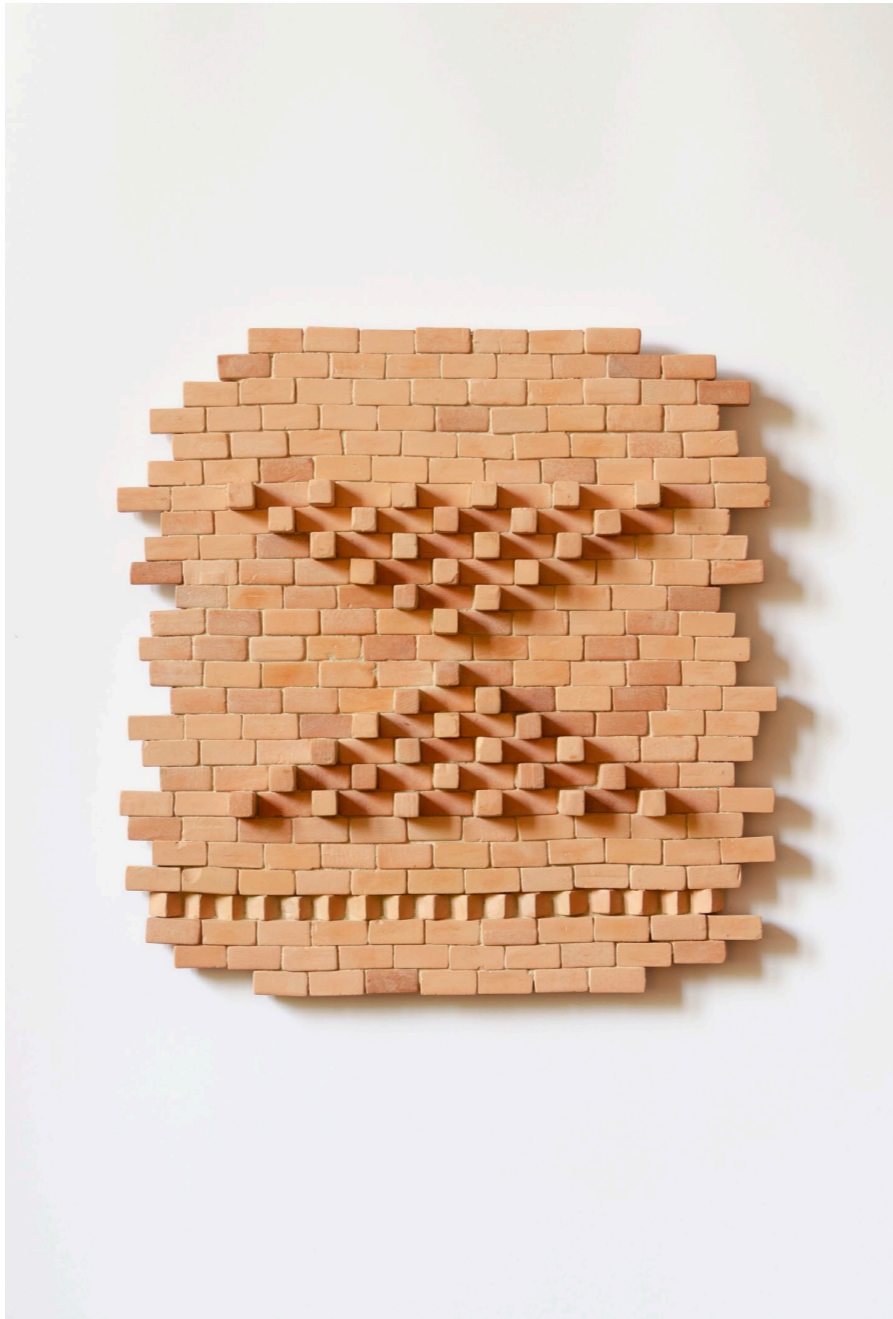


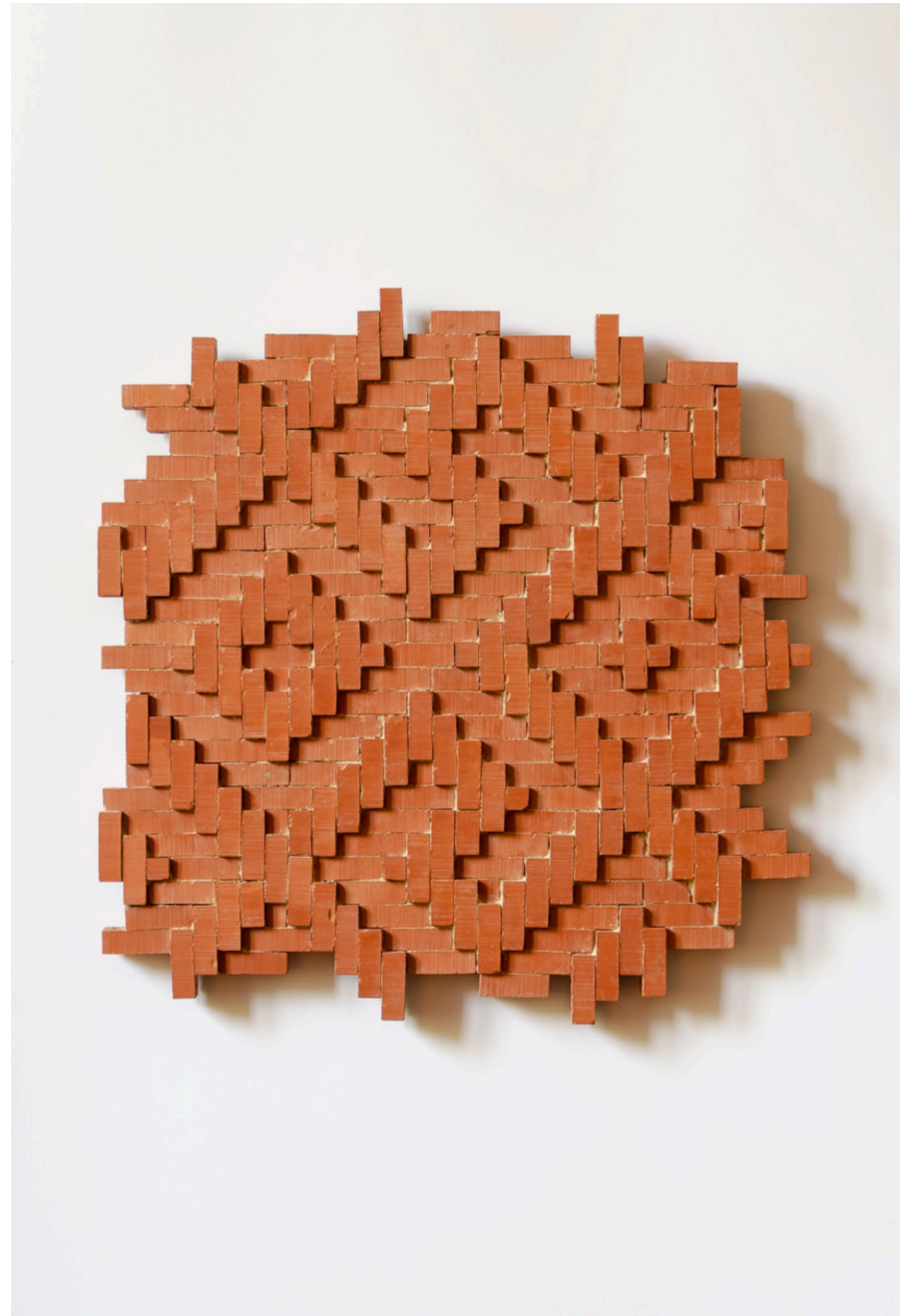
JONATHAN STEIGER

**PORTFOLIO
2020**



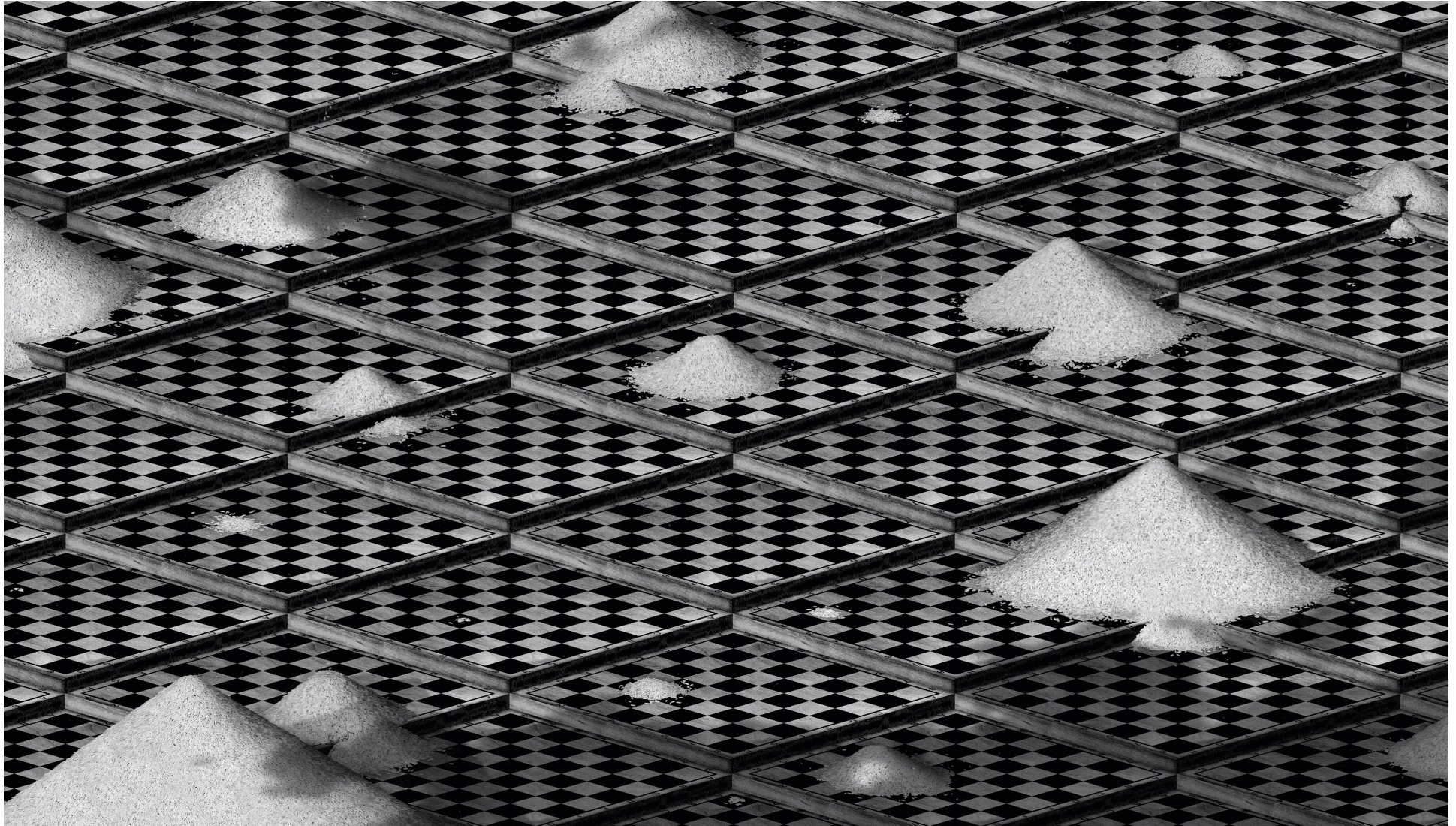
CODE 0, 2020

Miniature bricks, clay
26 x 25 cm



CODE 1, 2020

Miniature bricks, clay
28 x 27 cm



“It is said that, when Sissah invented the game of chess and presented it to King Shihram, the latter was struck with admiration and filled with joy; he ordered chessboards to be placed in the temples, and considered that game as the best thing that could be learned He said to Sissah: ‘Ask me for whatever you desire’—‘I then demand’ replied Sissah, ‘that a grain of wheat be placed in the first square of the chessboard, two in the second, and that the number of grains be progressively doubled till the last square is attained: whatever this quantity may be, I ask you to bestow it on me.’”

