

Portfolio Philipp Modersohn

Where were you
at 414 ppm?



THE WITNESS INTERVIEW

In the short film “The witness interview”, six examples of climate proxies are the protagonists, minerals and fossilised life forms that tell scientists about past compositions of the Earth’s atmosphere. The 3D models of a drill core, a crustacean and a coral, among others, are digitally animated and questioned via text panels about events in the Earth’s history . But instead of answering, they dance to baroque harpsichord music against the backdrop of a Victorian greenhouse. The questions bounce off these “witnesses” and are reflected back to the questioners, like the sun’s rays off the glass panes of the greenhouse.

[watch video here](#)



Video, colour, sound,
3:08 min, 2020

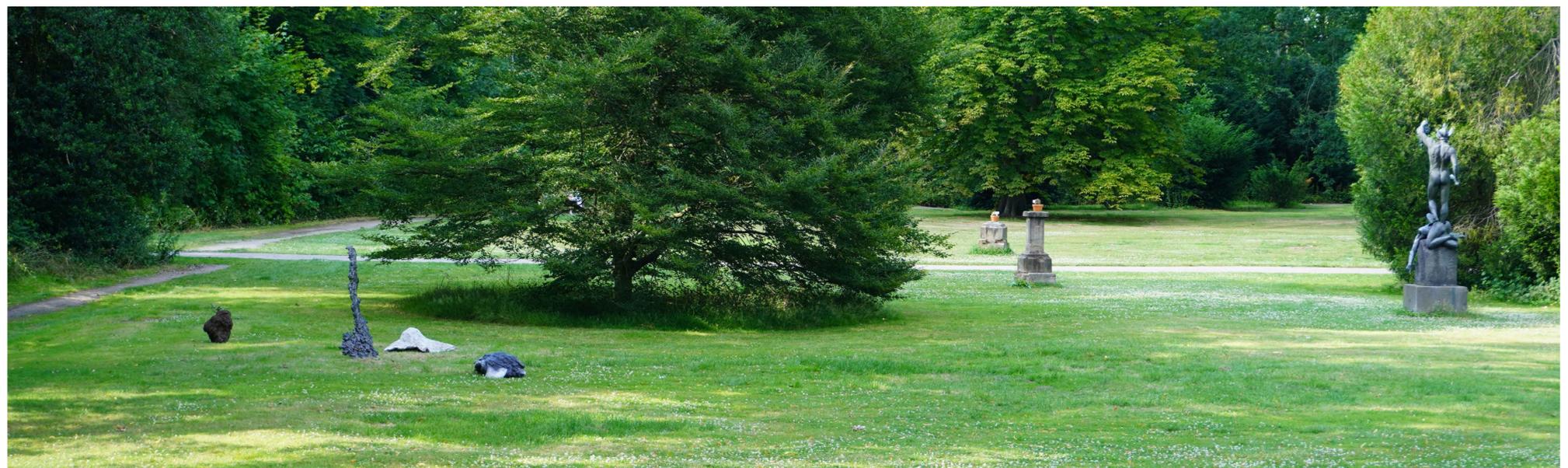
BAD LAND GUT

Four industrial materials, a found remnant of melted plastic, the leftover slag from steel production, a piece of concrete and a vulcanic rock, are brought to a park for a recreational vacation.

Taking off from a cornucopia-like cocoon, the materials wander in the course of the exhibition in 9 positions through the park, a 'strolling at geological speed'.

Via an audio play, the individual stories of the four exhausted protagonists are audible.

[Listen to the audio play here \(7 min\)](#)



Steel, PVC foil, polyamide, steel slag, concrete, tuffaceous rock, variable dimensions, 2022
Lantz'scher Skulpturenpark,
Düsseldorf

THE EXHAUSTED

'The Exhausted' is a sculptural scene in which a group of peat bogs seem to conquer an empty pedestal. An additional audio piece gives the peat pieces a voice, telling of their origins and needs. This site-specific work was commissioned by the Berlin Representation of the State of Lower Saxony, 10% of which is covered by peat lands.

[Listen to the audio play here \(2.40 min\)](#)

peat, steel, variable dimensions
(max. height 180 cm), 2024
Berlin Representation of the State of Lower Saxony



THE SELFISH SHELLFISH

The video, which uses analog and digital animation techniques, is a fictional self-portrait of a barnacle. These shellfish swim through the open water as larvae to then attach themselves to solid ground in the intertidal zone. The film images alternate between bright dryness and dark underwater scenes. The rhythm is set by a baroque song whose countertenor voice sounds all the stranger and whose instrumental parts have been replaced by sounds of the shells.

[watch video here](#)

Video, colour, sound,
3:38 min, 2022



A REPORTING ROCK

In a *reporting rock*, an undefined, conventional stone appears as an alien object in a laboratory. It reacts to written questions from the context of some sort of immigration office with its very own non-verbal language: geological transformation, fossil formation and shape shifting at high speed.

