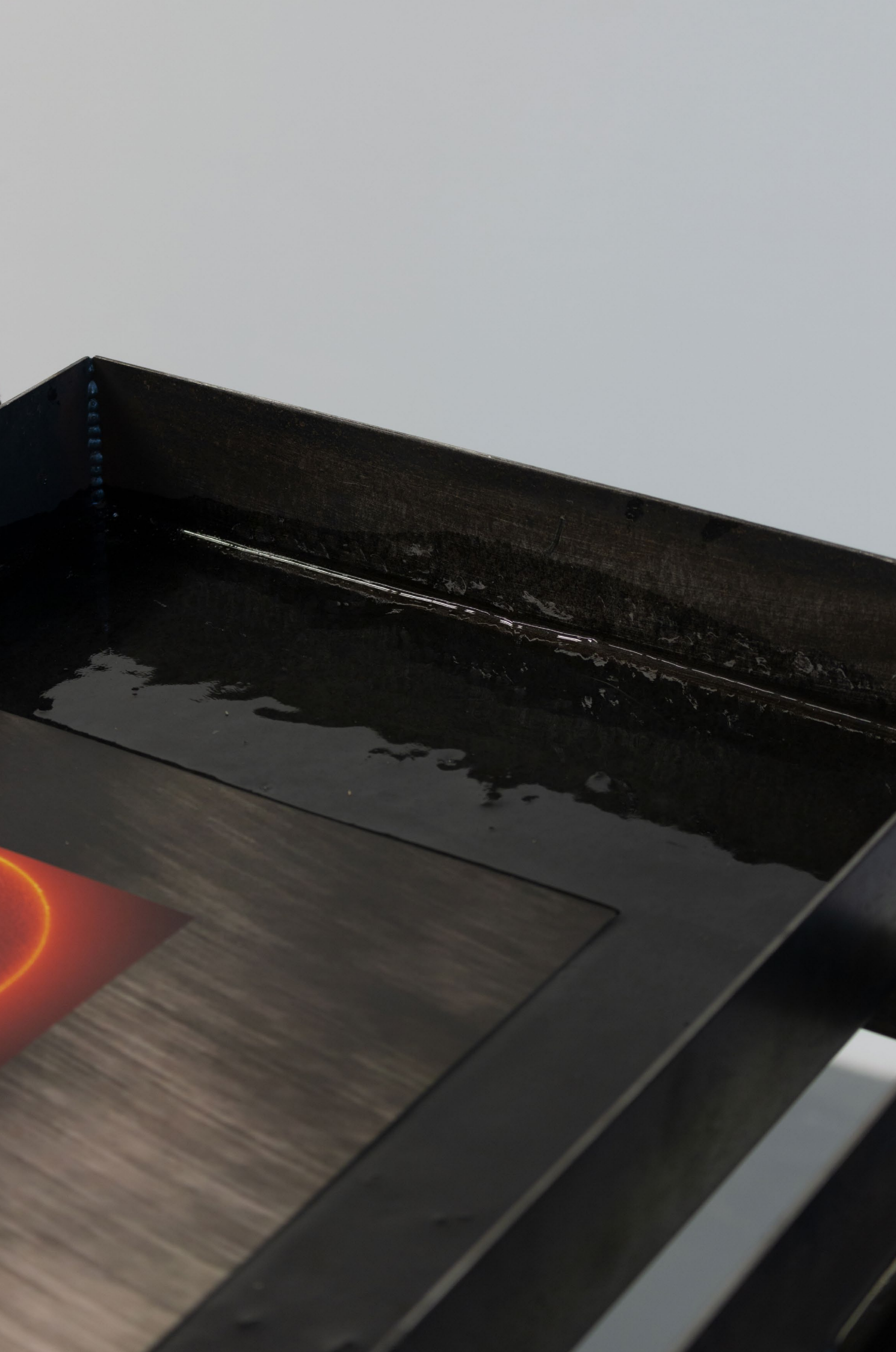
2021

UV-print on plexi

30 x 40 cm each

This work is based on researching archival prints by Marseille based sculptor and painter Pierre Puget (1620–1694). The prints, which served as drafts for naval decoration, are juxtaposed with screenshots taken from the website yachtworld.com.