64 Doublings, 2020

4K-video, loop, 15 min. [STREAM](#)

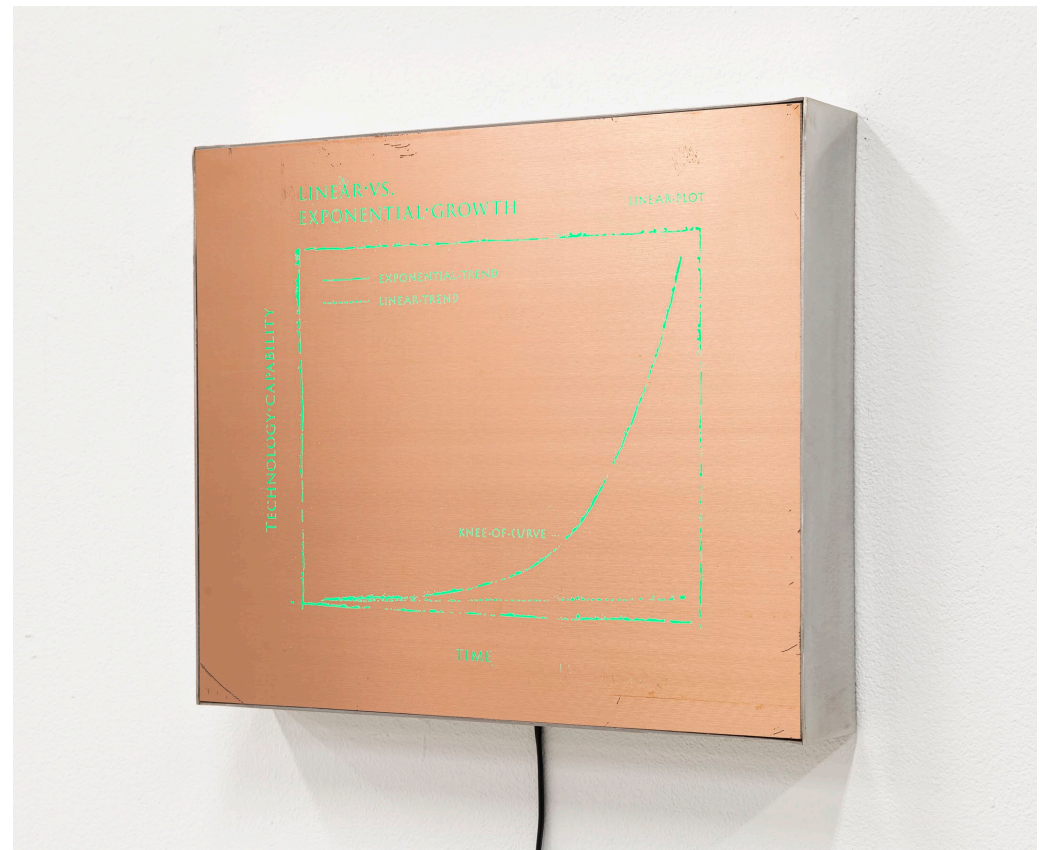
*Ibn Khallikan (1211 - 1282) In: Wafayāt al-Ayān (1274), translated by William MacGuckin de Slane
In: Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary vol. 3. (published 1868)*



Speed of Life, 2019

Salvation Curves, 2019

Installation view, *PALMA PIXTON ZIGA ZERO*
group exhibition, Zurich University of the Arts



