

KAI TRAUENEGGER  
{\_SELECTED WORKS}



## I Ein Fragment

Mixed media installation  
Textile, Screen  
2017

A particle is taken from the centre of a structure. The fragment is released from its surroundings and brought into a new form. From now on, it floats in a parallel world in which it is thoroughly investigated and analysed. Once part of a whole, it is now being experimented on, reconstructed and translated. The original construct as well as the now to be explored fragment live in different worlds, which are separated by time, distance, haptics and optics.

While the actually three-dimensional and "voluminous" carpet is perceived as flat, the visual information of the fragment in its

two-dimensional representation becomes spatial. The transfer process by scanning and reshaping the segment in a curved form gives an insight to otherwise hidden levels. It has been digitized and robbed of its body, only the context created in the frame is preserved. Instead of the original surface it now stands as a pure information carrier.

Gradually, more pieces of our environment are cut off and shipped to a virtual world. It offers us an endless dungeon of objects, in which spirits are kept and re-summoned by new devices, but can never be returned to their original state.



## I Stellvertreter

Mixed media installation  
Concrete, Aluminium, Leather, Electronics  
2021



The installation *Stellvertreter* shows a pair of buttocks casted in concrete which are continuously slapped by a mechanical whip which extends from the ceiling. The kinetic construction therefore lowers itself from a metaphorical sky where it remains slightly below the height of the sinners backside. The whip is swung for a single revolution at a periodical but always slightly random rate and persists until the given exhibition ends.

*Stellvertreter* serves as a substitute for a potential owner of the work who can afford to delegate moral responsibilities to a third party to avoid a deeper reflection and systematic change. It becomes an object entangled in the societal role of a wealthy elite that generously funds the arts as an ethical loophole. The "Stellvertreter" therefore is punished up to eternity taking up the medieval role of a royal whipping boy.

## I Daily Golem

Mixed media installation  
Cotton Candy, Steel, Wood  
2019



Daily Golem is a group project initiated by Alfredo Barsuglia collaborating with Gelatin, Jakob Kirchweger, Sebastian Lehner, Alisa Omelyantseva, Luka Savic and Kai Trausenegger.

The transformative sculpture created of cotton candy reacts with the heightened air humidity due to the exhibition spaces proximity to the river Litz. During the course of the show the sculpture slowly disintegrates, leaving only traces behind.

The Golem being summoned in the space, serving as an executive of the daily chore of performing.



Installation view: Kunstforum Montafon (c)Alfredo Barsuglia

## I Gaze

Mixed media installation  
Aluminium, Oil, Steel  
2021



Gaze is a relief carved out of thick sheets of aluminium depicting an angel of the order of the seraphim which is seen as closest and the first physical manifestation of gods will in the catholic belief system.

The relief is an existing graphical motif which was redrawn, transformed into a 3D model and robotically milled in dense parallel lines. An artificial decrease of resolution of paths is used to create a spherical effect of distortion and ambiguity.

In the tradition of intaglio printing techniques oil colour is applied to the metal surface while at the same time being scraped off

again from the highest layers. The resulting effect additionally increases the depth of the relief while maintaining the purity and reflectivity of the aluminium surface.

The choice of material is based on the artificial and immensely energy intense process of the production of aluminium through electrolysis. The perceived purity and energetic charging becomes a symbol for the heavenly or divine which cannot be uncovered in earthly matter but only through a process of its transgression.





## I Straight Edge

Mixed media installation  
Plaster, Steel, Light  
2021



Straight Edge illuminates the space in an unnaturally bright white. Repulsing and attracting at the same time the sculptures cast in plaster welcome and lure beings into their influence. A barbed hook is installed in front of the light source which can be used as a attaching anchor placed in the soft tissue beneath the chinbone. The light emitting the sculptures operates at the wavelength used in heliotherapy. The light gives direction and creates a tunnel vision which ends in complete dissolution.

The term Straight Edge is borrowed from the roots of the hardcore punk subculture which describes a refrain from using alcohol, tobacco or other recreational drugs.





### I Holy, Holy, Holy

Mixed media installation  
Aluminium, Steel, Water Pump,  
Water, Acrystall  
2017

Holy, Holy, Holy shows three heads being cleansed in a circular water basin. Through the constant movement of the water and the inevitable collision of heads leading to abrasion, their distinctive facial features slowly disappear. Serving as an apparatus of a symbolical purgatory the fluid is pumped in a continuous cycle leaving the subjects in a constant state of reenactment of the self.