Installation views: Salon du Salon, Marseille, 2021



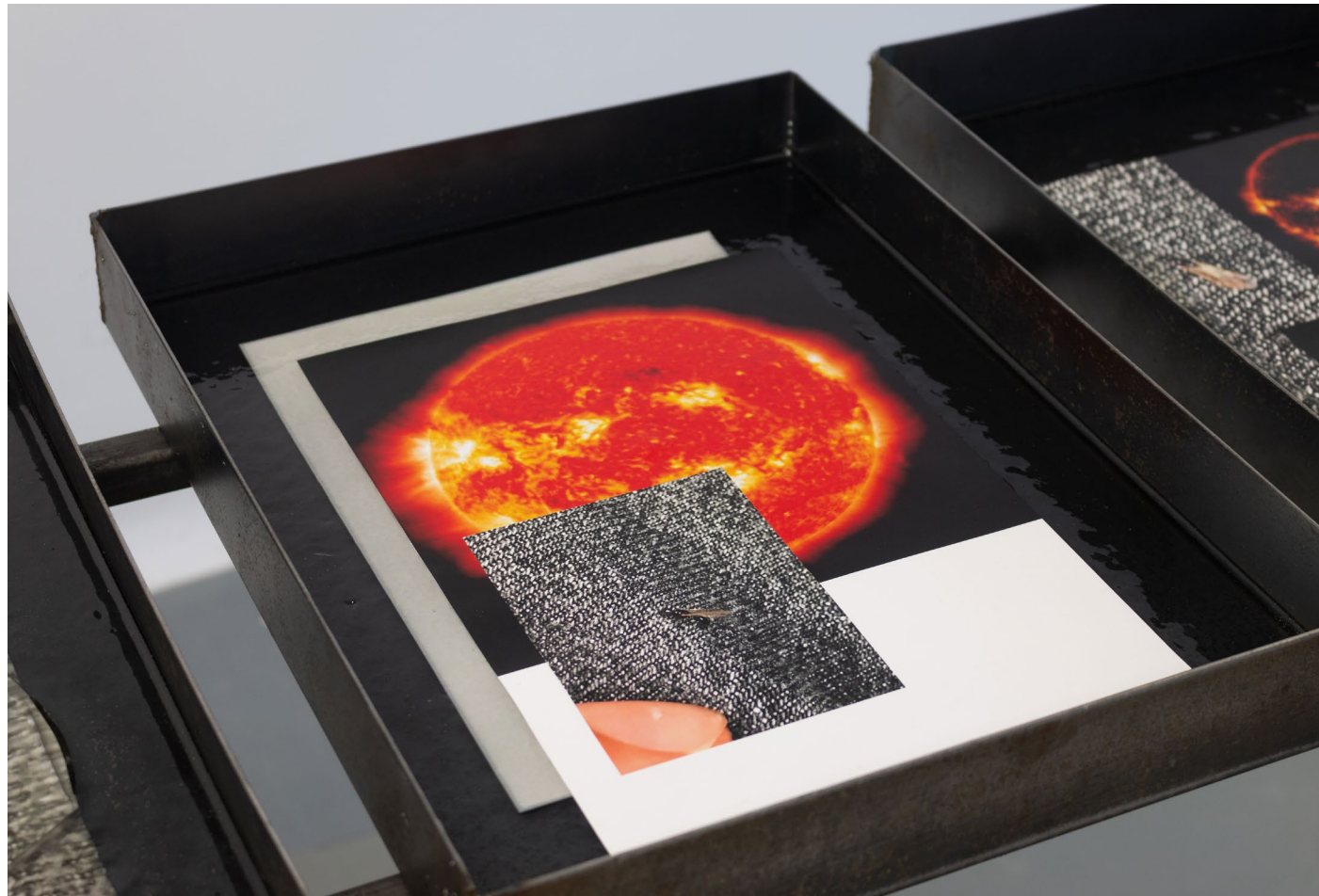
untitled (retinal suns)

