



Michaela Putz
Selected Works

Michaela Putz is an artist based in Vienna whose interdisciplinary practice explores the relationship between image, memory, nature and technology. Starting from the photographic image, she investigates overlaps between archival material, ecological issues, image storage and digital reconstruction processes. Rather than focusing on acts of preservation, she is interested in the permeability of images – towards what is missing, forgotten or imagined. In recent years, she has worked intensively with digital traces of extinct and endangered species. Using image fragments and 3D reconstructions, she creates speculative image spaces in which the boundaries between documentation, simulation and memory become fluid.



Foto: Laura Sperl

Postfactual Seeds

*Rendered photography and 3d-prints, commissioned work for exhibition Seeds. Reclaiming Roots, Sowing Futures, KunstHausWien
2026*

"In Postfactual Seeds (2026), Michaela Putz considers seeds as a store of past and future, exploring how they are translated from a biological carrier into a digital object: with the help of AI-supported 3D modelling, Putz translates the photographs into virtual models. Resulting from this evaluation are images of fictive seed hybrids, which are then presented as pigment carbon prints and 3D printed sculptures—as copies of copies which recall museal archival objects and simultaneously refer to the principles of agricultural hybrid breeding that is geared towards increasing yields and producing uniformity. The artist thus creates a parallel reality, one in which biological facts are replaced by machine-readable data, while also inquiring into the possibilities and contradictions of AI-supported systems and digital spaces for preserving biodiversity. What remains verifiable when knowledge is increasingly based on algorithmic interpretations? While AI is being deployed more and more in species protection projects, its enormous use of resources simultaneously contributes to further destabilizing ecological systems. By connecting archival documentation and algorithmic speculation, Postfactual Seeds poses a key question: What are the consequences when the future of ecosystems is conceived in the data room while its very physical foundations are becoming increasingly instable?" - Sophie Haslinger, Kunst Haus Wien





Exhibition view Seeds. Reclaiming Roots, Sowing Futures, KunstHausWien 2026, (c) photos: Iris Ranzinger



3d printed seeds
Exhibition view Seeds.
Reclaiming Roots, Sowing
Futures, KunstHausWien 2026,
(c) photos: Iris Ranzinger



Exhibition view Seeds.
Reclaiming Roots, Sowing
Futures, KunstHausWien 2026,
(c) photos: Iris Ranzinger



Postfactual Seeds
Rendered photographs, pigment prints on photo rag ultra smooth
25 x 25 cm each, 2026



Postfactual Seeds
Rendered photographs, pigment prints on photo rag ultra smooth
25 x 25 cm each, 2026



Postfactual Seeds
Rendered photography,
pigment prints on photo rag
ultra smooth
100 x 120 cm, 2026

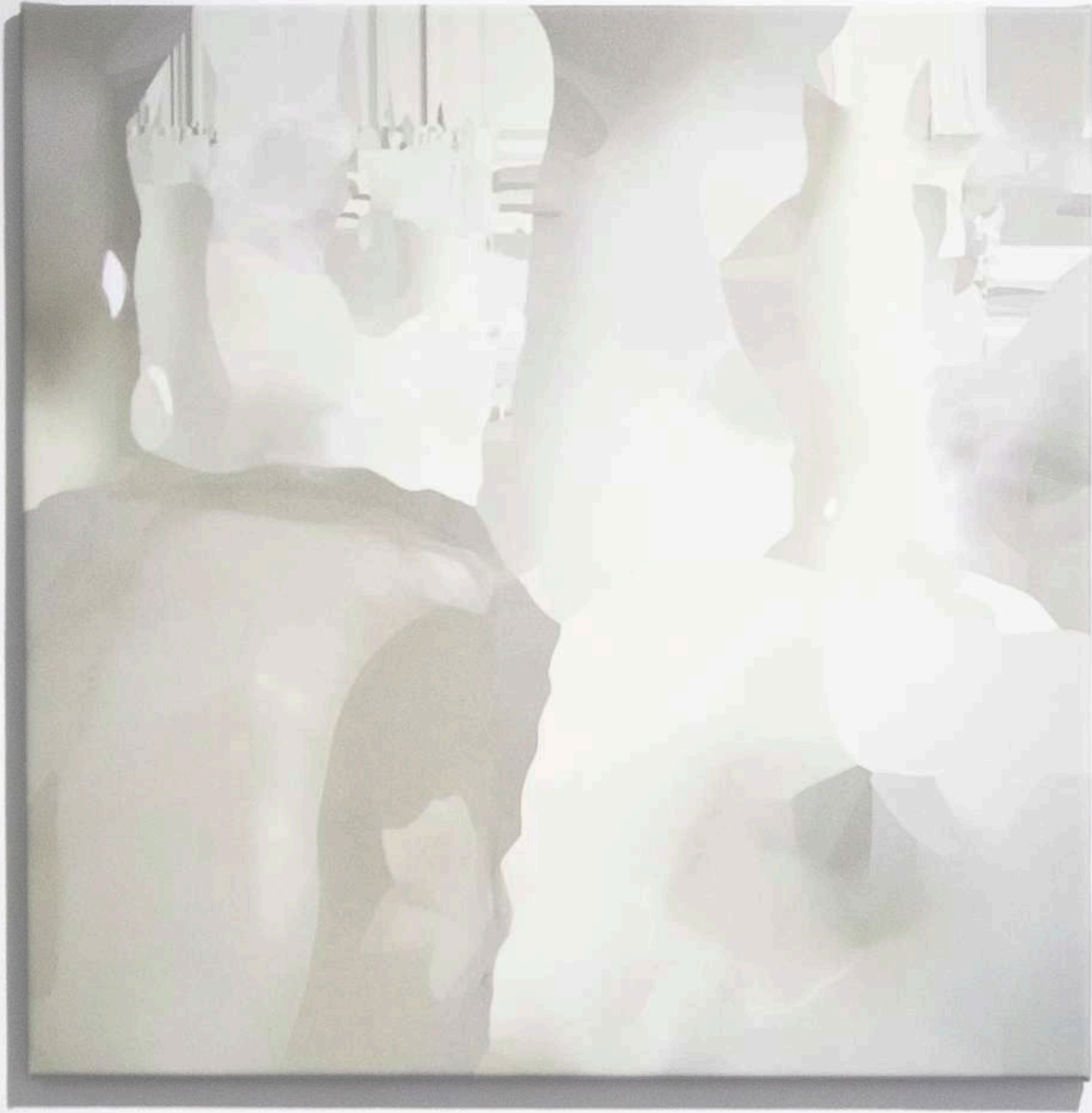
Albedo/Skin

Digital prints from 3D-reconstructions on textile
2024/2025

These textile-based and sculptural works derive from digital reconstructions of extinct species. The series originates from algorithmically generated images and 3D models that are translated into material surfaces - digital prints on synthetic leather produced in a textile factory in the Yangtze Delta, a region shaped by intensive global manufacturing. Developed during an artist residency there, the works address the interconnections between production ecologies, consumerism, and environmental degradation.