## I Momentaufnahme des aufsteigenden Jesu

Mixed media installation  
Pigmentprint (124 x 124 cm),  
copper bowl  
2019

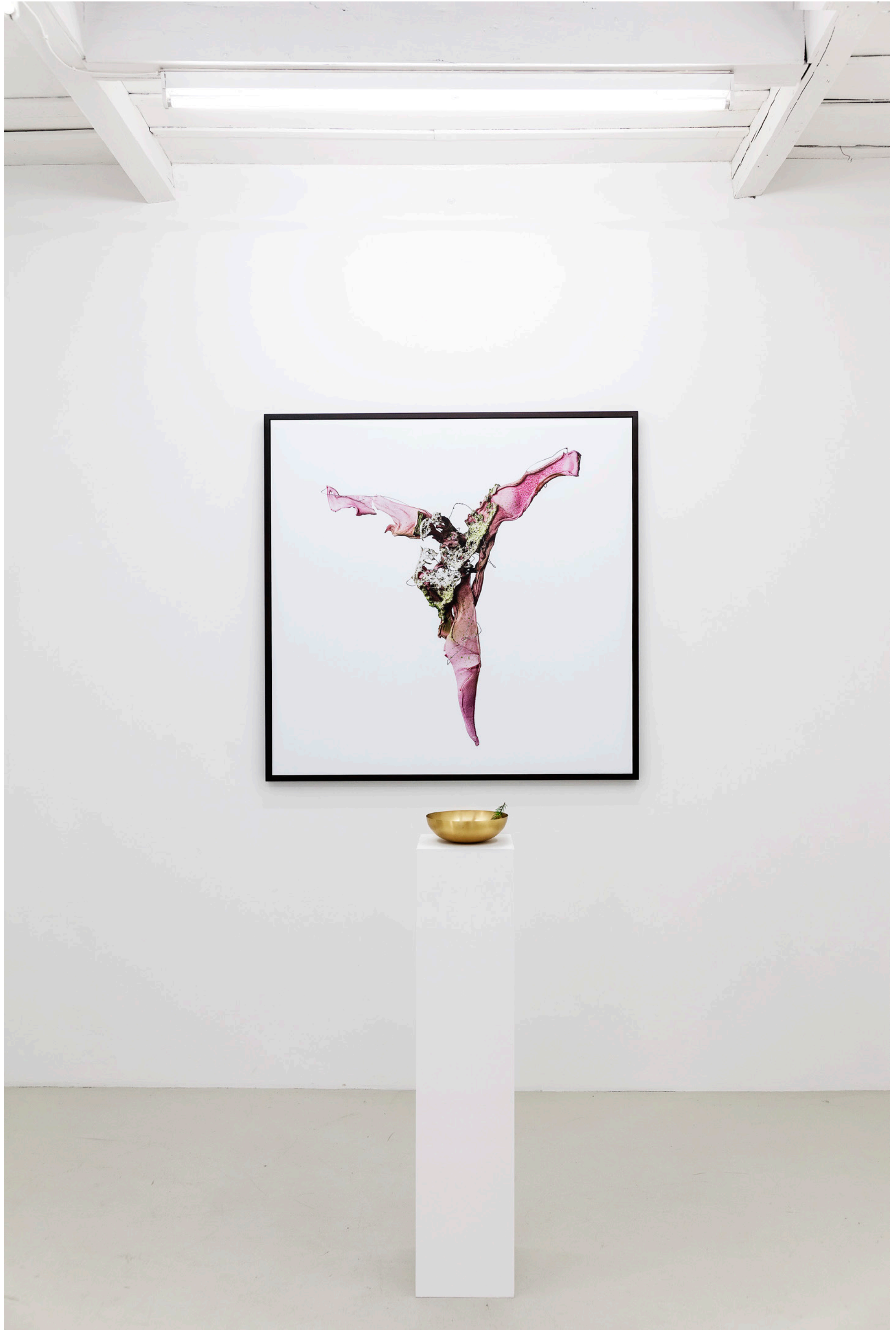


Holy Water

The artwork depicting Jesus ascending to heaven can be seen as an artistic reinterpretation of classical imagery. „Momentaufnahme des aufsteigenden Jesu“ reintroduces sacrality into the artspace to spark a discussion about spirituality in art. The thesis of the artwork states that at the point we entered an age of ongoing secularity and scientific rationality, art took over the role of existential worship. Therefore an artwork becomes the rational and capitalist substitute for religion.

The basin in front of the portrayal holds holy water which invites visitors to perform a ritualistic cleansing before watching the composition.





Installationview Wellwellwell Vienna (c)Kaja Clara Joo

## I Fromm Less Fromm

Mixed media installation  
Wood, Faux Leather, PLA, ABS, Steel  
2018



With the widespread acceptance of capitalism in the western world self-optimization has become an integral part of society. The digital evolution has further established possibilities to monitor our every moves to gain insight over our own productivity. Self-help is the new therapy. If you cant do it, you just didnt try hard enough.