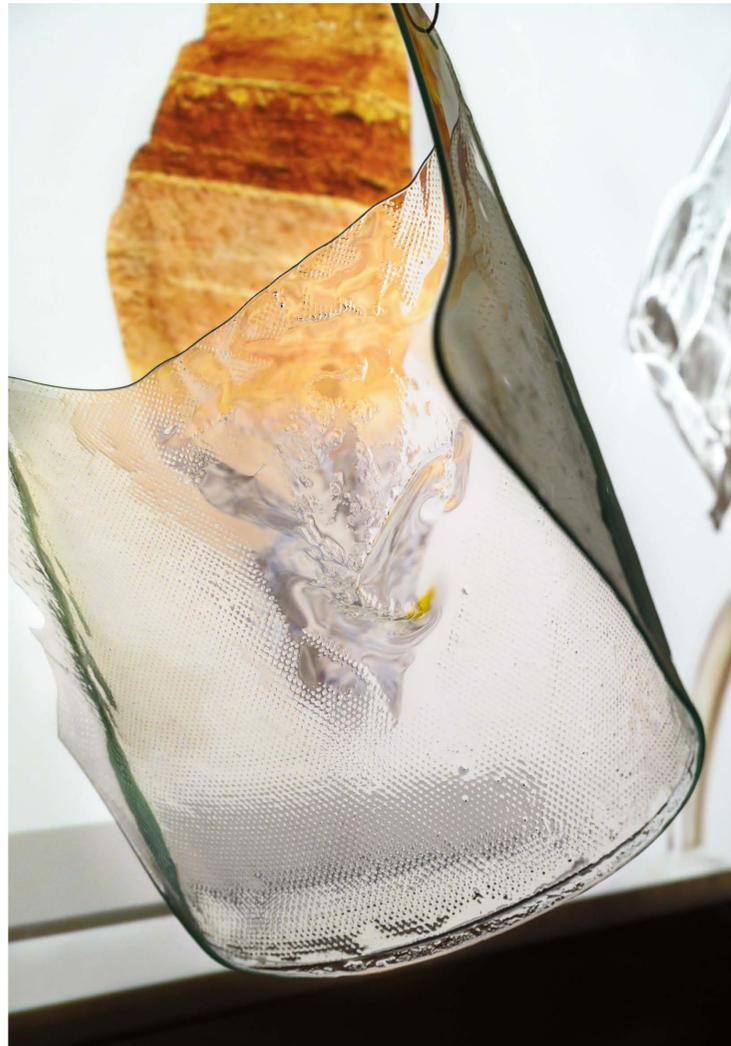
[watch video here](#)