2021

iron, resin, digital prints on paper

180 x 50 x 80 cm, 30 x 40 x 50 cm each

Installation views: dosmares, Marseille, 2021





On Sight Pavillon

2020

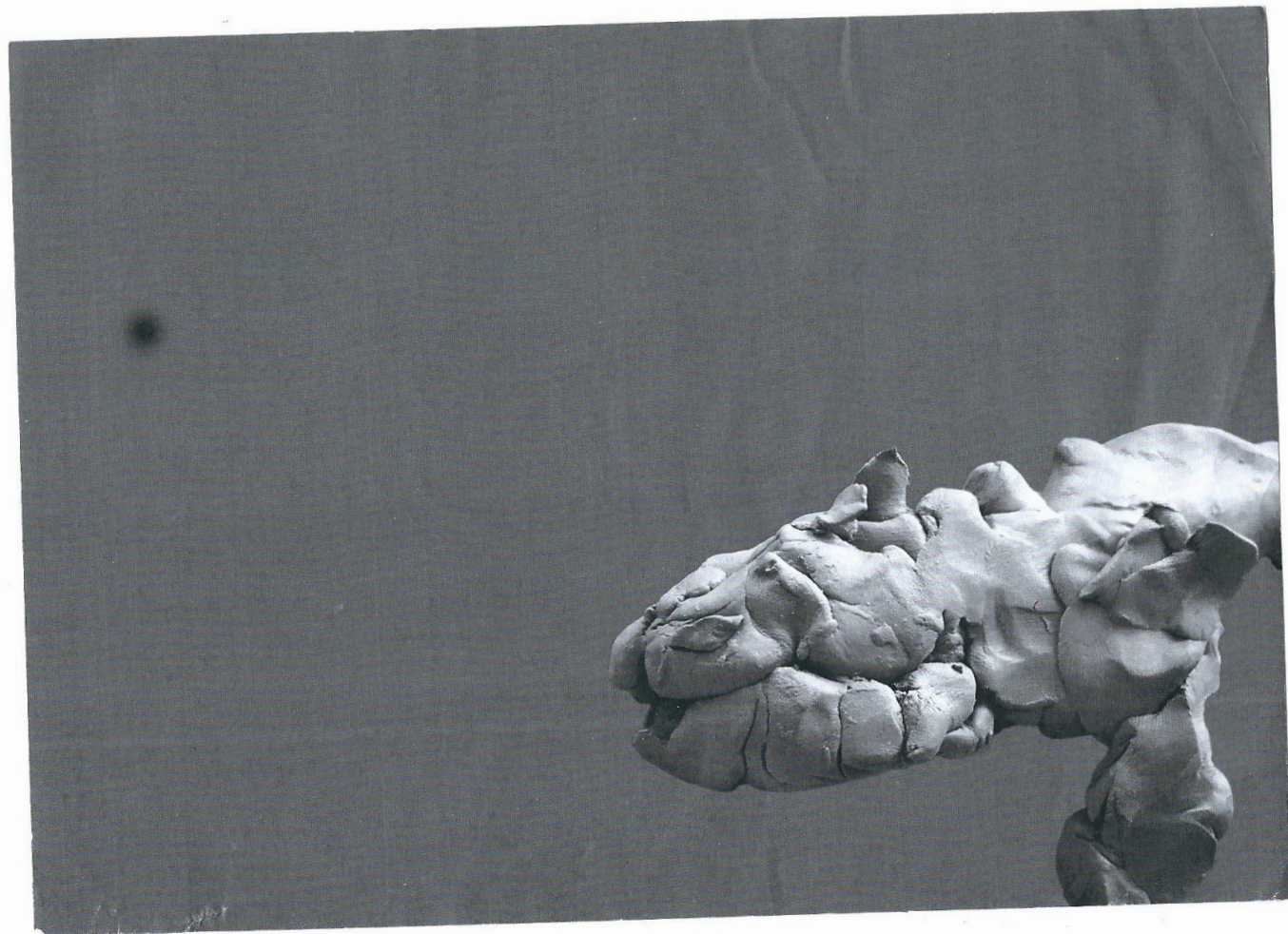
Latex print on PVC, aluminium tubes, cables ties, tablet, aluminium plate
dimensions variable

Installation views: The River and the City, public art project by the class of Alexandra Bircken, 2020



retrospective exploration scan
digital scanned drawings, print on adhesive foil
dimensions variable
2019/2022 (ongoing)

In 2019, I spent several weeks at the Prinzhorn Collection in Heidelberg. Over the course of this research period various drawings were conceived as a reaction to the drawings in the archive. Scans of these drawings were enlarged and printed on adhesive foil which then can be placed on different structures.