The photographic pieces are complemented by sculptural objects that extend these "digital skins" into three-dimensional forms. Based on AI-generated models of the extinct Baiji dolphin, fragmentary body shapes emerge as soft, spectral entities, synthetic membranes stretched over imagined anatomies. The AI's reconstructions hallucinate ornamental patterns and structural inconsistencies, revealing the fragility and unreliability of digital memory. Mounted on thin metal rods, the sculptures appear as suspended remnants, oscillating between presence and disappearance.





Albedo/Skin 01
2024
Digital print on feaux leather
95 x 95 cm



Albedo/Skin 02
2024
Digital print on feaux leather
130 x 100 cm



Albedo/Skin, Curtain
2025

Metamorphosen, mit Jasmin Schaschl, Offbeats Studio,
Foto Wien (c) Michaela Putz, Bildrecht

Phantom of a Garden

Video work and multimedia installation

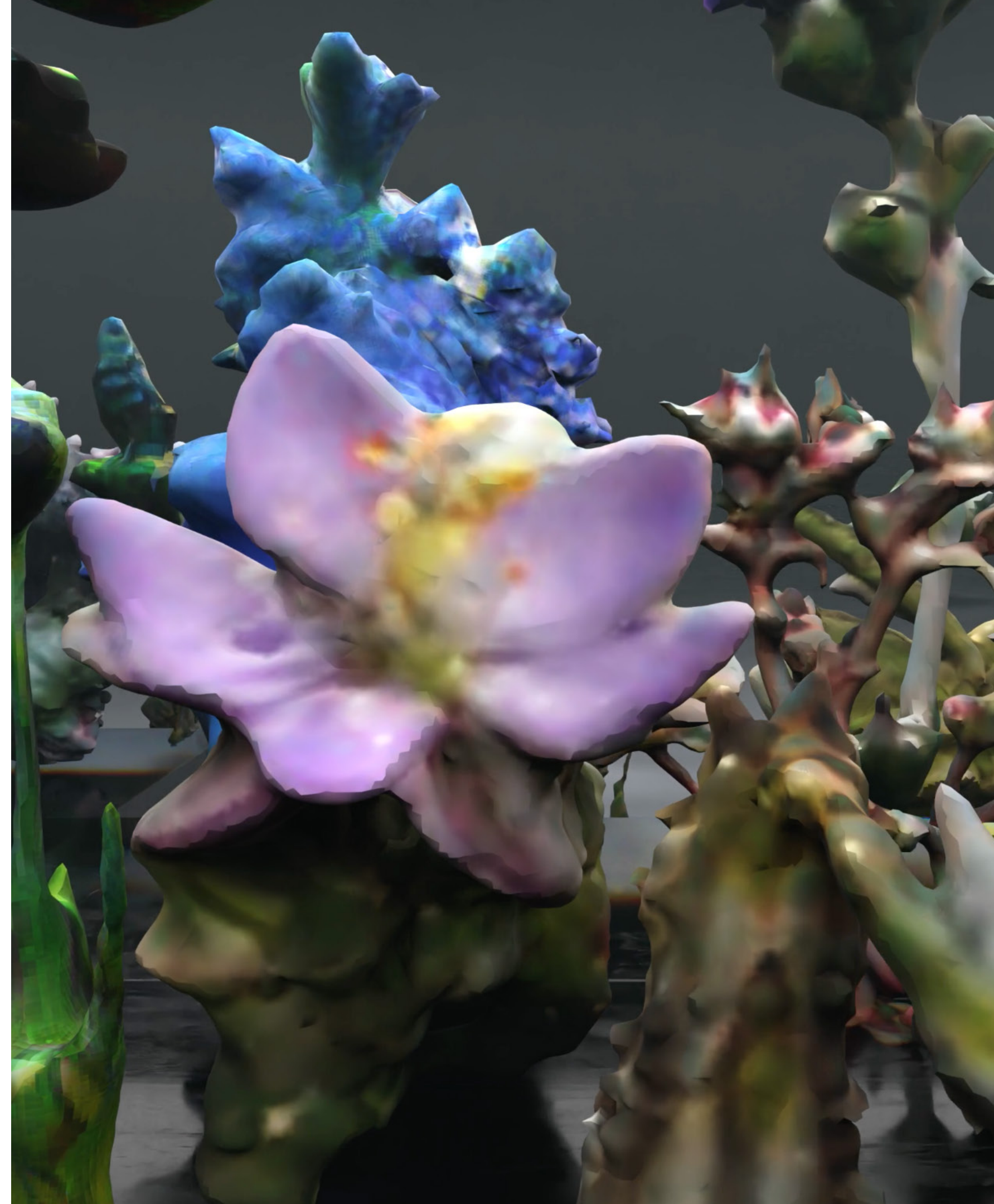
06:24 min

2024

As a result of working with digital image archives of extinct plants over the past two years, “Phantom of a Garden” imagines a future in which lost things are brought back to life in a digital realm. Based on a found-footage image archive of extinct and endangered plant species, the digital images and image fragments were subjected to a transformative process with the help of an AI that interpreted the images as 3D models. Without a real template, based only on collected images devoid of perspective and detail, the rendered plants are usually glitchy and reminiscent of ghostly apparitions or phantom echoes of their former selves.