Video, colour, sound,
5:55 min, 2020

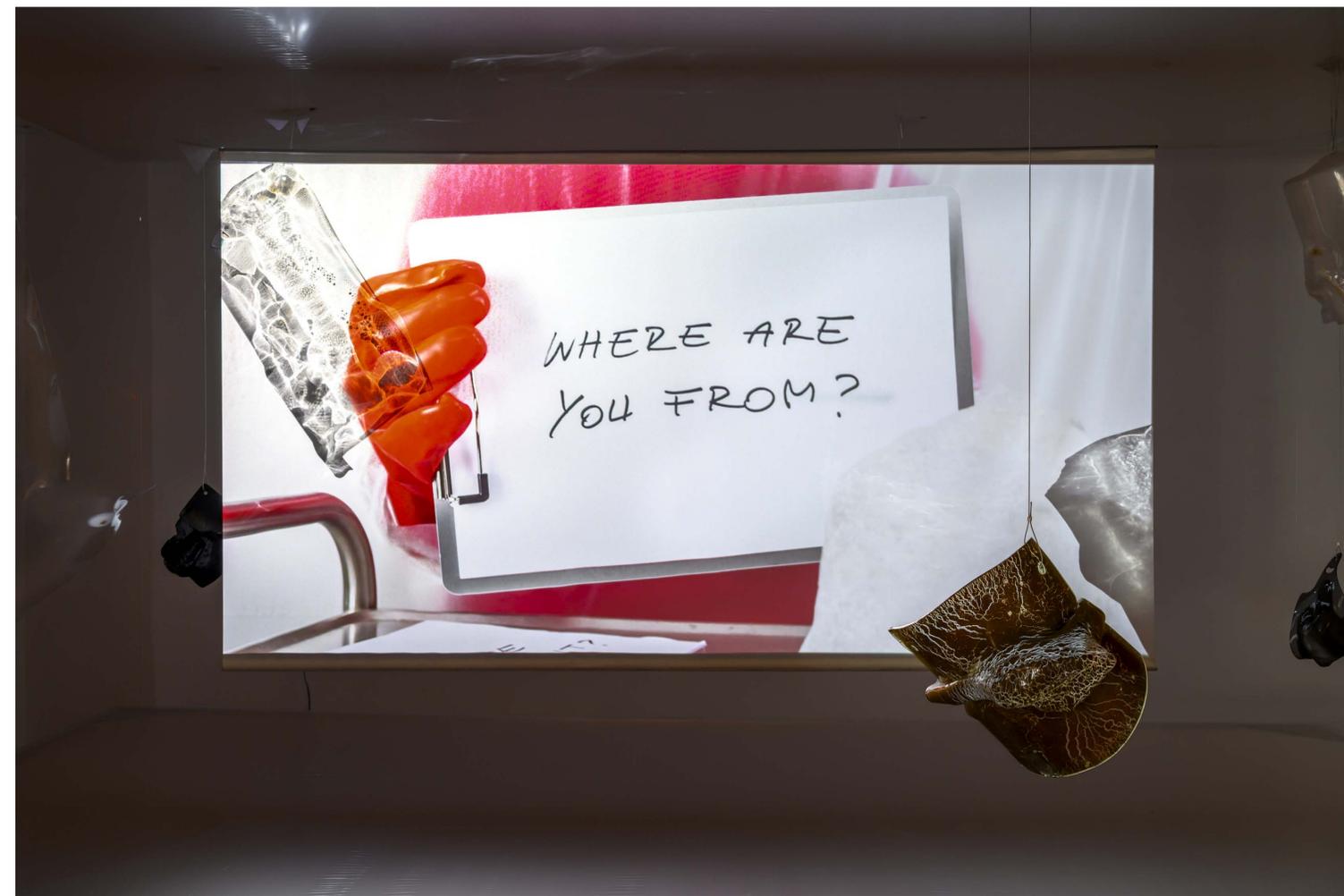


A REPORTING ROCK — EXHIBITION VIEW

The video is projected onto a rear projection foil suspended between two horizontal foil frames, alluding to a laboratory situation. Hanging from the ceiling are glass and acrylic glass screens, into which imprints of the stone were melted - the virtual model of the stone is subversively reintroduced into the physical world.



glas, polyethylene, aluminum,
steel, video (colour, sound, loop,
5:55 min),
350 × 260 × 120 cm, 2020
Installation view
Etwas mehr als Arbeit, group,
Kunstverein Göttingen, 2020

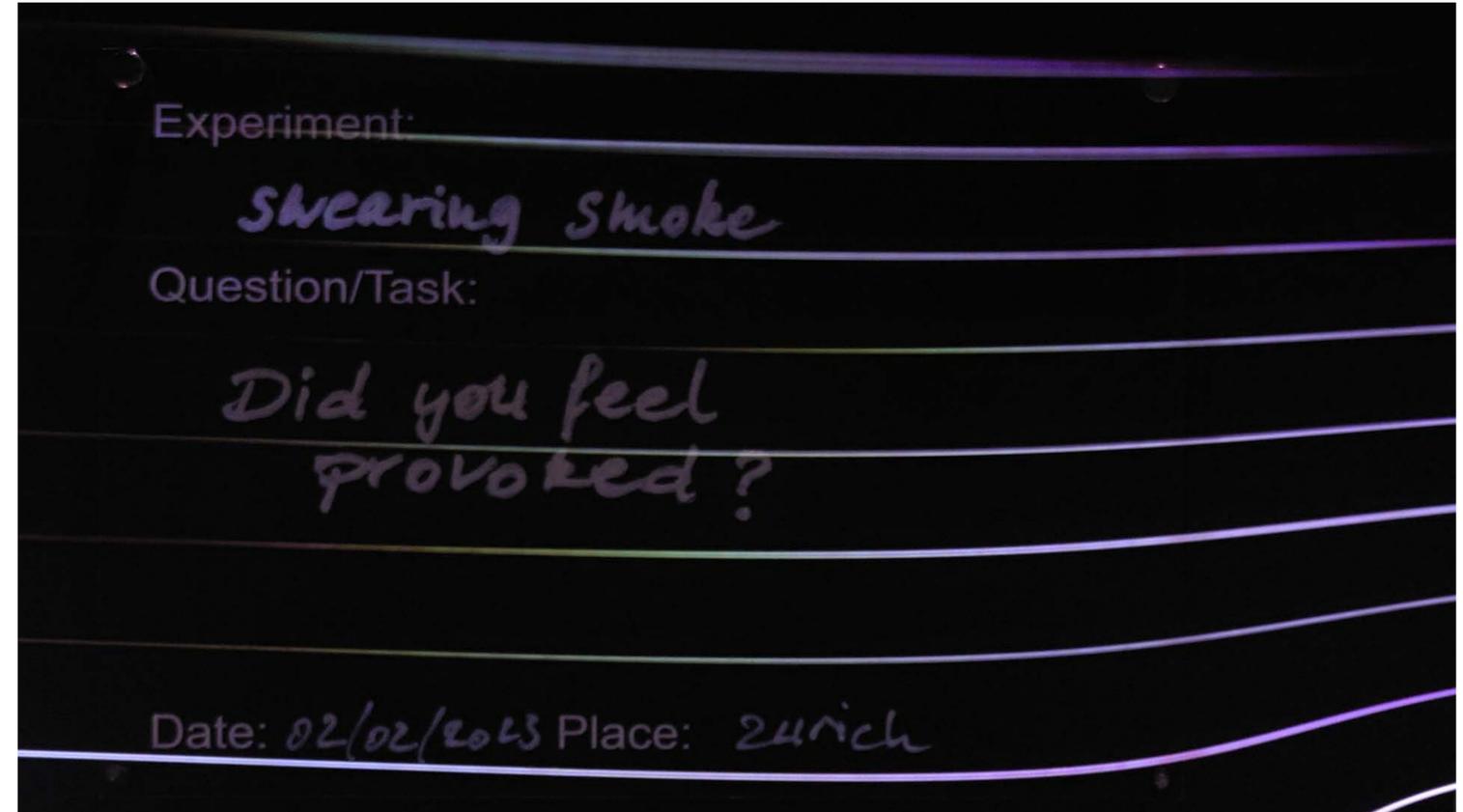


UNFILTERED SMOKE

The short film Unfiltered Smoke describes a fictional experiment in which the 5-phase model of swearing is tested on smoke in a wind tunnel. It investigates whether the still poorly understood turbulence itself are force expressions. The smoke becomes a swearing actor.