Das schwarze Loch, 2019
milchstrasse, Munich (solo)

untitled (gaze), 2019, transparent foil, tape, 150 x 150 cm

untitled (cut out), 2019, latex print on PVC, eloxated aluminum, straps, cable ties, 160 x 200 cm

untitled (black hole), 2019, acrylic, unfired clay, laquered chipboard, stickers, screws, 75 x 60 x 22 cm

untitled (weight), 2019, pendulum clock weight, acrylic glass, 26 x 14 x 8,5 cm

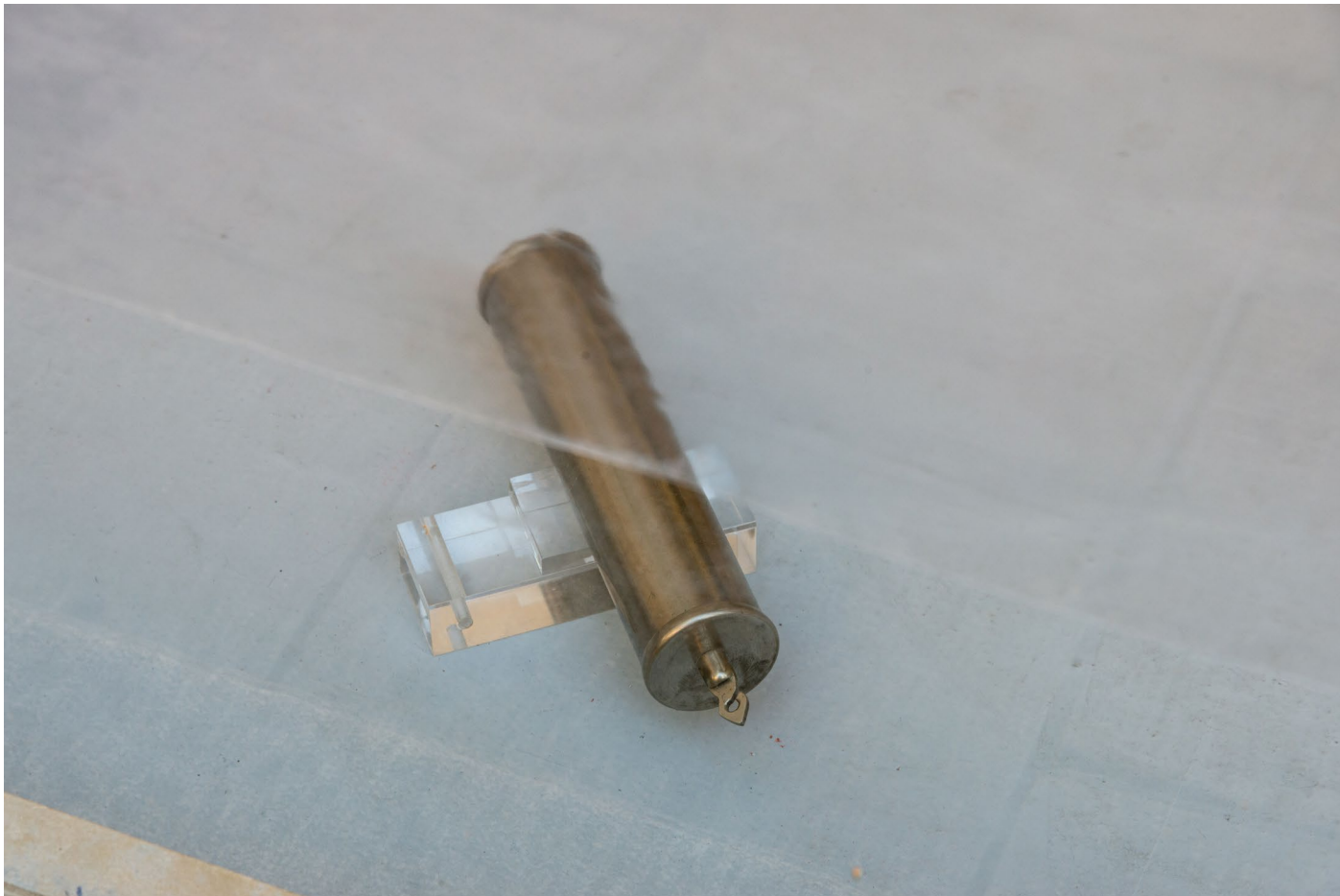
untitled (OVGC), 2019, collaboration with Berthold Reiss, adhesive foil, dimensions variable

reference points (evidence), 2019, digital print on paper, magazine pages, unfired clay, cable ties, copper wire