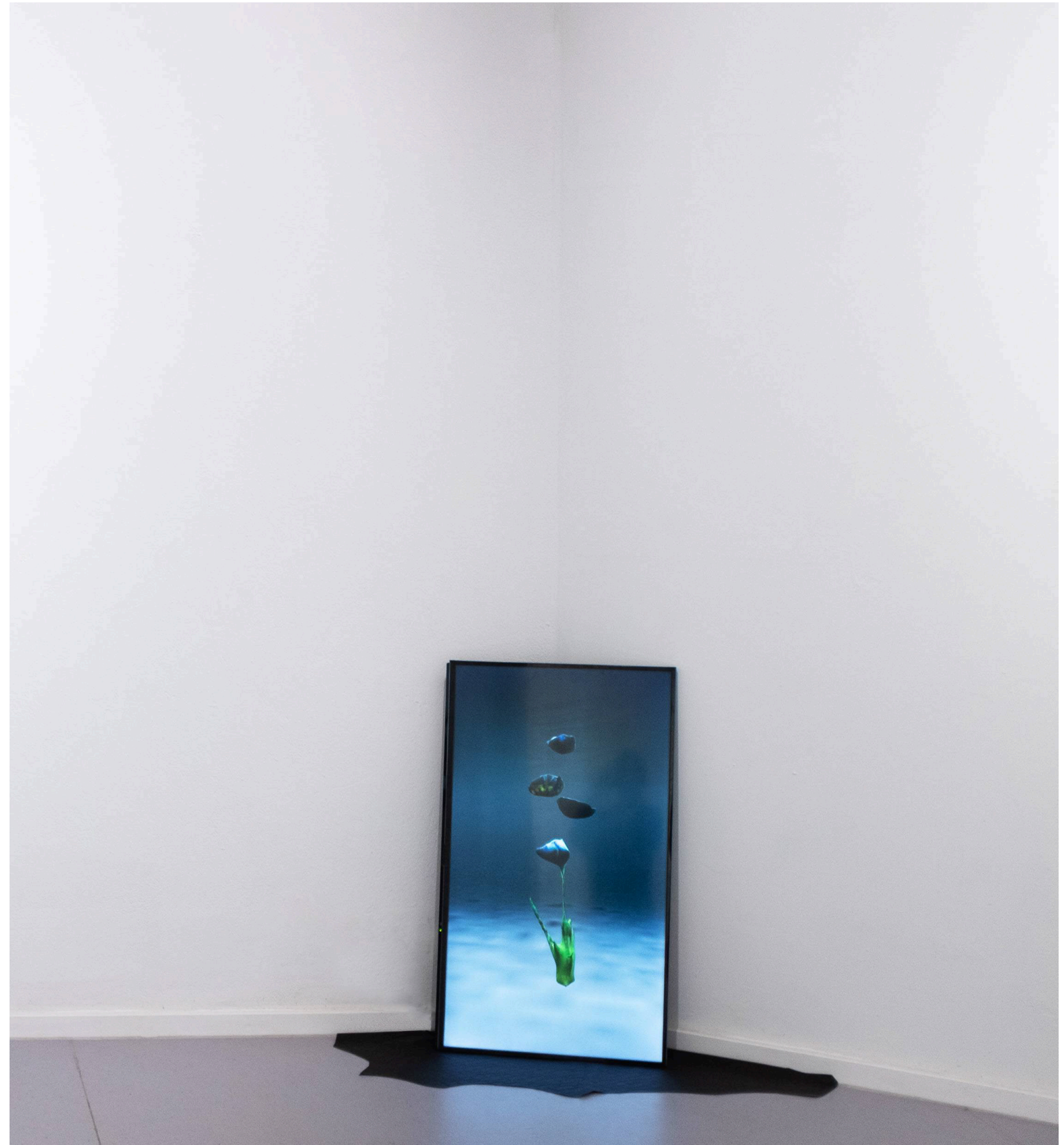
In collaboration with Multinode Studio

With the kind support of Land Burgenland

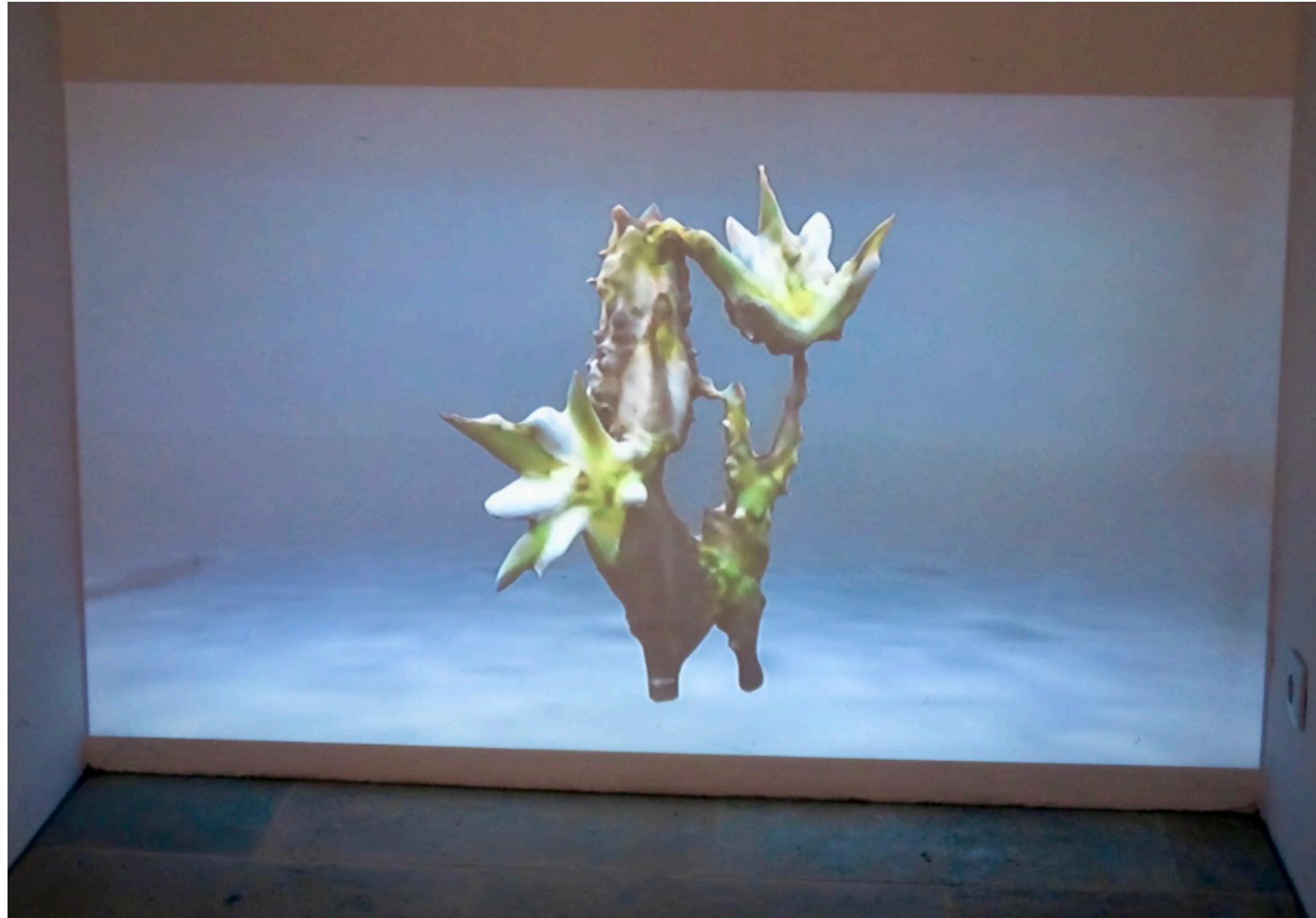




Exhibition view "Uncanny Gardens", Medienwerkstatt Wien (AT) (c) Michaela Putz, Bildrecht