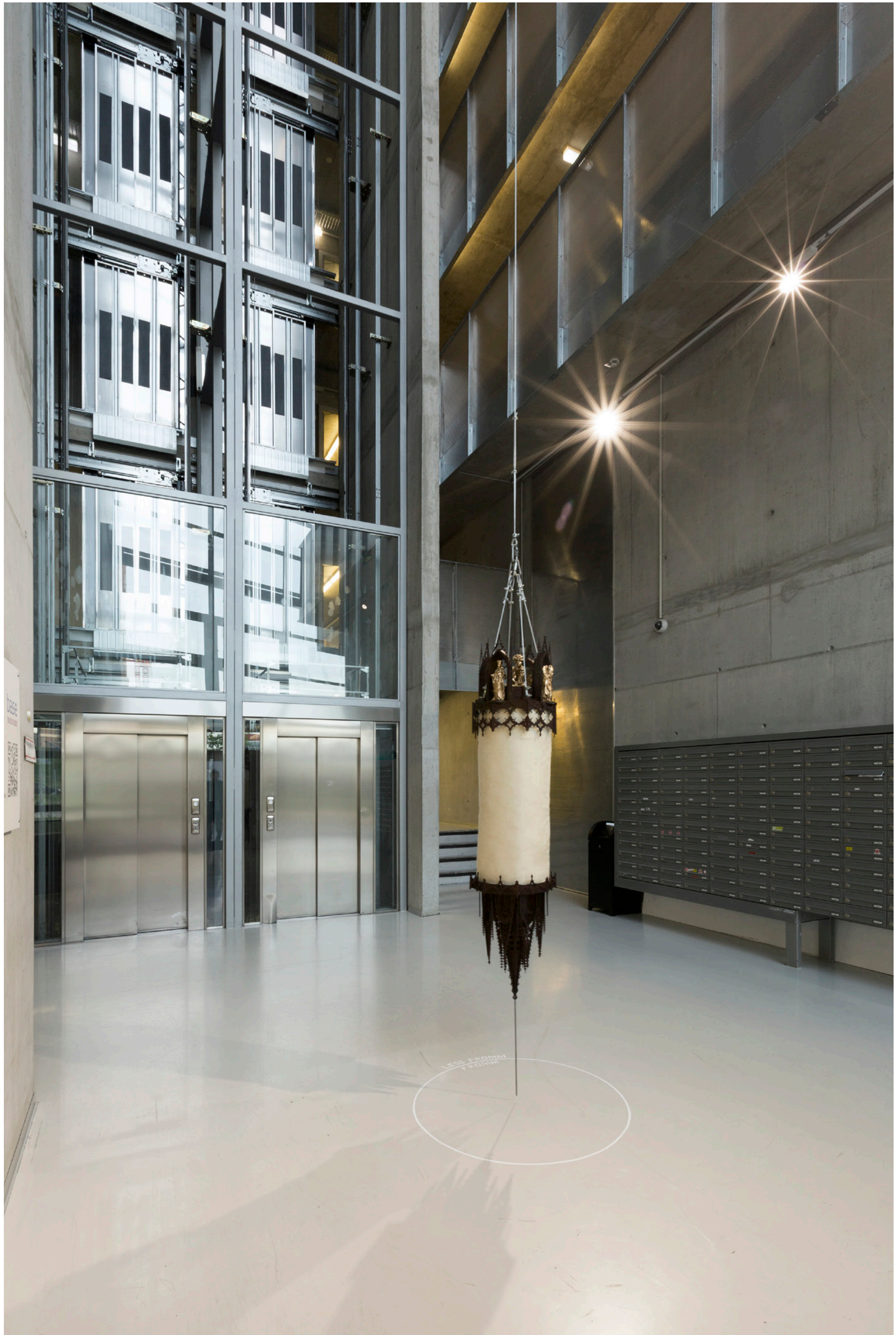
Fromm Less Fromm is set in a world where all the cashiers at the supermarket are replaced by ourselves, scanning food at the self-service checkout. Strong individuals minding their own business.

Attached to the installation are simple instructions for the procedure that has to be followed to use the confessional.

- 1) Evaluate how much you have sinned
- 2) Concentrate your energy into your fist according to how much you have sinned
- 3) Punch the self-service confessional
- 4) Gather feedback based on the markings below the confessional

No priest will be around so you will have to deal with the consequences by yourself.