www.mmilchstrasse.de







change

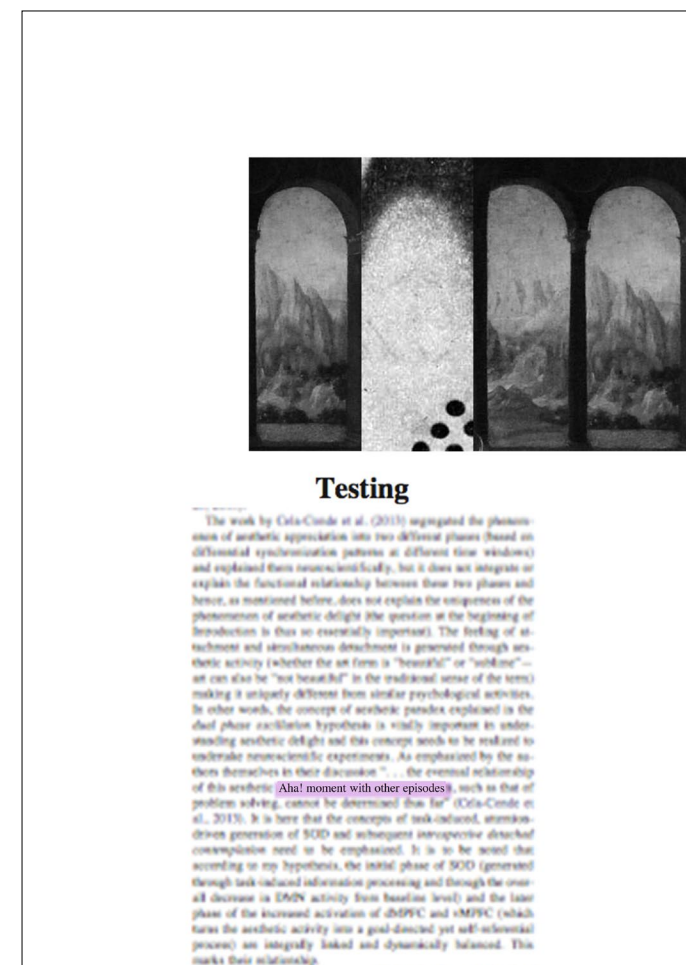
imagination



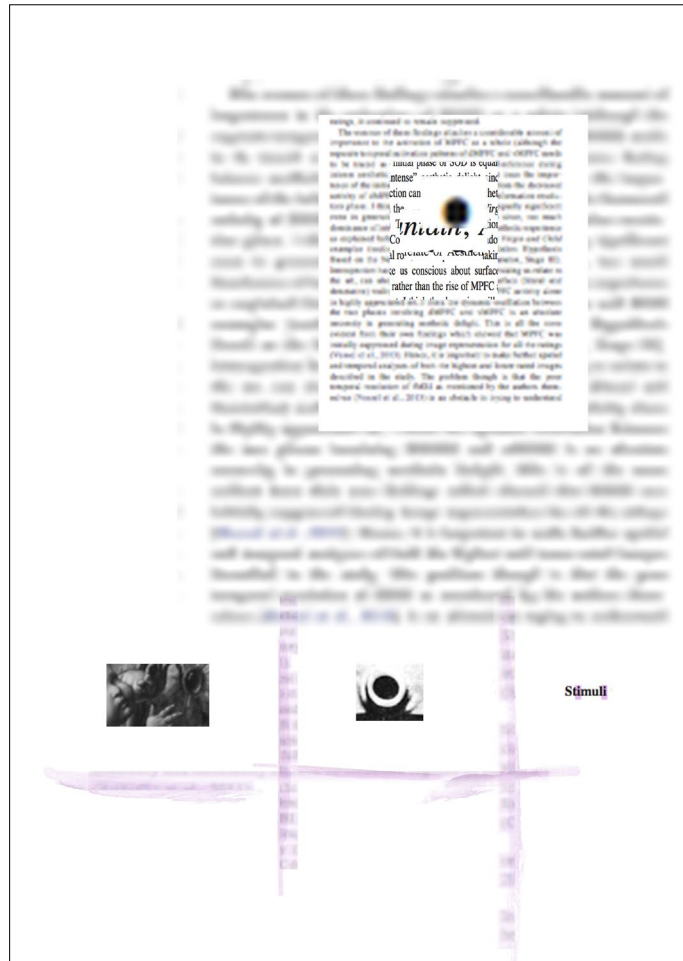
intensity



duration



Dual Phase Oscillation
2018
UV-print on dibond
series of 12 individual works
each 29,7 x 42 cm



precise logic behind



Figure 1. The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaus Tulp by Rembrandt van Rijn, 1632 (https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Anatomy_Lesson.jpg).

be investigated separately, . . . this may not be the case: it may be impossible to isolate the component processes without losing the aesthetic experience itself" (Näslund & Pearce, 2011, referring to Chatterjee's contribution to the Copenhagen Neuroaesthetics Conference, 2009, entitled "Visual Neuroaesthetics: Principles and Practice").