[watch video here](#)

Video, colour, sound,
6:00 min, 2023



STONE TREK



STONE TREK

The telescope of the Archenhold star observatory softens like a trunk and burrows into the soil of Berlin's Treptower Park. During a cinematic journey through the sediments of human history and Earth's recent epoch, the products of the drilling develop a life of their own. After the telescope has spat them out, they conquer the surrounding urban space in movements of undefined choreography.

[watch video here](#)

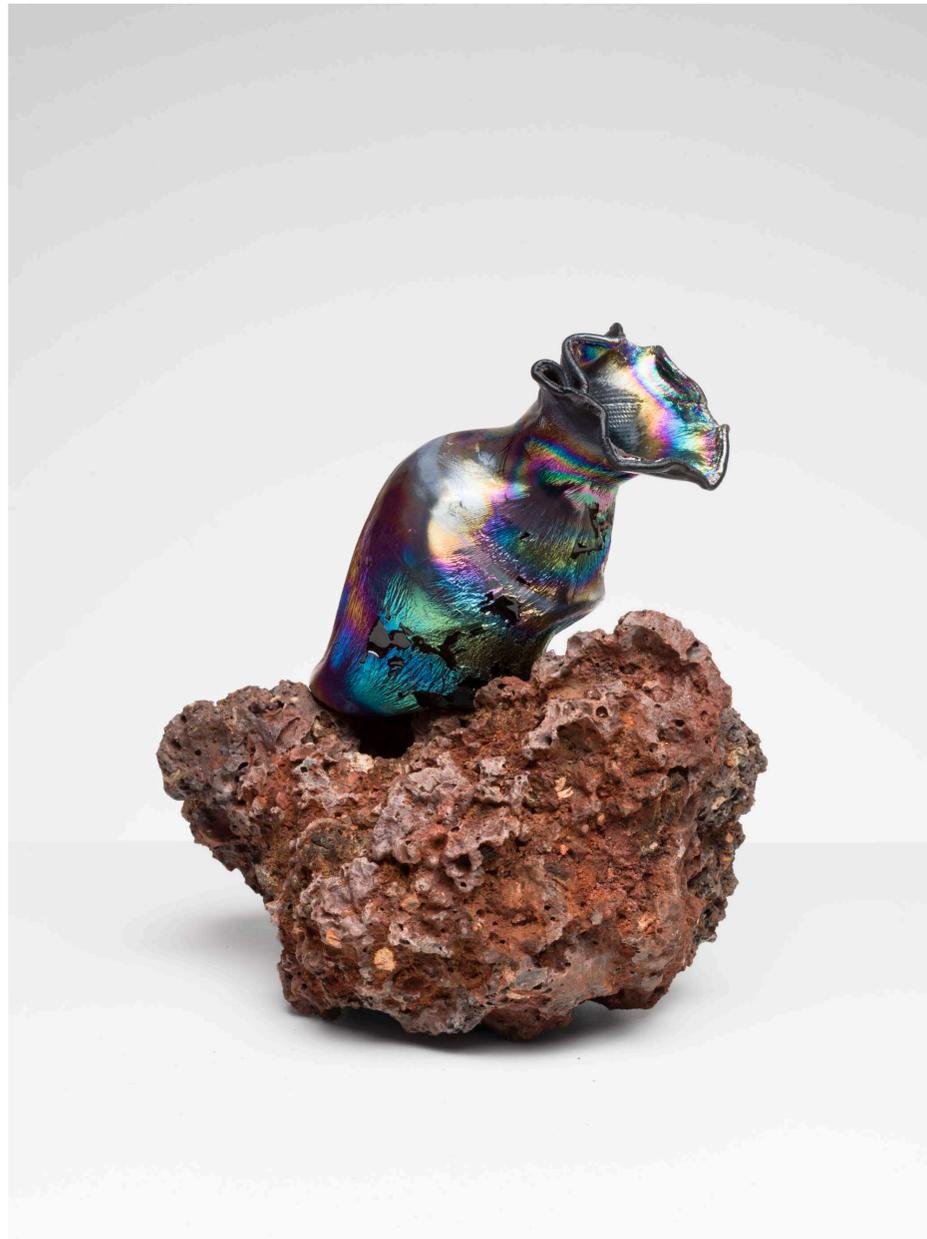


Video, colour, sound,
6:50 min, *the sky was the
limit*, group, Stiftung
Planetarium Berlin, 2021



STEINLI WILL NIT SCHLAFEN

stone, slag, glass, between 12 × 20 × 11 cm and
53 × 36 × 15 cm, 2024



THE INTENSIVE INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR ACADEMY

The IIIAA, initiated by artists Kasia Fudakowski and myself in 2018, is an interdisciplinary 'amateur academy' that aims to bring together international participants from different professional and social backgrounds within a non-bureaucratic, low-hierarchy and material-oriented approach.