Fromm less Fromm suspended as a pendulum / Installation view: Kunstraum PFERD Vienna (c)Matthias Bildstein



Installation View Kunstraum Pferd (c) 1) Kaja Clara Joo 2) Matthias Bildstein

## I Post Nut Clarity

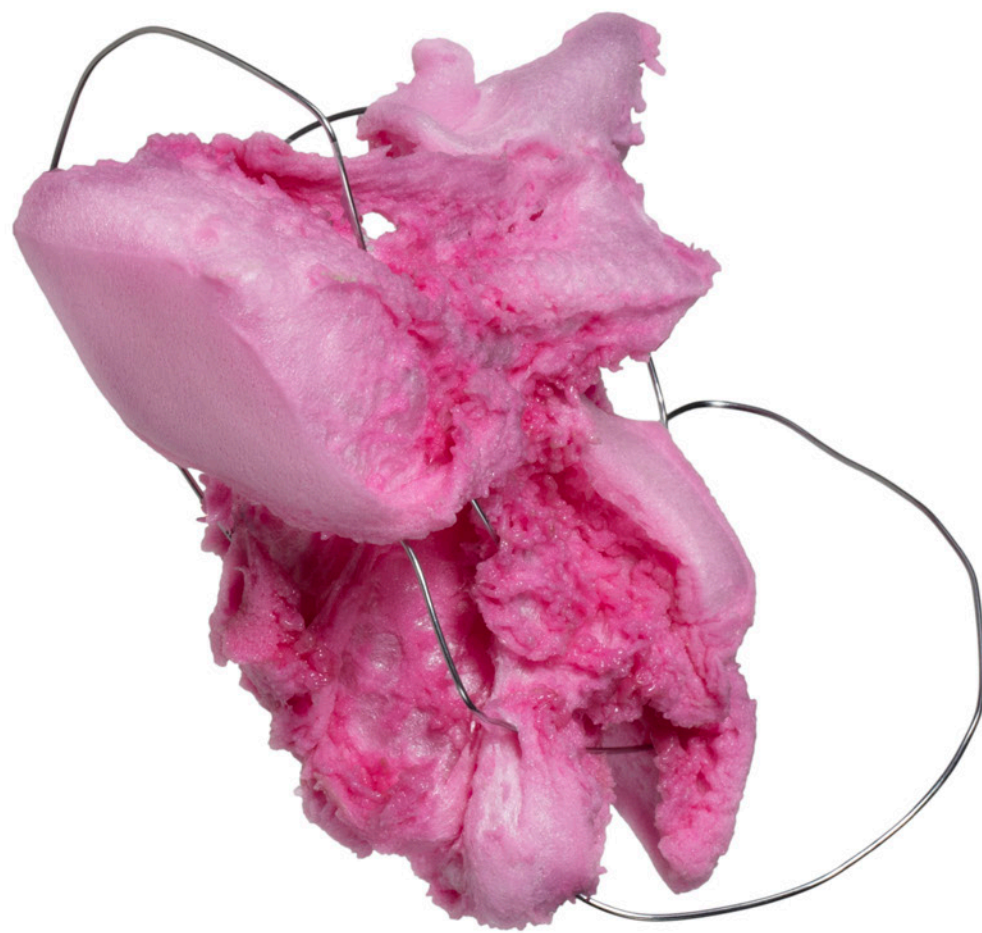
Woodblockprint on Paper  
2021



Post Nut Clarity is a series of photographs in steel frames facing a simple woodblock print. The latter depicting a self-flaying man peeling off his most outer layer of the body. The photographs on the opposite wall facing the print show apparently exfoliated amorphous and not clearly definable organic forms. Therein, "Post Nut Clarity" relates the process of cleansing oneself of shame to issues of flesh and skin as well as the discourses of e.g. white guilt, race, identity and representation as they are embedded in the institutions of contemporary art.