Exhibition view "Alchemical Im/possibilities", Frappant Hamburg (DE) (c) Michaela Putz, Bildrecht



Video screening Werkstatt für zeitgenössische Wahrnehmung, OFFEN Burgenland (c) Michaela Putz, Bildrecht



Shapes 1-3, Textilausschnitte, Galerie Frappant Hamburg (DE)

Collected

*Series of collages from C-Prints (Fujicolor photo paper matte) and digital collages from found footage images / In situ wall collages / Room interventions, various dimensions
2021-2024*

This work complex explores the act of remembering and the instability of digital images in the context of ecological loss. Endangered and extinct plant species were researched in digital archives, photographing the images directly from screens and mobile devices. The resulting C-prints capture not only the found imagery but also the material traces of the interface - pixels, reflections, scratches, fingerprints, and navigation icons, transforming the digital surface into a visible site of mediation. Through layering and manual reassemblies, past and present collapse into complex visual palimpsests. The work reflects on archives, memory, and reproduction, while questioning the interface as both boundary and conduit between the digital and the physical. Informed by media theory and post-photographic discourse, Collected reveals the screen not as a neutral tool, but as an active, tactile participant in processes of seeing and remembering.





Wall collage, Inkjet prints, photography,
4 x 2,40 cm, 2024 // Exhibition view
ALCHEMICAL IMPOSSIBILITIES, sehsaal
Wien (c) Michaela Putz, Bildrecht



Exhibition view FRAGMENTARIUM,
Vienna Collectors Club
(c) Anna Ignatovich,
Vienna Collectors Club



Wallcollage & Collected series
(26 x 18 cm & 22 x 16 cm), unique
works // Exhibition view "Plants,
Sand, Sea", XYZ Lisbon with Laura
Sperl (c) Michaela Putz, Bildrecht



Cutout #003
Fine Art Print on Cotton paper
80 x 60 cm



Exhibition view "Between Light & Shadow", Duo with Hessam Samawatian (c) Theresa Wey // left: Untitled (Paper Archaeology) #01, Herbarium paper (47,8 x 56,8 cm), middle: Untitled (Linaria arvensis), Collage from C-Prints (100 x 70 cm), right: Untitled (Linaria arvensis), Collage from C-Prints (100 x 70 cm), right: Untitled (Linaria arvensis), Collage from C-Prints (26 x 18 cm)



Cutout #001 (left)
C-Print mounted on Alu Dibond,
80 x 60 cm, framed, edition of 3
Exhibition view "9 Artists, 9 Days",
Otto Wagner Pavilion (AT)
(c) Michaela Putz



Untitled (*Actaea europaea*), 2023, 40 x
30 cm, Collage from C-Prints,
Unique work
(c) Michaela Putz, Bildrecht



UV-Print on Vinyl (500 x 150 cm)
2022
Foto Anna Nickel



Fine Art Prints on Hahnemühle, mounted on Alu Dibond, framed (dimensions 75 x 45, 100 x 60, 125 x 75 cm), UV-Print on Vinyl (500 x 150 cm) / Exhibition view "Flora Iranica", group show 2022, Yassi Foundation (IRN) curated by Farshido Larimian (c) Yassi Foundation, 2022

Screen Romance

Photography, 2018-2020

“In Putz’s “Screen Romance”, (...) swiping is an expressive gesture. Sometimes it materializes as a decisive, emphatic movement, at other times as an almost tentative touch; sometimes the traces agglomerate into an energetic cluster, at others they remain so subtle that they are barely visible. (...) Almost every glance is also a touch. We palpate the images, want to know more, zoom into the photo, pause, move the selection, zoom deeper, until the shot dissolves into pores or pixels. Out again, on to the next image, stop, continue, stop, continue, double click, zoom in, and so on. It is a process in which the photographic image comes to life. Digital data may be cold and incorporeal, but photos have always been lifeless matter, dead moments that had to be animated by our gaze and imagination to become carriers of memories.” - Fabian Knierim, translated by Georg Bauer





Screen Romance, Digital prints on fabrics,
various dimensions // Exhibition view
"Memory Matter. The Relationship Between
Objects and Our Self", Museum Villa Rot, 2022
| Photo: (c) Xavier Gonzalez



Screen Romance, UV-Prints on acrylic glass // Exhibition view "Memory Matter. The Relationship Between Objects and Our Self", Museum Villa Rot, 2022 | Photo: (c) Xavier Gonzalez