At least three additional studies by Cole-Cole *et al.* (2017) and Vessel, Svan, & Ratto (2018) tried to resolve this deficiency in understanding the functional coherence of aesthetic design using two different neuroimaging techniques (Magnetoeuroencephalography (MEG) and functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI)) respectively and assess the relevance of the Default Mode Network (DMN) of the brain in aesthetic appreciation. In the same line, Cole-Cole *et al.* (2017) published their MEG study on the dynamics of brain networks in aesthetic appreciation highlighting the role of DMN in aesthetic design. Vessel, Svan, and Ratto (2012, 2015) focused on the phenomena of individual variability in art. By showing unfamiliar artworks, they compared the fMRI of brain activity during observation of visual art (classical high aesthetic appreciation) with that of abstract art (low aesthetic appreciation) and found that the neural networks and aesthetic experience of DMN activity in highly scoring art forms.

The works of Cilia Coschi et al. (2013) and Vissel et al. (2012, 2013) used two different technical approaches in understanding the neural correlates of aesthetic appreciation, namely, the previous namely temporal approach using MEG and spatial localization using fMRI, respectively. Both works highlighted the limitations of their neuroimaging techniques: moderate spatial resolution of MEG (Cilia Coschi et al., 2013) and poor temporal resolution of fMRI (Vissel et al., 2013). However, more importantly, the works are yet to precisely highlight the attributes behind the acquisition of aesthetic delight (or specifically was what primarily separates aesthetic experience from similar psychological experiences. For example, why is there a distinctly different psychological feeling between perceiving a line drawing and the same person perceiving the painting of Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaus Tulp*? (see Figure 1).

This article formulates the dual phase oscillation hypothesis based on the neural context of aesthetic paradox, explaining the

greater logic behind linking aesthetic delight and EDSN activity while evaluating the concrete phenomena which play a part in the aesthetic grasping of existence. The author's main conclusion also stresses the different moment within the Cola-Donati (1978) and Yessai et al. (2017), and highlights how these results can be integrated with the proposed hypothesis to create a complete picture of aesthetic delight at once an emotional evaluation and a state of sensory (Chassagny, 1986) representing a state of united sensory attachment and disengagement with some paradoxical. The fundamental characteristics of aesthetic delight thus need to be determined. This will highlight the uniqueness of the process and will separate it from other psychological activities (e.g., perception or emotionally charged events in a real-life situation). In my next paper (Chassagny, 2018), I will further develop this.

paradox (how can we be aware of surface rapture)