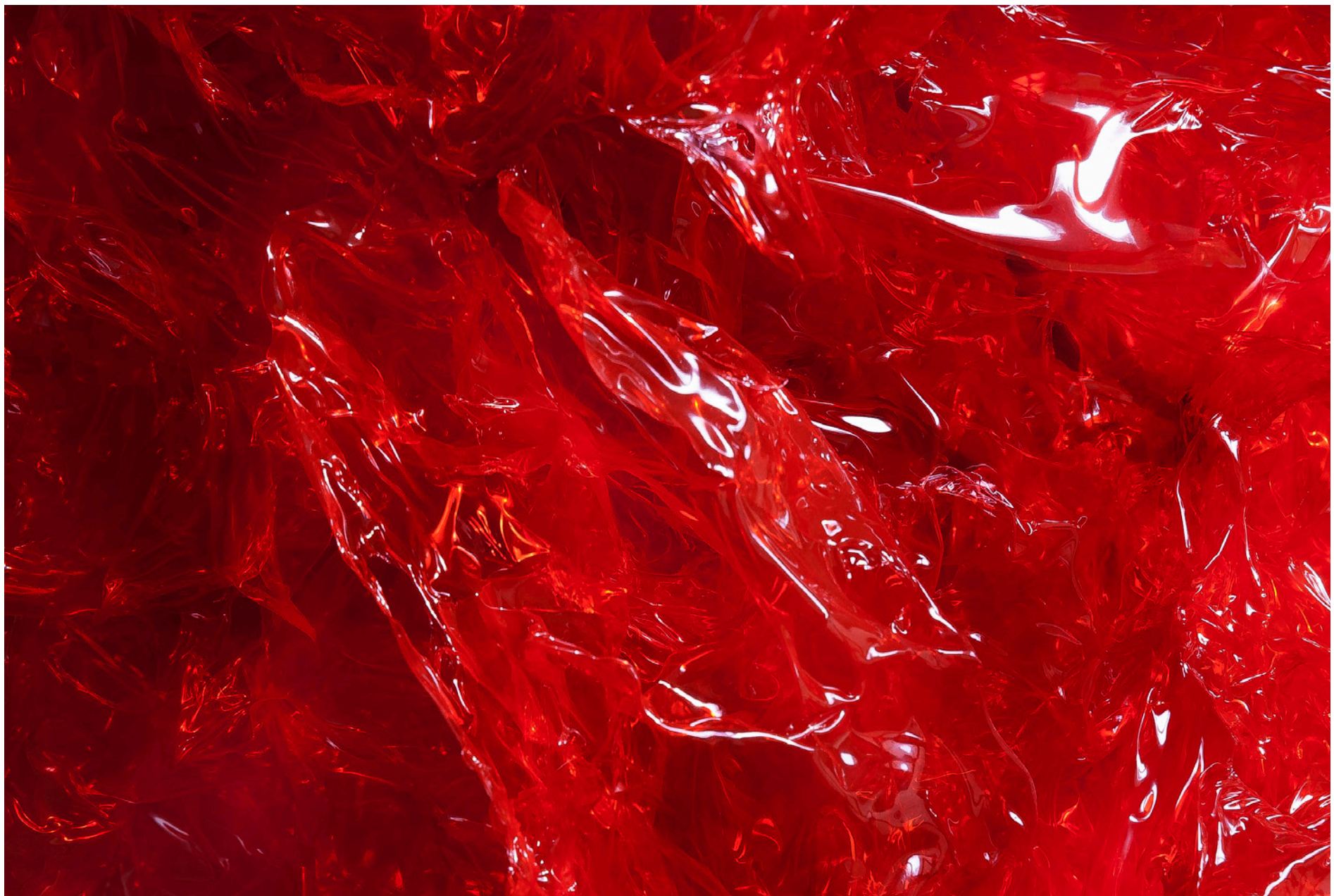
The borrowed term "post-nut-clarity" is loosely defined as the feeling of an elevated state of mind which occurs after mostly male orgasming and is often described as the moment when important life decisions are made. An empty body without the haze of lust or sin.





## I Homunkulus

Mixed media installation  
PVC, Steel, Superskin, Headphones  
2018



The artwork Homunkulus explores the subjective feeling of the distance between an artistic representation and its related theoretical concept.

### Concept trouvé

Explanatory text have become an integral part of artistic and curatorial practice and therefore inevitably interconnected with any artwork.

The ongoing paradigm of conceptual necessity in artistic practice often leads to the creation of theoretical constructs which serve as justification-suffixes charged with trending buzzwords like Postcolonialism, Capitalism or Feminism. This method commonly leads to a gap between the phenomenological representation of an artwork, between the signifier and the signified.

Homunkulus is an installation that tries to overcome this subjective disconnection between theoretical content and the "retinal" installation itself.

The subconcept within the installation can be seen as the conceptual counterpart of André Bretons objet trouvé. A

reversal in the creative process where the object is crafted and the conceptual background gets attached later during the various stages of production. Unlike the "conceptual readymade" the concept trouvé always possesses a personal component of the artist who customizes and thoughtfully adjusts it to his discrete artistic expression.

Like at a french flea market this concept trouvé is found amongst a pile of other second-hand concepts which likewise signify towards a vague, mysterious, unknown and "merveilleuse"/miraculous biography. These traits want to be revealed and explored and offer an infinite amount of theoretical depth. When the so offered depth exceeds the threshold of ones subjectively perceived representational value of the artwork it will presumably evoke a feeling of pretentiousness.

Homunkulus is addressing this very feeling of pretentiousness and is an attempt to overcome the gap between the object and the theoretical subject.



Installation view: Krinzinger Projekte Vienna (c)Kaja Clara Joo



### **The Object**

The visible object consists of a metal support structure to which amorphous form made of molten polyvinyl-chloride (PVC) that was added layer by layer.

The frame itself is made up of three elongated legs with a derivation of female human reproduction organs. The upper parts which represent the ovaries are the origin of the growing form and plastic layering, while the region around the crotch holds an idealized but lifelike imitation of outer female genitalia. Inside this replica a looping audio file on an mp3 player is placed which is plugged to headphones that lead to the outside of the installation for anyone who wants to interact directly with the object.