We see the IIIAA as an experimental, ever-changing platform for exploring new forms of knowledge exchange, with a substantive focus on the everyday, hands-on working relationships with the things and research objects of each practitioner, and the goal of narrowing the gap with the non-human and inanimate world.

For the first edition, we found four international participants (fr/pl/de/per) of different ages (21 to 35) through a call for proposals. In July 2018, as a group, we met 27 invited experts and dedicated amateurs, such as a physicist, a lawyer, curators and artists of diverse practices, all sharing their ways of thinking and working within an intense and diverse program of workshops, lectures and site explorations.

During IIIAA II at the Salon am Moritzplatz in July 2019, the hierarchy of knowledge exchange was to be further reduced: 10 lecturers were asked to address in innovative formats the special relationship to the object of work of their respective practice and to make clear whether and if so which matter or things have a performativity or agenda. For example, a virologist, an environmental law attorney, an architect, and a plastics conservator were invited.

Given the special circumstances of 2020, IIIAA III took place privately over a weekend in September as guests at the Stechlin Institute. As our experts we invited 5 lawyers from London, Amsterdam and Berlin to discuss with us the possibilities of rights for matter and natural entities, simulated processes and a liability of concrete.

Coming back to an idea that has been fermenting in us for over a year and a half, we wanted to better understand the legal processes involved in creating a legal personhood for non-humans and the resulting right of action.

IIIAA I - III: Berlin-wide (2018), Salon am Moritzplatz and Cemex cement factory Rüdersdorf (2019) and Stechlin Institut (2020)



CONVICTING CONCRETE

This short film uses photo essay, stop motion and digital animation techniques to tell the story of an absurd fictional courtroom drama: Concrete is being sued for its environmental damage. The trial is contested by people and materials alike.

[Watch the trailer here](#)

with Kasia Fudakowski
Video, colour, sound,
20:15 min, 2023



GRAND HOT COURT



Installation view
attitudes of heat, solo,
Galerie Guido W. Baudach,
Berlin, 2020

GRAND HOT COURT

The room installation *Grand Hot Court* consists of a suspended ceiling made of plastic foil, similar to a greenhouse roof or a miniture climate chamber. Oval metal cages covered with stone-based granules stick out of melting holes in the foil. They enclose vacuum bags and hold them at different heights. The vacuum bags contain atmospheric gases such as argon, CO2 and methane.

A poetic text is published as a press release for the exhibition: in a ‚greenhouse tribunal‘, materials such as glass, concrete and gases themselves negotiate the responsibilities of recent climate change:

(...) Glass is carrying on with its strategy of clearly defining a framework for which the responsibility of climatic eventualities can be fairly assigned. It was explained that to assign responsibility a true understanding of the effects of each and every material must be interrogated, their motives made clear, and only then can the tribunal make its final judgement.

In one rousing moment Concrete objected to taking any responsibility claiming that, as it was man-made, how could Concrete bear responsibility for its own creation. The prosecutor replied, “Ours is a system in which there is no outside, so there can be no such thing as unintended consequences, there are only consequences. And this tribunal’s job is to lay them bare.” (...)

— Harry Haddon

HUSTLE IN A HOT HOUSE (CO2)
Sand, pebble stones, asilikos,
epoxy resin, steel, PET, PE, CO2,
76 × 52 × 42 cm, 2020
attitudes of heat, solo,
Galerie Guido W. Baudach, Berlin



DIE AUTONOME ALGE ANLAGE (THE AUTONOMOUS ALGAE FACILITY)

A text about a fictional facility accompanies the installation:

The test facility *The autonomous algae* works in a future, where we can communicate and negotiate with other species. Here, the energy potentials of algae are explored, as are ways to regulate their blooms.

Mutating algae species are proliferating, the number and size of their blooms are steadily increasing. The algae seem to pursue an expansive strategy. Using green micro algae as pro bands, conditions for bloom arrest using nitrate diets will be investigated at the facility to avoid future tipping points. In the form of asphalt made from petroleum, algae have already sealed large parts of the earth's surface. Here, blow-ups in the ground will be used to allow water to evaporate.

The goal of the facility is to develop scientific standards for a 'general algae law'. On the one hand, this should designate bloom areas and guarantee nutrient supply, on the other hand it should penalize exceeding the bloom limit.

Steel, polyethylene, polyvinyl chloride, construction waste, pump, microalgae (*Chlorella Vulgaris*), potassium nitrate, 500 × 700 × 40 cm, 2020
Welt in Teilen, group, Kunstverein St. Pauli, Heiligengeistfeld Hamburg



COUVERTURE

(...) These objects, which are made of various kinds of both artificial and natural materials, such as relics or weathered fossils, petrifications of uncertain origin or even geological formations, appear as kinds of threatening hybrid messengers from the future. (...)

The work *Couverture* (2015) is difficult to define: like a folded and then carelessly abandoned blanket, this curious thing made of thin bed mortar, sand, wood and glass lies strewn on the ground, strangely soft and surprisingly hard at the same time, weirdly artificial – and then, in its casual obviousness, in fact almost natural.