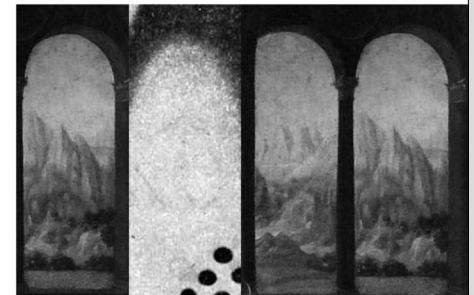
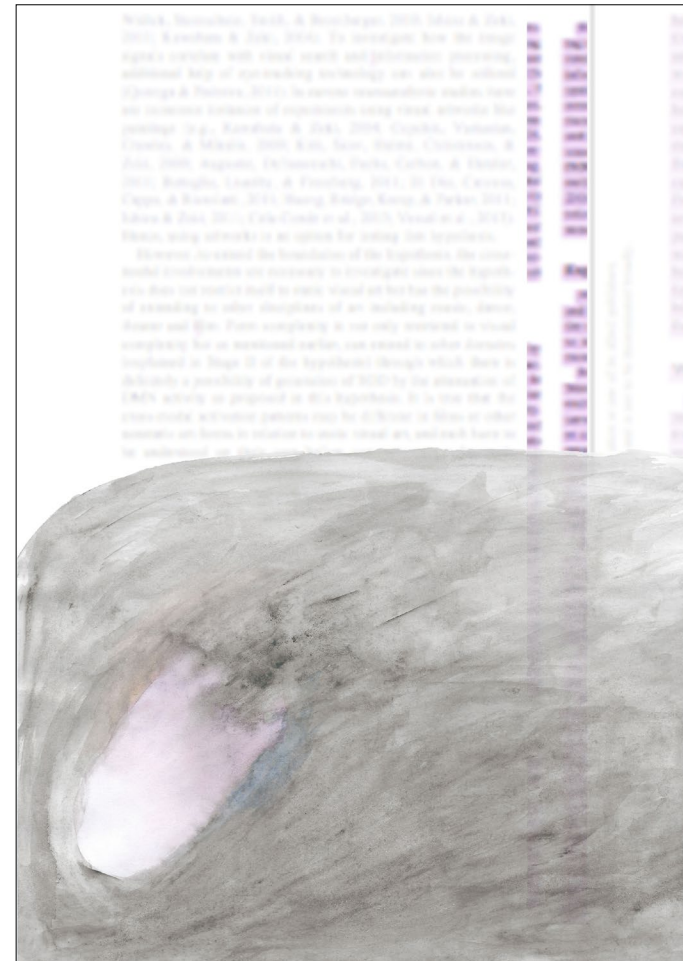
1. **aware of surface r**
emotional rapture
of distant' SOCs
of temporary ex-
2. The phenomenon of *interceptive detached contemplation*

The above two characteristics of aesthetic delight seem contradictory to each other and that is why it can be called the *aesthetic paradox* (how can someone simultaneously suspend and become aware of surface reality?). It is for this reason there is simultaneous emotional capture and a state of calmness in art appreciation. It is because of the interplay of these two aspects that one having an aesthetic experience remains attached and simultaneously detached from the art.

The roles of TED and detachment in aesthetic appreciation have been independently investigated by philosophers. The phrase 'willing suspension of disbelief' was coined in 1817 by the poet and philosopher S.T. Coleridge, whereby he suggested that readers temporarily suspend the improbability of a narrative through poetic faith (Coleridge, 2000, p. 239). The concept of *disinterestedness* in aesthetic appreciation was chiefly emphasized by German philosopher Immanuel Kant who, in his *Critique of Aesthetic Judgments* (Kant, 2014) explains the aesthetic attitude of disinterest. The concept of *Rasa* in ancient Indian aesthetics (Chandrasekhar, 1994) also speaks about aesthetic detachment.

The recent philosophical debates on the paradoxes of fiction began prominently with the paper by Colin Radford and Michael Wreen in 1979 (Radford & Wreen, 1979). Since then several theories have been put forward regarding how people get emotionally involved in fiction despite knowing that the *fiction* is false. Some of these concepts include the *make-believe* (or *quasi-factual*) theory proposed by Kendall Walton (1990), the concept of imaginative resistance (inspired by David Gaele) by T. S. Gendler (2000), the theory

¹⁷ Bainton's awareness of surface reality refers to accepting the art *how* (as what its surface properties include). It can refer to a range of denotative and literal properties of the art form. For example, while observing a painting we initially temporarily suspend the awareness that this is a two-dimensional represented image of an object and that the form is caused by ink, paint or colour.



Testing

The work by Cohn-Cadee et al. (2013) investigated the phenomenon of aesthetic appreciation into two different phases (based on differential synchronization patterns at different time windows) and explained them neuroscientifically, but it does not integrate or explain the functional relationship between these two phases and hence, as mentioned before, does not explain the uniqueness of the phenomenon of aesthetic delight (the question at the beginning of Introduction is thus to essentially important): The feeling of aesthetic satisfaction/dissatisfaction is generated through aesthetic activity (whether the art form is "beautiful" or "aesthetic") and can also be "not beautiful" in the traditional sense of the term) making it uniquely different from similar psychological activities. In other words, the concept of aesthetic paradox explained in the dual phase facilitation hypothesis is widely important in understanding aesthetic delight and this concept needs to be redefined to underlie neuroscience experiments. As emphasized by the authors, the aesthetic experience is not a simple matter of the quality of this aesthetic content, but rather a complex process of problem solving, cannot be determined by itself (Cohn-Cadee et al., 2013). It is here that the concepts of task-induced, attention-driven generation of SDO and subsequent introspective detached contemplation need to be emphasized. It is to be noted that according to my hypothesis, the initial phase of SDO (generated through task-induced information processing and through the overall decrease in *zENK* activity from baseline level) and the later phase (driven by the attentional shift and the subsequent increase in *zENK* activity) serves the aesthetic activity into a goal-directed yet self-sustained process) an integrally linked and dynamically balanced. This marks their relationship.