The thus growing cancerous head bears multiple layers of content and context that are heaped, melt and become redirecting until they have found their true expression. The outcome is guided through the birth channel where it manifested as a subconcept.

### **The Subconcept**

The so called subconcept is an audible voice coming from headphones which are linked to the object. A female voice addressing the viewer and tries to involve them to actively engage with the sculpture.

Based on the method of Autogenic Training, invented by the German psychiatrist Johannes Heinrich Schultz the voice tries to draw the participants into a hypnotic and self-reflective state where theoretical concepts should be experienced in an emotional and immediate way.

Instead of presenting a written suffix to an artwork which explains what "it is about" it actively forces the participants to "make it about" a certain topic. The intellectual metanarratives can no longer be questioned and the idea of readability in artworks becomes irrelevant.

The subjective trigger of pretentiousness is bypassed since the artwork is no longer

pretending to be something but only gives the instructions and invitation to actually experience the artwork in a certain intellectual and emotional way.

Therefore the artwork develops two layers of theory which consists of the interactive "commands" of the descriptive text and the subjective interpretation of the presented piece. The moment of doubt though is eradicated.

Homunkulus in particular serves as a mediator between the proposed method of direct interaction and the method of justification-suffixes and therefore possess a metaconcept which is expressed within this present text.



I Siegerkunst  
A letter to Wolfgang Ullrich

Installation  
Oil on Aluminium  
2019

(original letter in german)  
Dear, Dr. Ulrich,

Following on from the podium discussion at the Producers' Gallery in Vienna, I would also attach the painting in the appendix, which I have titled in reference to your book "Siegerkunst".

Of course, this is not really "victor's art", as it neither scores horrendously high prices nor is shown at one of the many biennials. However, this term has served as a starting point for thinking about one's own work, which dealt with the marketing of art.

First and foremost, I was guided by the idea of what a piece of art would look like behind the desk of a cliché of the "rich, white man in an anonymous skyscraper". Here I assume that, in contrast to appropriated art of great collectors or "professional consumers", there is still an extremely strong tendency in the general population to connect the medium of painting with the concept of (contemporary) art. This may be due to well-known facts that lie in the decorative and everyday use aspect of flatware, as well as in the aura described since Benjamin, which raise artworks with the artist's personal resilience to almost spiritual objects. At local art fairs, painting also seems to be the most widely represented by far.

It should also be noted that the aesthetic appearance of this type of artwork is often relatively interchangeable and often resides in the broad "abstract" category, with relatively few objective criteria for how an expensive abstract painting differs from an amateur image. (If I remember correctly, there is a similar comparison with Gerhard Richter's paintings in your book Siegerkunst)

Although there are probably a variety of forms of "Siegerkunst", with which one could distinguish oneself as a collector, I saw the execution as an abstract painting through its wider recognition as "art" as the most appropriate medium. This kind of victor's art is not only a status symbol for collectors who are interested in art, but also creates a bridge between elitism, decoration and the closeness to the people (or clear identification value) without taking any risks.

In my execution of the painting, I have strongly oriented myself here on the sales lines of brands such as Damien Hirst who has created easily reproducible and each individual decorative products with his spin and spot paintings. Products that can be purchased as an easily digestible appendage in addition to the prestigious and elaborate "museum productions" and could be completely interchangeable in their formal expression. Something I equate with Walter Robinson's term "zombie formalism," or as Jerry Saltz would describe it, "[Produkte die wirken], als spielten [sie mit] Maler Tonleitern, wie Fingerübungen, denen es an Geist oder harmonischem Kontext fehlt, aus denen Musik erst entstehen kann - visuelle Fahrstuhlmusik, die nicht weiter auffällt." (<http://archiv.monopol-magazin.de/blogs/der-kritiker-jerry-saltz-blog/2013368/Zombies-an-den-Waenden--Warum-sieht-derzeit-soviel-abstrakte-Kunst-gleich-aus-.html>)

In Damien Hirst's series of spin paintings, I want to particularly highlight the naming, which always begins with "beautiful" and ends with "painting". (Such as "Beautiful, pop, spinning ice creamy, whirling, expanding painting") This type of titling is interesting in that it exposes the decorative role of painting from the beginning and does not even hide behind a mystification. Damien Hirst is aware that these types of images are already painted in children's classes, but decides, with a full disclosure of the process, to get rid of this criticism. A technique that is often found in the visual arts and ends in the process of becoming aware of the processes that legitimize the original product. The easiest way to do this is by means of exaggerated irony, but as can be seen with Hirst, this is not absolutely necessary.