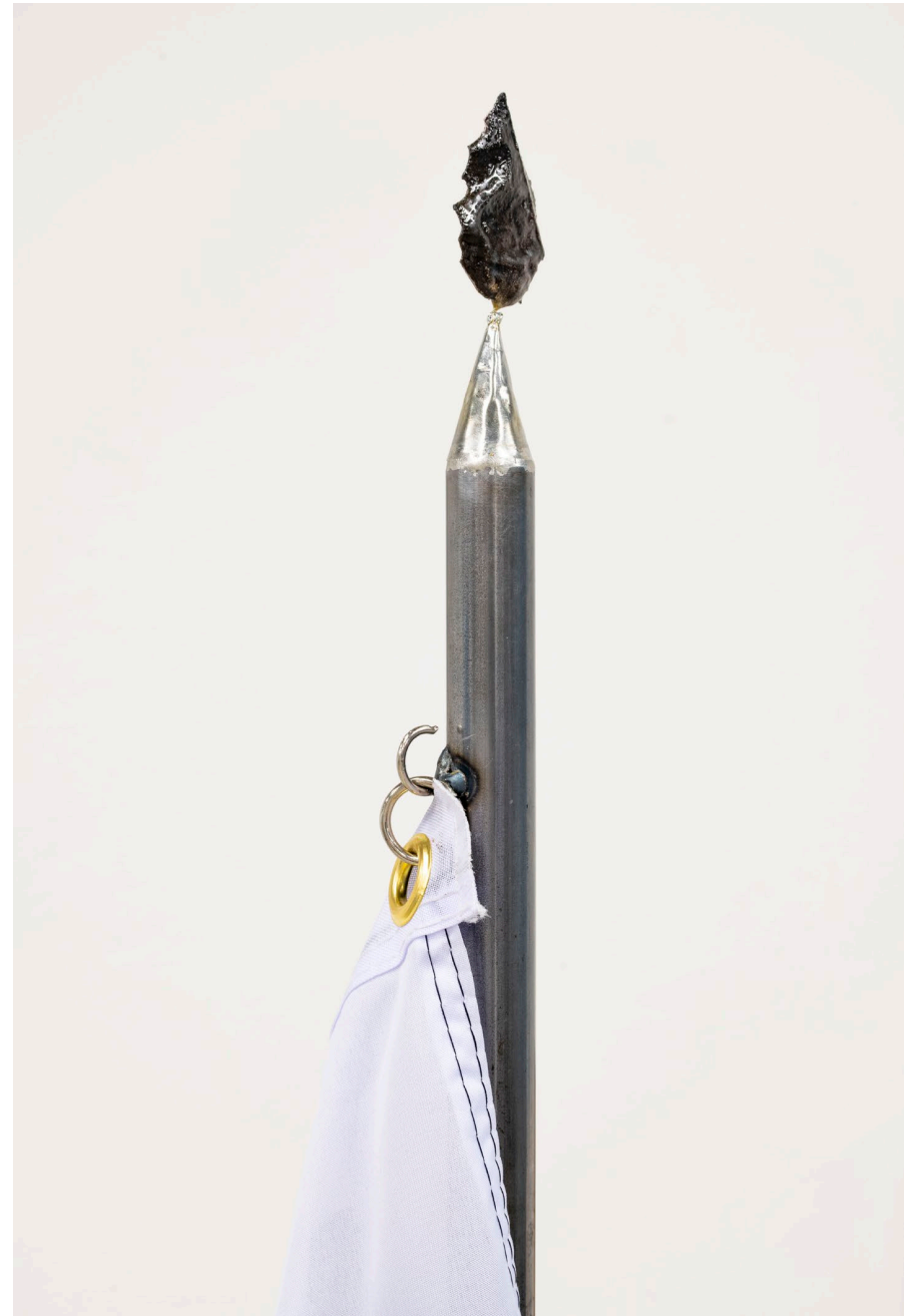
“Our sole responsibility is to produce something smarter than we are; any problems beyond that are not ours to solve...”
 - Ray Kurzweil, Director of Engineering at Google LLC

Salvation Curves, 2019

Etched circuit boards, LEDs, three charts out of „The Singularity is near: When Humans Transcend Biology“ by Ray Kurzweil, each 25 x 30 x 5 cm