Screen Romance,
photography,
dimensions variable

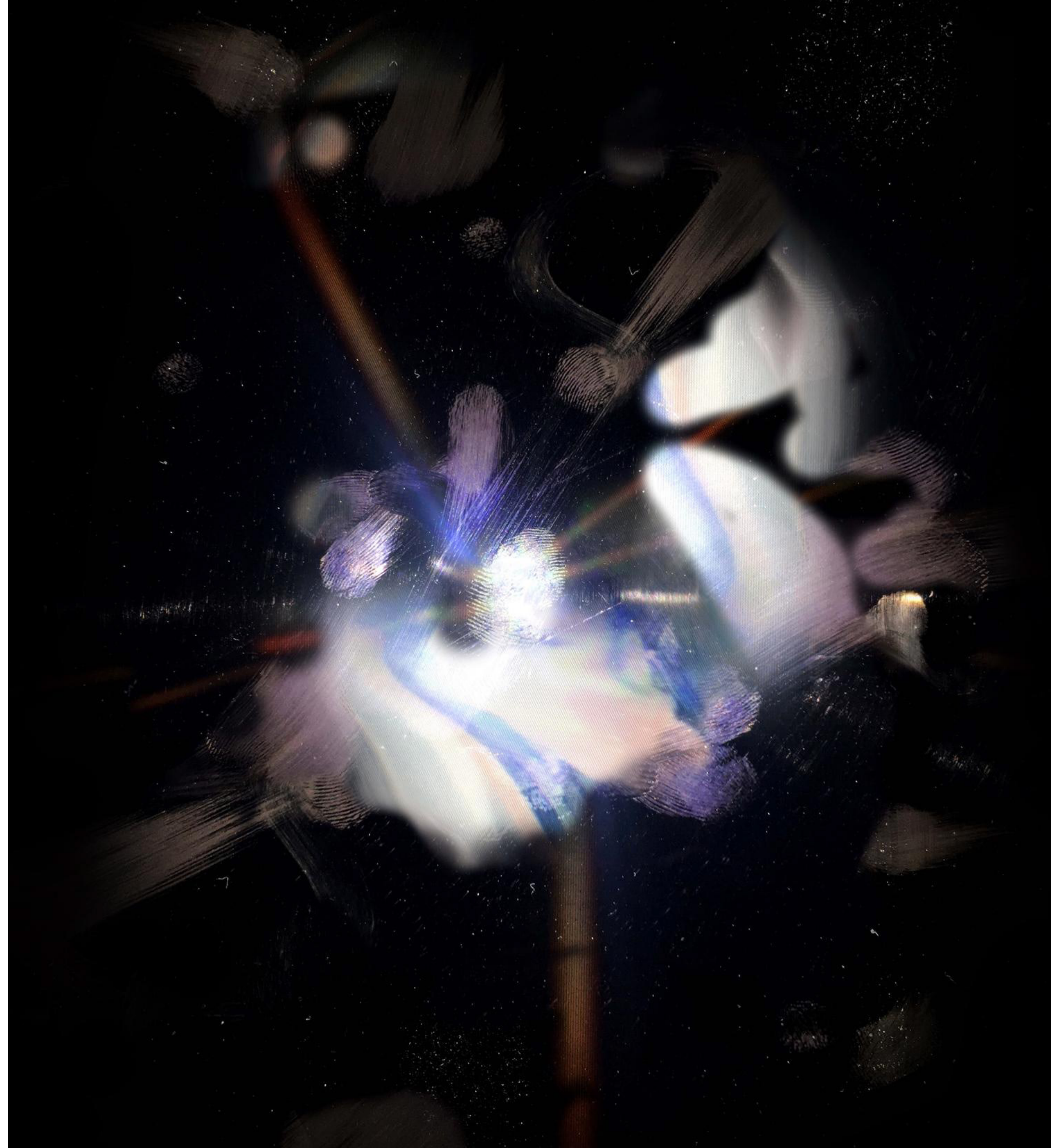
Gloom of Mnemosyne

Photography and Object, 2019

Through digitalization, the endless stream of images stored in the cloud fills these gaps. Virtual memories complement the imperfection of our human memory and let us forget fewer and fewer events from our own past. In the project "Gloom of Mnemosyne", the works explore the partial incomprehensibility of memories. Images from the artist's own past, stored on computer and hard disk, serve as starting material. In a digital retrospect, these images are captured directly from the screen, whereby fingerprints and dust on the screen are also part of the image world, as well as technical artifacts. The works become fragments of a memory, superimposed on the traces of time and alienated by technological interventions - and sometimes drift back into the darkness of oblivion.

With the kind support of:

 Bundeskanzleramt





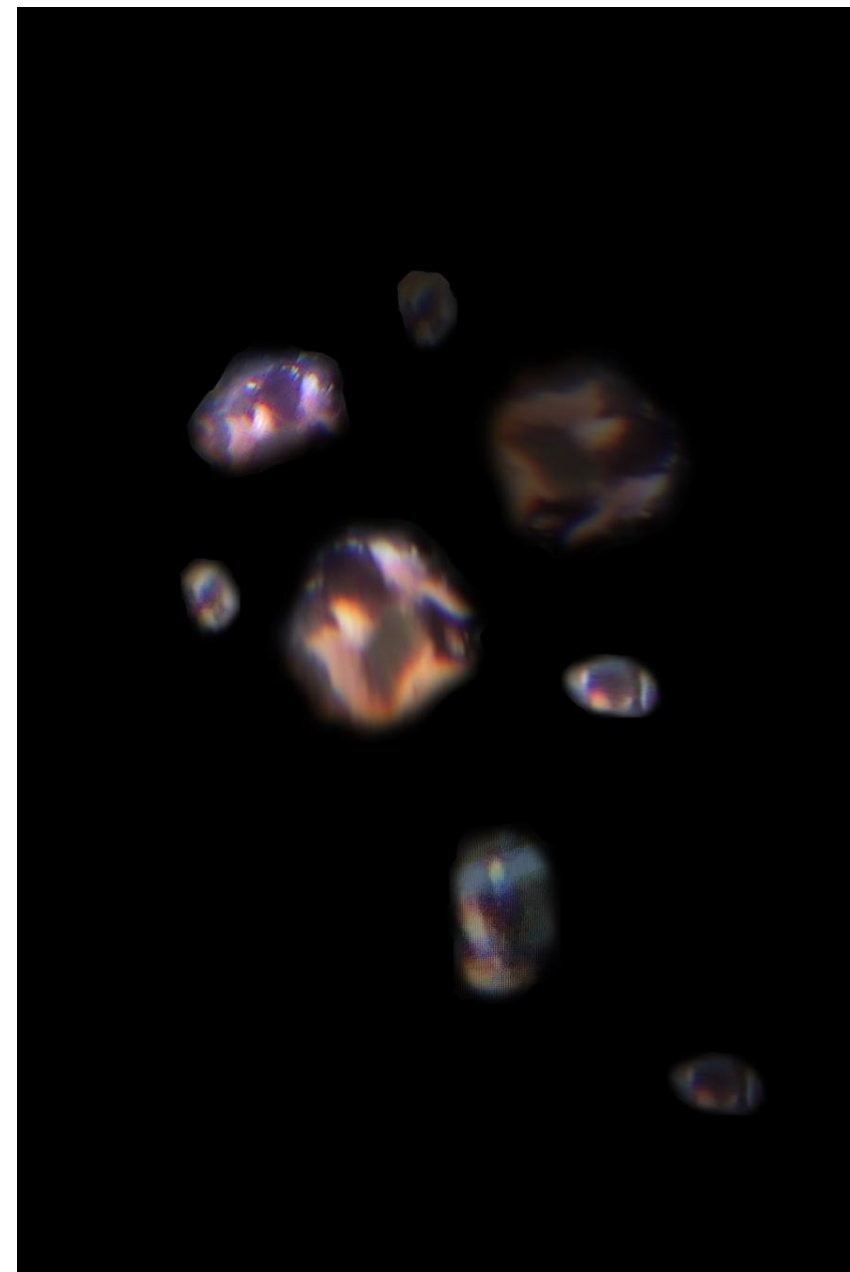
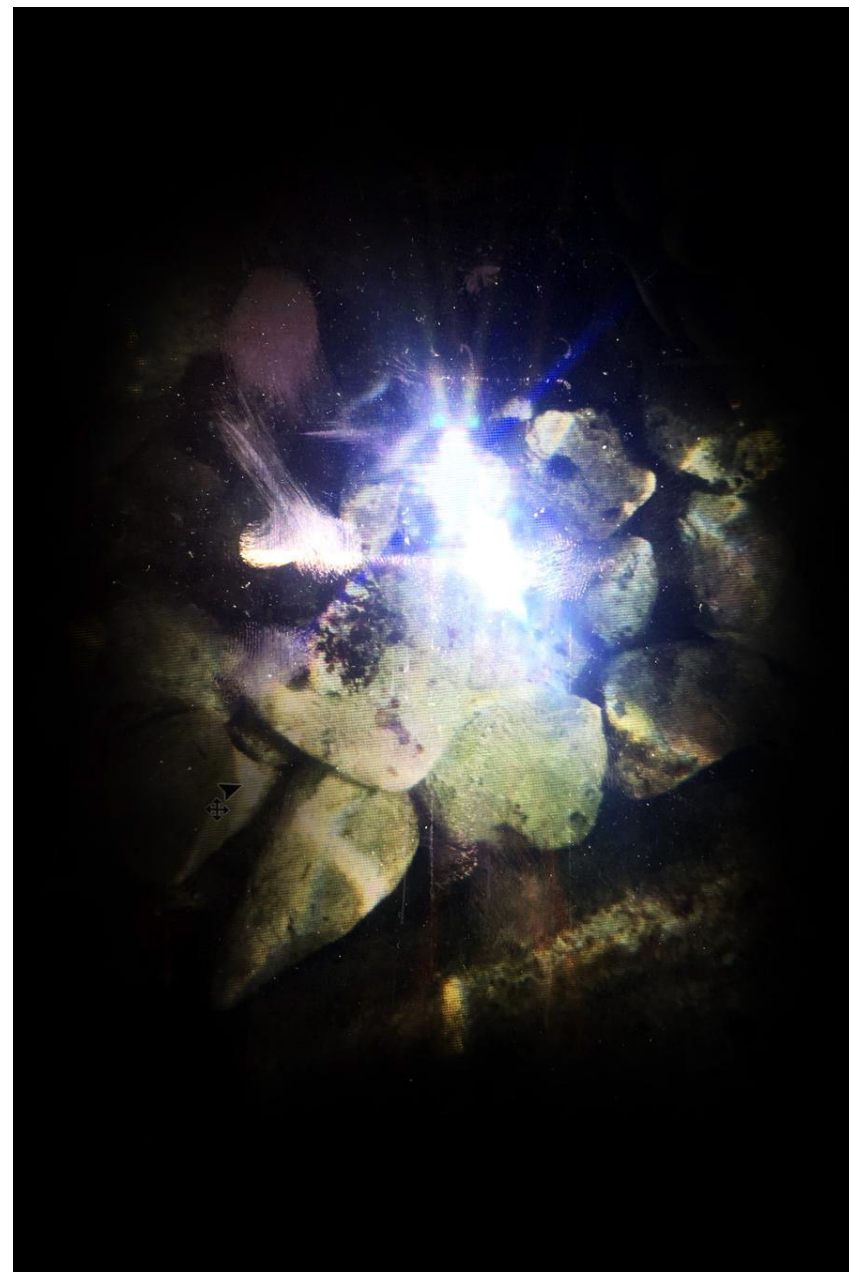
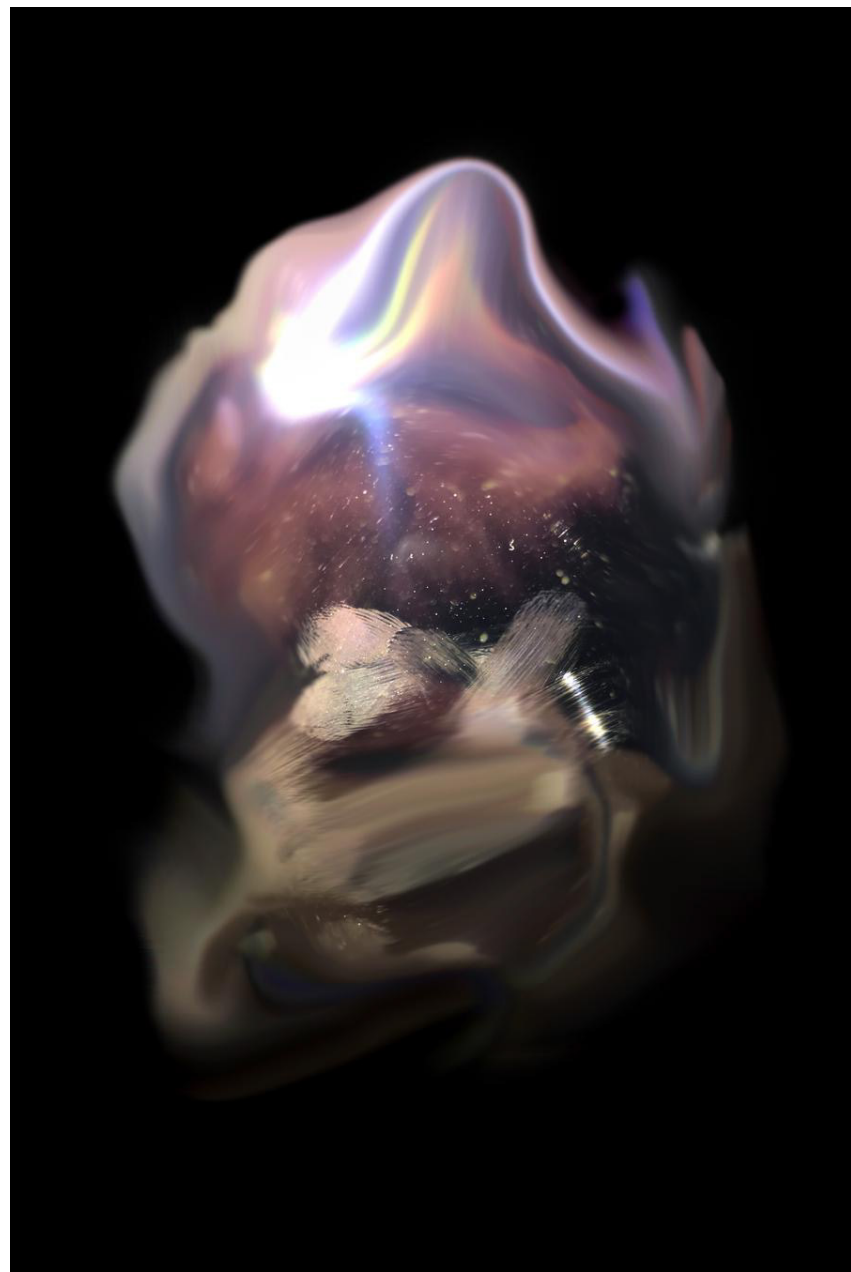
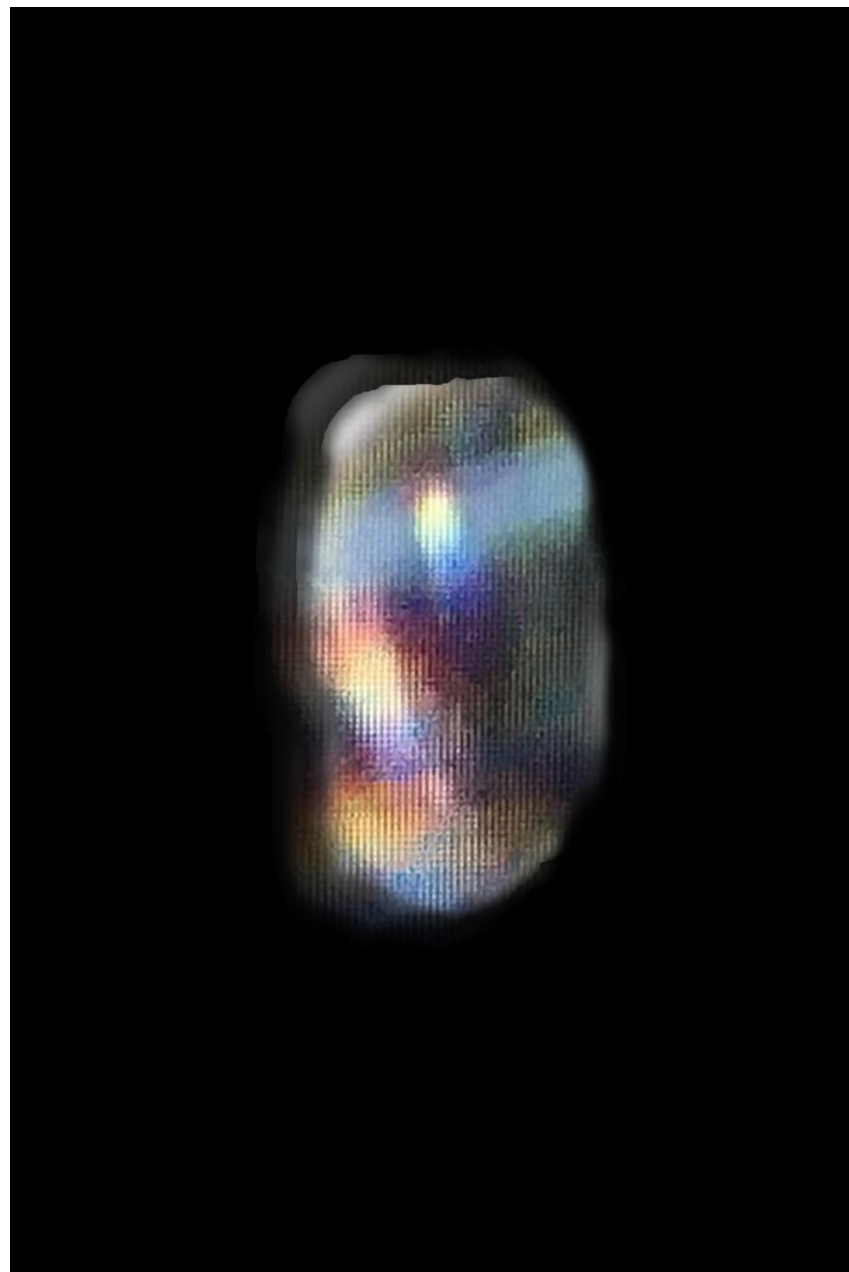
Left: Archival Fine Art Print Hahnemühle Photo Rag, mounted on alu dibond, in shadow gap frame, 140x100 cm, Center: Archival Fine Art Print Hahnemühle Photo Rag, framed, each 30x20 cm, Right: Wallpaper (various dimensions) // Exhibition view "Gloom of Mnemosyne (Solo), Bildraum 01 (AT) (c) Eva Kelety, Bildrecht