The painting series Siegerkunst works on a similar principle. A product is created and finds its "justification" in the critically questioning train of thought of its manufacture. Although it is not manufactured by machine, but has a machinelike character that nonetheless creates individual works. Furthermore, there are the series in a variety of colors, shapes and sizes, which are available to various budgets and thus completes the commodity character.

I am not sure if this endless loop will only lead to an "aesthetics of resistance" as a game of thought. What remains is that the artwork fakes resistance but does not change the actual system, ultimately transforming it into a status symbol, like the image of a communist painter in the room of a bank director

In the panel discussion, I asked the question of how to prevent resistance in art from becoming an aesthetics of resistance. What I wanted to point out was that exposing criticism may not be enough, as criticism is always being re-marketed as part of the art market. Just as critique of capitalism within a capitalist art market is in vogue in order to show that, as a buyer or viewer, one has seen through the "corrupt" market anyway.

In the same way, I "abuse" the book of winning art for making a work to get higher on a meta-level higher, but in the end I am trapped in the same system as any artist before me who criticizes the art system / capitalism or other social issues.

So much for my thoughts, I hope I did not misinterpret your book!

In the attachment several views of the work with an additional picture of me, to demonstrate the size and background suitability

Yours sincerely,  
Kai Trausenegger



Siegerkunst 200 x 200 cm (c)Lukas Preisinger

## I Angler

Mixed media installation  
Steel, Neon, Fish, Silicone  
2020



The installation Angler consists of a fluorescent tube in shape of a monstrance that is connected to four vacuumized fish which are mounted like pictures to a facing wall.

The light emitting sculpture is placed in a somewhat central spot of the room while transparent plastic tubes emerge from the bottom of the object. Subsequently the tubes are laid out in a relaxed but slightly tensed fashion towards the wall where the cannula ends in the fishes mouths.

Angler is a sitespecific take on apostle Paulus.



Installation view: Paulusplatz Vienna (c)Kaja Clara Joo



I Barometz

Mixed media installation  
Bronze, Goldthread, Pedestal  
2018



"...the plant is protected from aggressors by an enclosure built around it and by armoured men yelling and beating drums. Its wool was also said to be used for fine clothing and headdresses..."



5 Kilometers of goldthread were used spanning over the exhibition space and connecting all the artworks of the show as well as wrapping the building and connecting nearby parts of the village.

I [sic]

Mixed media installation  
PLA, Acryl, Acryl, Silicon  
2019



Wrongful citation and restoration of Notre Dames's waterspouts.

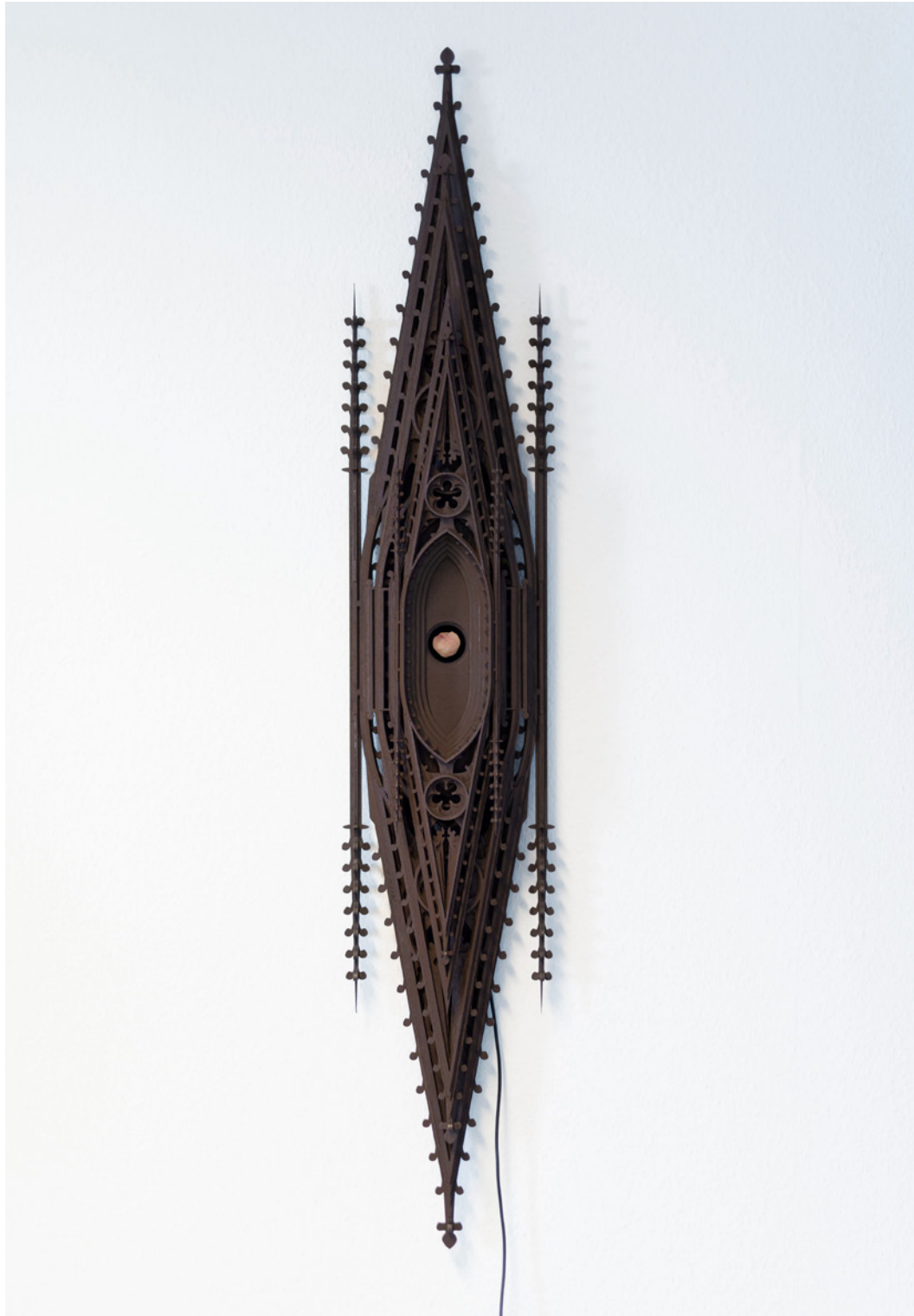
The sculpture cites traditional gothic facade masonry where the figurative elements merge seamlessly into the materials of the building. The aesthetic choice of the surface was fit according to the colourscheme of the club and are therefore interwoven with the existing architecture.