– Dominikus Müller

thin-bed mortar, sand, wood,
glass, 40 × 28 × 8 cm, 2015



SALENTO MODEL

The Salento model feigns to be hewn from a rock in the municipality of the same name in southern Italy, but it is actually a cast of the 'artificial stone' concrete. Its organic folds refer ironically to the leather seating found in classical museums.

concrete, pebble and chalk,
38 × 135,5 × 65 cm, 2015
Ausstellen des Ausstellens,
(exhibiting the exhibition),
group, Staatliche Kunsthalle
Baden-Baden, 2018



LOUNGESET ,TORBA'



concrete, steel, foam, peat,
gravel, salt, sand, styrofoam,
glass, transparent folie,
160 × 80 × 75 cm &
80 × 80 × 40 cm, 2016
cement & weather, solo,
Oldenburger Kunstverein



PARTERRE MORAINE



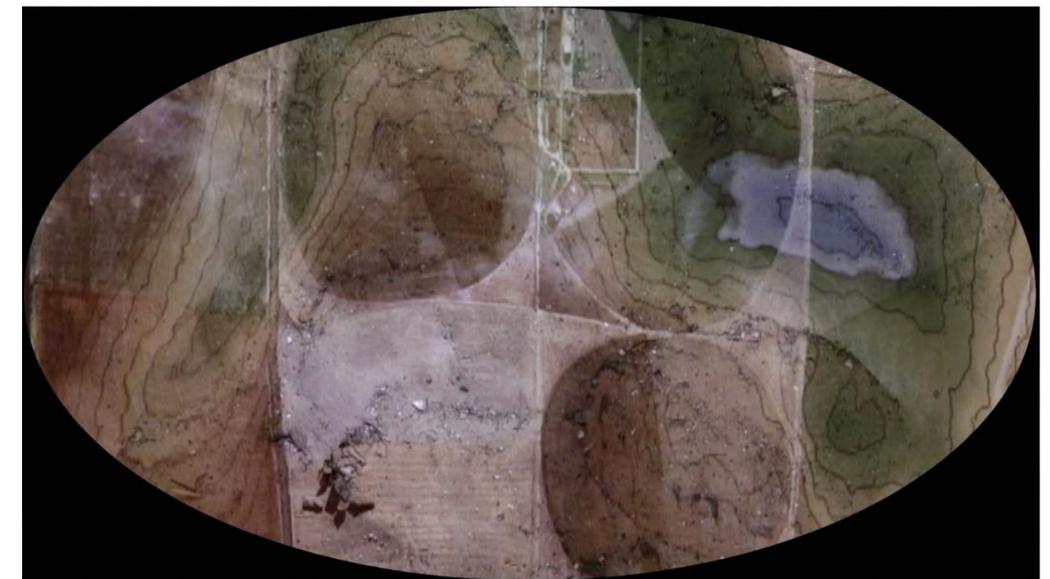
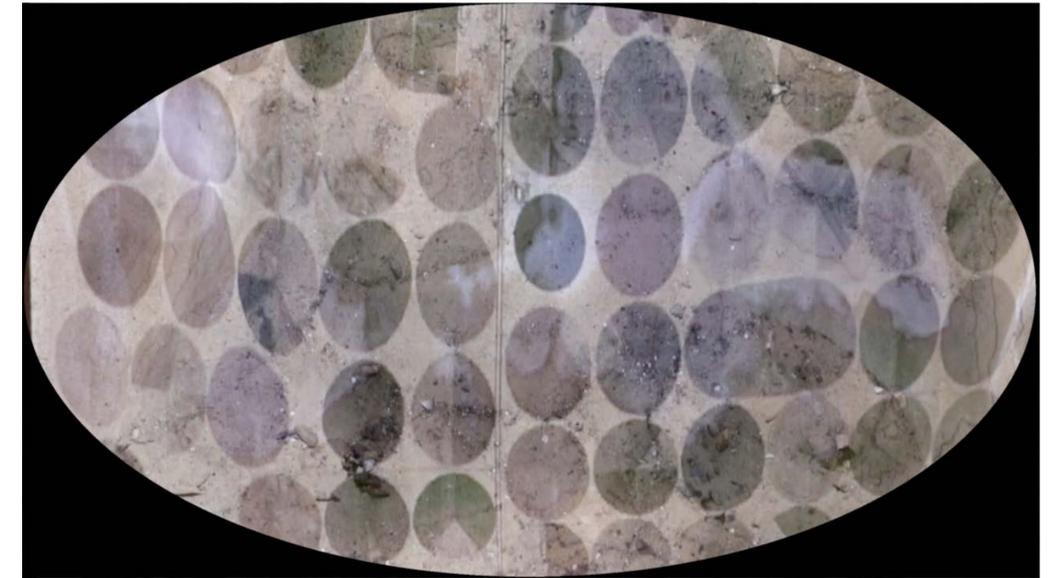
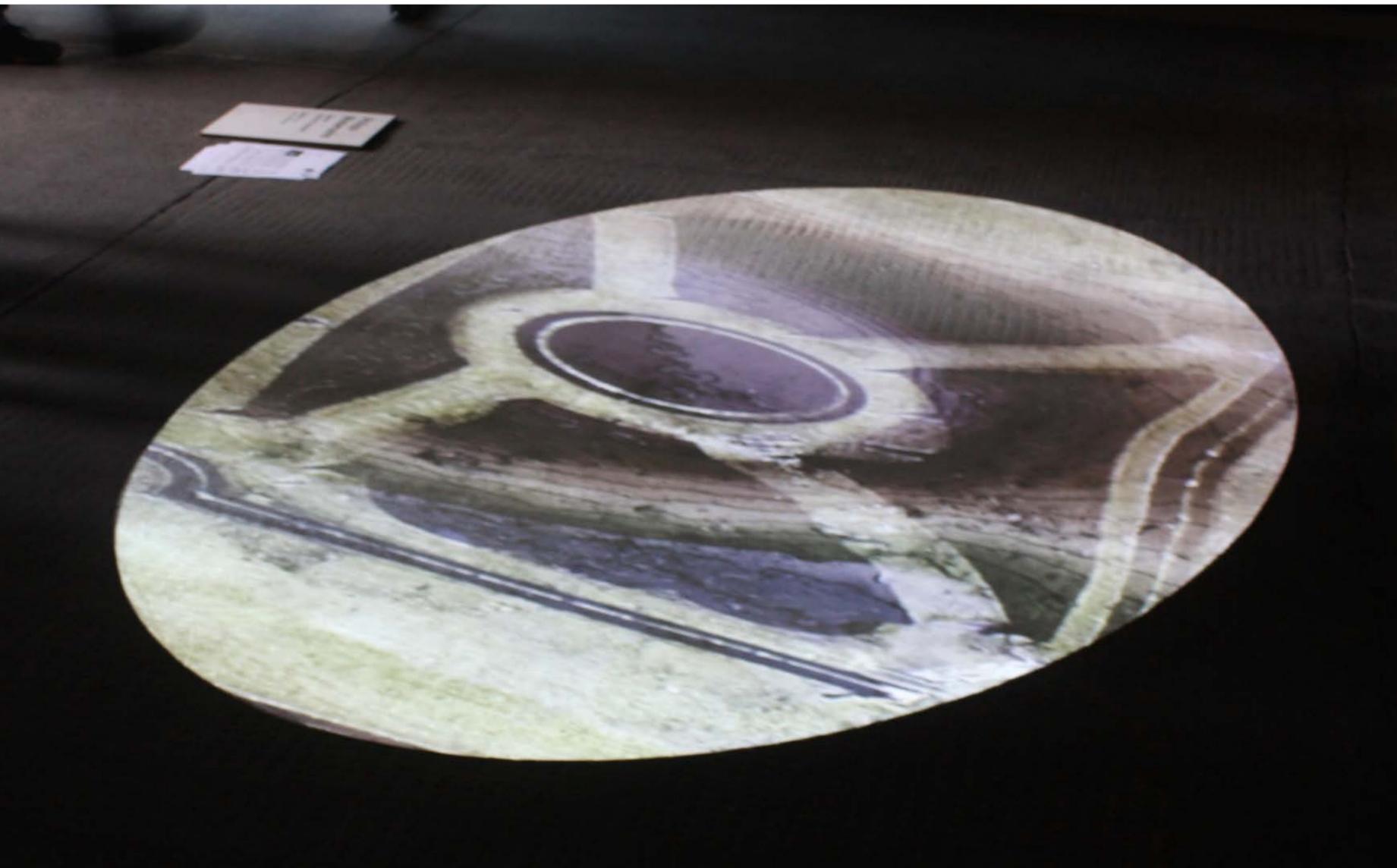
gravel, sand, glass, dust,
styrofoam, glass slag, salt,
peat, granulated clay,
360 × 550 cm, 2016
cement & weather, solo,
Oldenburger Kunstverein