Left: Archival Fine Art
Print Hahnemühle Photo
Rag, mounted on alu
dibond, in shadow gap
frame, 140 x 100 cm,
Center: Archival Fine Art
Print Hahnemühle Photo
Rag, framed, each
30x20 cm, Right: Archival
Fine Art Print
Hahnemühle Photo Rag,
mounted on alu
diabond, in shadow
gap frame, 140 x 100 cm
// Exhibition view "Gloom
of Mnemosyne (Solo),
Bildraum 01 (AT) (c) Eva
Kelety, Bildrecht



Left: Archival Fine Art Print Hahnemühle Photo Rag, mounted on alu dibond, in shadow gap frame, 140 x 100 cm, Center: Archival Fine Art Print Hahnemühle Photo Rag, framed, each 30x20 cm, Right: Archival Fine Art Print Hahnemühle Photo Rag, mounted on alu dibond, in shadow gap frame, 140 x 100 cm // Exhibition view "Gloom of Mnemosyne (Solo), Bildraum 01 (AT) (c) Eva Kelety, Bildrecht



Archival Fine Art Print Hahnemühle Photo Rag, framed, each 30x20 cm (Ed. 2+1 AP)



Left: Archival Fine Art
Print Hahnemühle Photo
Rag, mounted on alu
dibond, in shadow gap
farme, 100x70 cm,
Center: Archival Fine Art
Print Hahnemühle Photo
Rag, framed, each
30x20 cm, Right: Archival
Fine Art Print
Hahnemühle Photo Rag,
mounted on all
disband, in shadow gap
frame, 140 x 100 cm //
Exhibition view DIGITAL I
- ARTEFAKTE
OstLicht.Galerie für
Fotografie by
Fotogalerie Wien (AT)
(c) Michael Michlmayr,
2022



Left: Archival Fine Art
Print Hahnemühle Photo
Rag, mounted on alu
dibond, in shadow gap
frame, 70 x 50 cm //
Exhibition view: Salzamt
Linz, Ars Electronica
Festival 2021 (c)
Anna-Katharina Nickel