Permanent Installation, Fluc Vienna





Installationview at Fluc Vienna (c) Kaja Clara Joo



I **Generator**  
(Nabe)

Mixed media sculpture  
Wood, Screen  
2020



**Generator** is part of the installation Nabe and is exhibited as a multimedia object.

The wooden body is holding an animation of a spinning sphere which depicts different surfaces of the human skin.

Each of the six sculptures bears an individual photograph which got abstracted and projected and sculpted onto a digital globe. It can be seen as a reference to texture databases which are commonly used in 3D modelling and serve as an initial point of placing surfaces onto created objects.

These archives of skin depict the idea of a tool that is used to sculpt a potential object, without being the object itself. Therefore the generator can be seen as a bearer of potentiality to recreate the human surface and will be continuously expanded into a larger directory.

The gothic structures are a direct quote to the peak of power of the catholic church in medieval times and the symbolical importance that came with the collection of relics.



Installationview at Parallel Vienna '20 (c) Kaja Clara Joo

## I Nabe

Mixed media installation  
Wood, Clay, Video  
2020



The installation Nabe contains six wooden wall objects and a symmetrically placed amphora which is projected with an animation of a rotating photogrammetric scan of a living room. The German word "Nabe" can be translated to the central hub of a rotating structure which is implemented in different ways throughout the artworks.

The room is filled with the sound of a voice which is continuously reciting the foreseeing predictions of an online Tarot card reading service while a 3D scanned pointcloud is continuously rotating around a centered small object named Omphalos.

The generic prophecies are played from a large crack in the wall where the technical equipment is hidden and serve as a reference to opening within the ancient Oracle of Delphi which was said to emit dazing vapours from a tectonic opening in the ground.

Nabe can be seen as a documentation of a personal engagement with the future in a time of increased isolation and forced switch to digital intimacy. A closeness that is not based on bodily interaction but the question of what parts of human needs can be fulfilled with digital outsourcing.



Image 1: Omphalos / Installation view: Parallel Vienna '20  
Image 2: Amphora / Installation view: Parallel Vienna '20

I Stein II  
(Kulturträger)

Photography  
Pigmentprint  
2018



The photoseries Kulturträger is part of the series Ephemeral works for eternity which were public interventions at the historic site of the viennese northern-railwaystation.

The documentation of ephemeral artworks becomes integral part of the artworks itself by storing its cultural information for future generations. Therefore the distinction between the "original" and its cultural carrier is erased and the documentation becomes artwork.

*The documentation of the project can be found in a publication about the historical site of the northern railwaystation (by Dorothea Trappel in cooperation with Shift Basis Kultur and Falter Verlag)*

I Stein I  
(Kulturträger)

Photography  
Pigmentprint  
2018



I Erde I  
(Kulturträger)

Photography  
Pigmentprint  
2018



## KAI TRAUSENEGGER

Helferstorferstraße 6/4, 1010 Vienna  
+43 677 620 36 087  
kaitrausenegger.com  
kaiiak@gmx.at