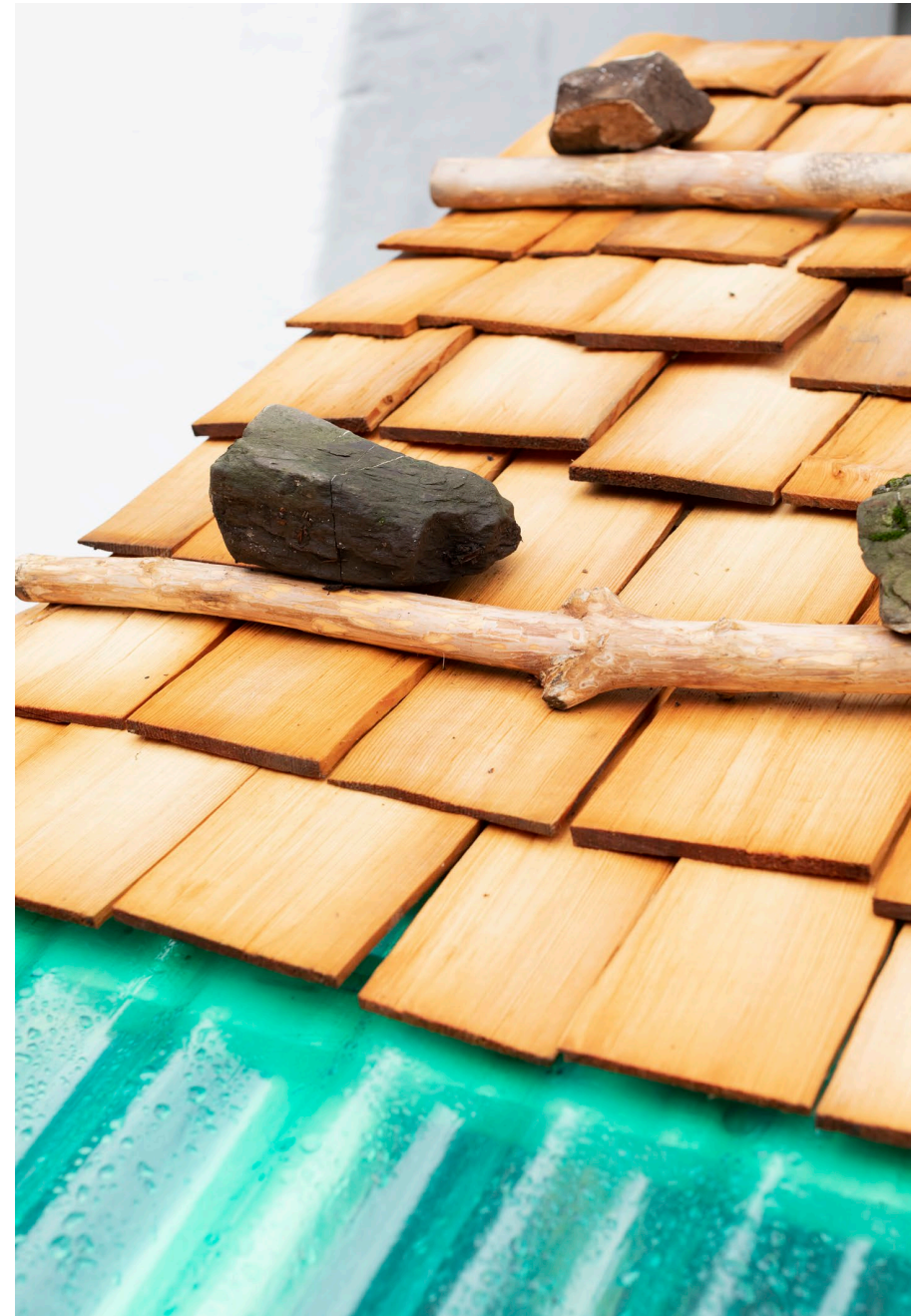
Speed of Life, 2019



Chequered flag, iron pole, faux spearhead
180 x 20 x 20 cm



Dach (Muotathal), 2019



Shingles, branches, stones, PVC corrugated sheet, roof battens
140 × 140 × 60 cm



Dach (Muotathal), 2019

Installation view, *Am Gaa Aa*
group exhibition at Gasthaus Hirschen,
Muotathal

In Muotathal, canton of Schwyz in the absence of reeds or straw, the roofs have always been covered with long wooden shingles. These shingles were placed on the flat roof construction and weighted down with long branches and stones. At best, a few wooden nails were used, but metal nails were unaffordable for most inhabitants until industrialisation. Today, only very few alpine buildings are still roofed with shingles, most of them have been replaced by corrugated sheets which are much more convenient and durable.



Rock (1-5), 2019

15 Modular Living Units, 2019

Installation view, Werkdiskurse organized by Nadia Veronese
Kunstmuseum St.Gallen