ALLROUND MANEGE

Allround Manege deals with the formation of surfaces; layers of fleeting images show an array of topographies and land uses. Within an oval of sand, satellite images from common navigation technology are brought together with the music of a baroque garden party and the live digital topography of an 'Augmented Reality Sandbox'.

This technique is used both in geographical museums and in military strategic planning; while a sensor scans the changing contours of constantly modulating heaps of sand, topographical color sequences are projected in real time back onto the surface. Forms emerge, fold and disperse in the sandbox, the initial format of the sculptural.

ALLROUND MANEGE
video, floor projection,
color/sound, 14:40 min, 2015



BLOCK- UND SCHOLLENGEBIRGE (BLOCK AND CLOD MOUNTAINS)

Societies are transformed, boundaries are offset, worldviews grow stronger and weaken, styles evolve and disappear. What remains constant is the concrete physicality of landscape, architecture and cultural artifacts ... in between is the perpetual fiction of flexible and uncontrollable interactions between people, creatures and things.

In the Park Manituusa are conglomerates of material and style references, which take the form of platforms, miniature continents or seating modules. The design of these bodies is made up of elements that were seen and collected during walks in the neighborhood of Stary Grundwald.

pigmented concrete, moss, soil,
varying dimensions, 2014
Spacerologia, group,
Park Manituusa, Poznan



DIE PUNKTIERUNG DER SPHÄRENARENA
(THE DOTTING OF THE ARENA OF SPHERES)



each 76 cm × 21 × 21 cm,
concrete and diverse materials,
correction lines, group,
Rosengarten in the Großer Tier-
garten, Berlin 2014





Sand, gravel, stones, asphalt,
asilikos, glass, pigment, epoxy
resin, steel, rolls,
120 × 135 × 90 cm, 2018

YOUNG STONE WITH FUTURE



Sand, pebble stones, stones,
glass, asilikos, epoxy resin,
165 × 70 × 73 cm, 2020



SIO2GO



SiO2go
Installation view, solo,
Galerie Guido W. Baudach,
Berlin 2017

SIO2GO (STREET)



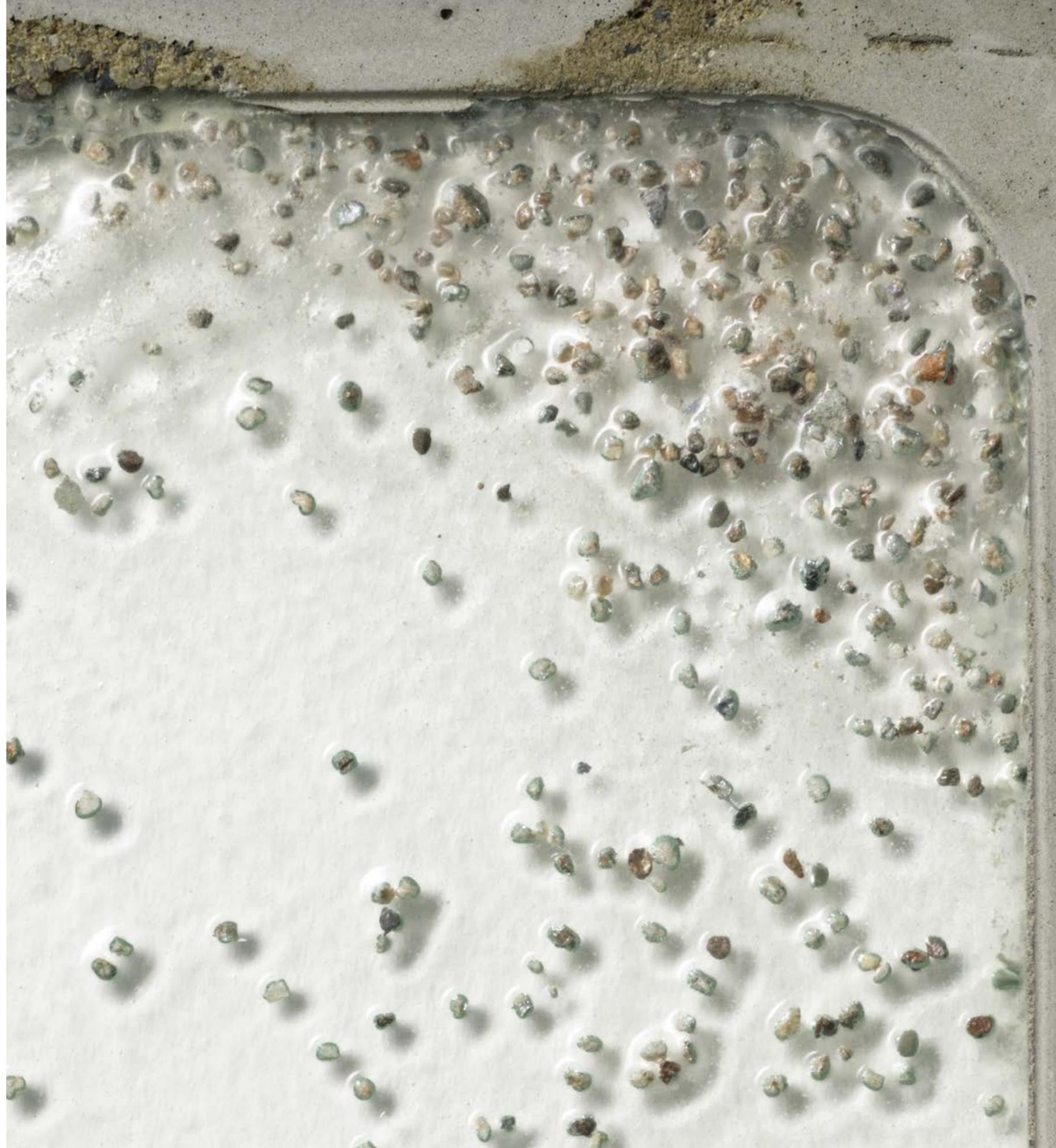
Safety glass, asphalt, crayon,
pebble, quartz sand, iron, epoxy
resin, 96 × 134 × 12 cm, 2017
SiO2go, solo, Galerie Guido W.
Baudach, Berlin



FLOATING



FLOATING XIV
concrete, glass, steel, sand, gravel,
42,5 × 31,5 × 5 cm, 2015
Turbulenzen im Teich, solo,
Galerie Guido W. Baudach Berlin



DÉCOR DANCE (RED AND YELLOW)



mirror, stones, pebble stones,
steel, epoxy resin,
53 × 63 × 18 cm, 2020
attitudes of heat, solo,
Galerie Guido W. Baudach, Berlin