marked dot over an i
2018
latex print on PVC
200 x 300 cm

Installation view: Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, 2018



1kreis9
2016
intervention
dimensions variable

Installation view: Notel Prinzregent, exhibition project, Munich, 2016

CV
*1995 in Frankfurt am Main, DE
lives and works in Munich, DE

Education

2023	Diploma (Meisterschüler, Prof. Alexandra Bircken), Academy of Fine Arts, Munich
2022–2023	Academy of Fine Arts, Düsseldorf, Prof. Peter Piller
2020–2021	École des Beaux Arts, Marseille
since 2018	Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, Prof. Alexandra Bircken
2015–2017	Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, Prof. Stephan Huber
2015–2019	Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Psychology (B. Sc.)
2014	Studio Olafur Eliasson, Berlin (Internship)

Exhibitions

2023	<i>Jahresgaben</i> , Kunstverein München (upcoming) <i>World Dream The World</i> , with Christian Eisenberg, milchstrasse, Munich <i>the inner edge – a provisional non-archive</i> , Diploma Exhibition, Academy of Fine Arts, Munich
2022	<i>Kai's Kitchen</i> , Kai's Kitchen, Munich <i>Where an eagle meets fish</i> , Nokwoodang Foundation, Haenam, South Korea <i>Alt wie ein Baum</i> , Atelierhaus Baumstraße, Munich <i>fruit of the gloom</i> , Jahresausstellung, Klasse Bircken, Academy of Fine Arts, Munich <i>Hollow Shells, Shallow Holes</i> , Kunstverein Circolo, Ortisei <i>if by skin we don't include the eardrum</i> , Richard-Strauss-Straße 7, Munich <i>Januar</i> , Klasse Bircken, Goldberg Galerie, Munich
2021	<i>How to like people</i> , Einsteinstraße, Munich <i>To be successful in hunting, think like a prey</i> , Kunstpavillon München, Munich <i>une porte se ferme, une autre s'ouvre</i> , Salon du Salon, Marseille <i>ici mais parti.e</i> , dos mares, Marseille
2020	<i>Tischung, ein Reisebericht über die Beschneigung des Vesuvs</i> , Opernkollektiv DIVA, Lothringer13 Halle, Munich <i>Drawing Restrict</i> , rosastern space, Munich <i>The River and the City</i> , Klasse Bircken, Munich <i>immun</i> , illegalerie, with Christian Eisenberg, Munich <i>SANS SOUCI</i> , Opernkollektiv DIVA, fructa space, Munich
2019	<i>Das schwarze Loch</i> , milchstrasse, Munich (solo) <i>Some Stories. How the alien bridged the gap with her mind</i> , Galerie 21, Hamburg <i>Herde</i> , milchstrasse, Munich <i>Regulate your time</i> , Z common ground, Munich <i>Jahresausstellung</i> , Klasse Bircken, Academy of Fine Arts, Munich <i>fliegen und geflogen werden</i> , with Eva Burkhardt, Christian Eisenberg, Patrick Nishnik, Eveline Reinholz, Cordula Schieri (publication)
2018	<i>Jahresausstellung</i> , Academy of Fine Arts, Munich
2017	<i>Doppelmensch</i> , Raum49, Munich (solo) <i>Neumeyer III Messemonitor</i> by Judith Neunhaeuserer, Neumeyer-Station III, Antarctica
2016	<i>Unboxing Pandora</i> , Kunstpavillon, Munich <i>Notel Prinzregent</i> , Hotel Prinzregent, Munich <i>Kunst Aktuell</i> , Kunstverein Rosenheim <i>Two empties. A box of pins. Nine batteries</i> , streitfeld project space, Munich

Grants

2023–2024	Studio Grant, Munich
2020	Project Grant, Akademieverein München Erasmus Scholarship, École des Beaux Arts, Marseille
2016	International Summeracademy Salzburg, with Imran Qureshi

nikolaiguembel.de

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Bayerisches Staatsministerium für
Wissenschaft und Kunst