15 Modular Living Units, 2019

Gypsum, paint
ca. 90 × 30 cm



Rock (2), 2019

Oil on copper, hinges
ca. 8 × 13 cm



For the Technologies to Come, 2018

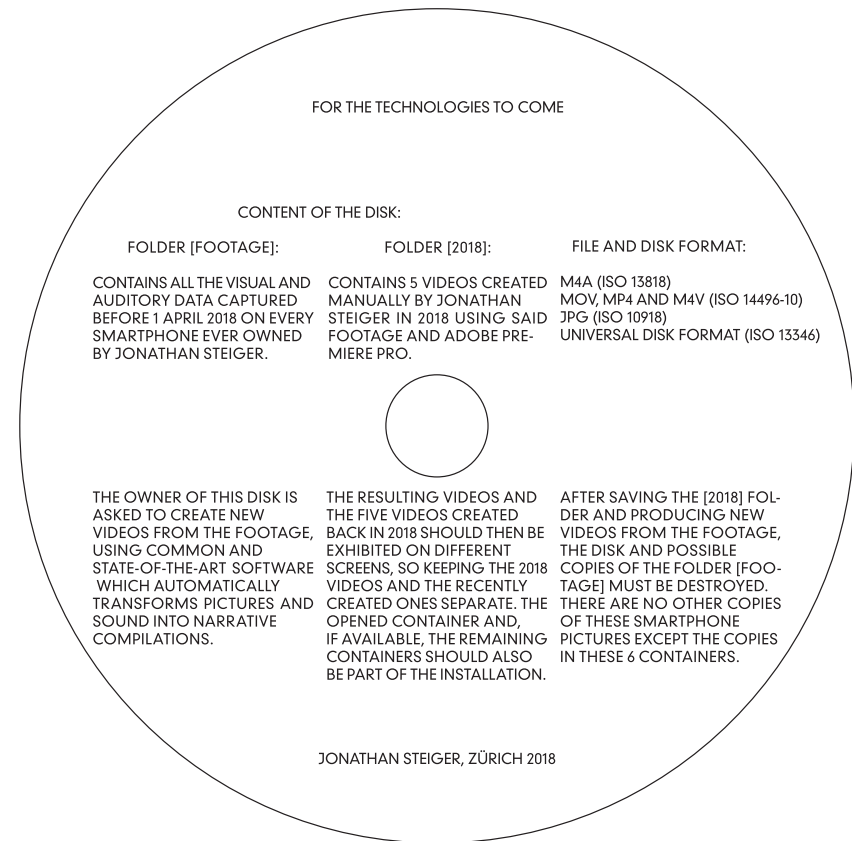
Stainless steel capsules filled with Millennial Discs, rock wool, each 30 × 13 cm
Two channel video with sound, 32 min. [STREAM](#)



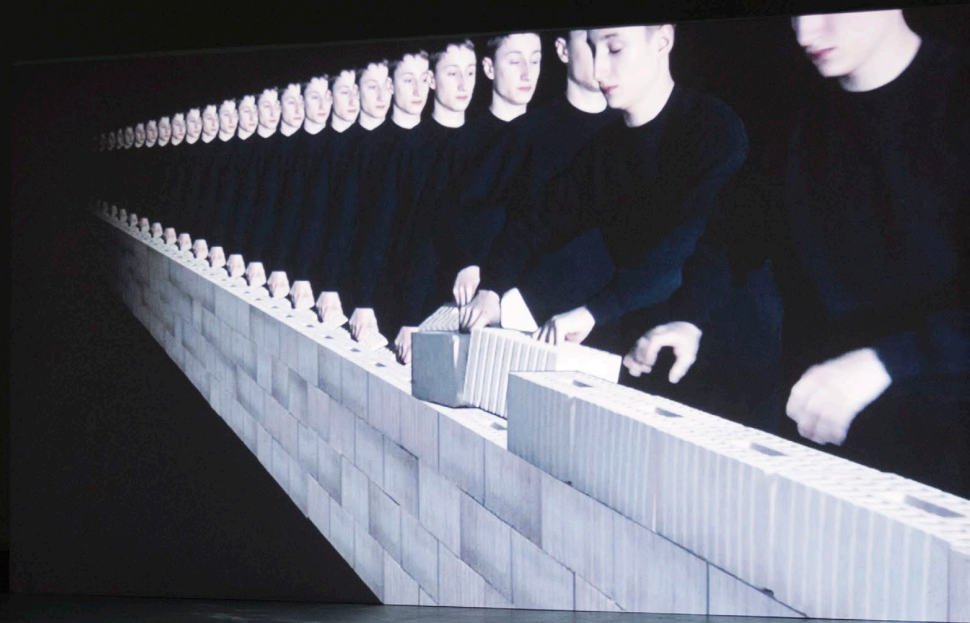
For the Technologies to Come, 2018 (detail)

Thousands of personal photographs and videos have accumulated on our mobile devices in the past years. Too much to deal with and consume in a conventional way, especially when we think of the myriads that will be added in the future. Tech companies claim to have a solution for this: As Apple's website states, their application *Photos* "scans your library for significant people, places, holidays, and more, and presents them in curated collections called Memories."