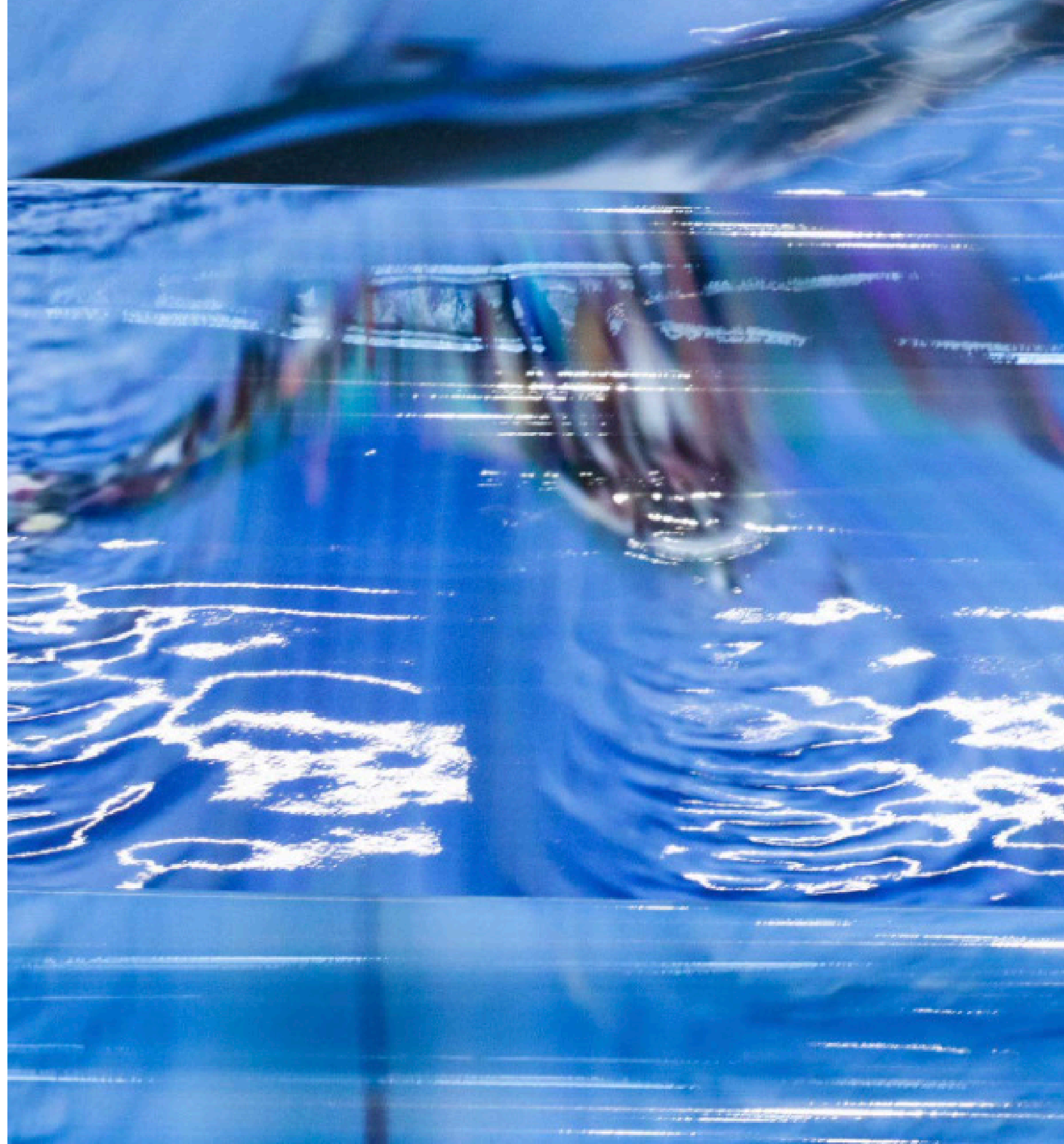


Group show NÖ
DOK -
Dokumentation
szentrum für
moderne Kunst
St. Pölten
January 2020
(c) Sonja
Dürnberger

On The Water

Photo-sculpture, 2018

The work *On The Water* explores how we deal with the endless stream of news about human tragedies in the digital age. We encounter an image of a tragedy – a refugee boat in the Mediterranean, for example – and after a short moment of affectedness, we swipe away the image to make way for new inputs. The piece takes such images collected online and recreates the gestures of conscious disregard – the gesture of swiping the image to continue the flow of information: one image is substituted by the next one in a constant stream that transforms attention into disaffection. This process allows us to create a distance between ourselves and the pain of others, by turning the reality of suffering into a constant smudge of images that robs them of any meaning or emotional weight. This work fits into the broader framework I have been exploring in my recent projects, which focuses on the relationship between gestures we make on our personal devices and the perception we form of the world around us.





Digital smudge
on found
footage
images, print
on PVC /
577x90cm //
Installation view
/ Kunstraum
Nestroyhof /
VERRAT DER
FOTOGRAFIE,
2018 program
partner of FOTO
WIEN / (c)
Philipp Pess

Narcissus' Ponds

Objects, 2018-2023

Resin and black pigments, various sizes and dimensions

These objects were once liquid, now solidified: Poured from synthetic resin, their shiny black surfaces reminisce on one hand the pond in Greek mythology, in which Narcissus reflected himself and fell in love with his self-image so deeply that he was thus unable to detach from it. On the other hand, they remind of smartphone screens, who also lure their users into obsessive occupation with what's on and behind its surfaces.





Exhibition view BETON 7
(c) Daniel Castells



Exhibition view: Feelings are
Facts: ANGST, Kunstverein
Eisensadt, 2023, (c) Rudolf Strobl



Exhibition view BETON 7
(c) Daniel Castells



(c) Michaela Putz



Installation view / HORTUS CONCLUSUS /
Skulpturengarten Vienna (c) Michaela Putz



Feelings are Facts:
ANGST, Kunstverein
Eisensadt, 2023,
(c) Rudolf Strobl

Traces of Seemingly Insignificant Gestures

Photogrammetry, Steel, Installation, 2017

Photogrammetry (15x10cm), Steel tables, Glass, black paint LED

Photogrammetry reproductions: 60x40cm (Edition 5+2)

Not only did the use of technology like our smartphones change the way we communicate with each other; it also produced a whole series of new gestures, the gesture of writing, for example. Sending text messages means to move our fingers around on our screens. A process that leaves traces as stains of fat on these shiny and sleek surfaces. These traces can be seen, when we turn off our phones and the light shines onto the black screen. But there are also algorithms that can identify us by the way we write. Our typing dynamics can be seen like our personal handwriting, our fingerprint. In a process of recreating those movements of writing, a series of photograms have been produced to make traces usually volatile traces visible and permanent. They show a new way of writing, a new kind of script – brought forward by technology. But also do they question the mechanisms of power related to the constant monitoring and analyzing of our actions.





Installation view |
Heiligenkreuzerhof
Vienna, Diploma
exhibition 2017
(c) Peter Kainz



Photogrammetry (15x10cm)



Installation view with
Philipp Pess | Ars
Electronica Festival 2018,
Bildrecht Gallery Space |
(c) Philipp Pess



Installation view with
Philipp Pess | Ars
Electronica Festival 2018,
Bildrecht Gallery Space |
(c) Philipp Pess

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