On the two screens, I try to merge my own documents into a consumable form, once manually and once with the help of Apple's algorithms. All these photos and videos are also stored on six long-term storage discs, each one enclosed in a steel capsule. They are being preserved for future technologies that will ever be predicted by the tech industry.

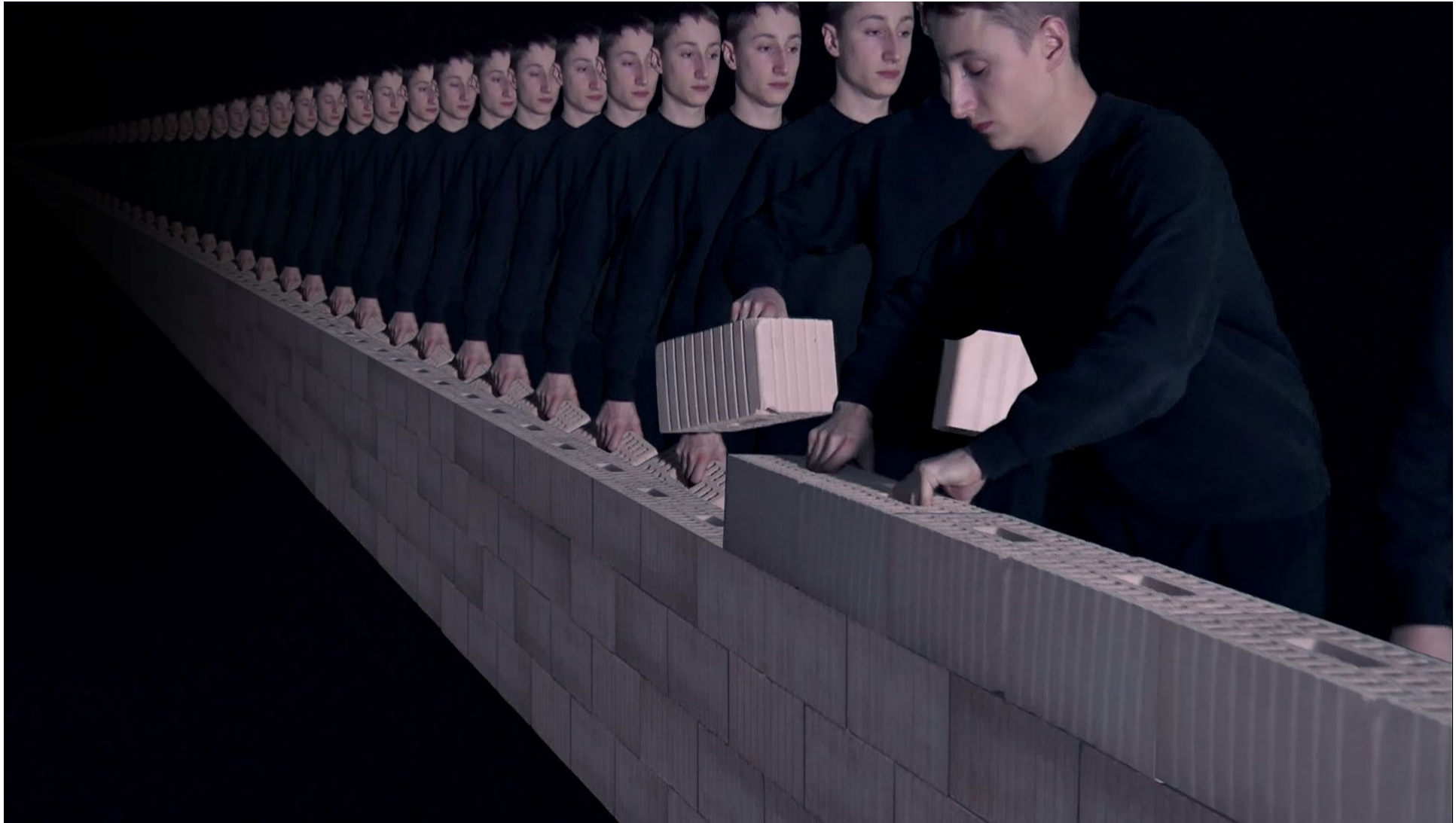


Manual enclosed in the capsules



The Most Satisfying, 2018

Installation view, Zurich University of the Arts



The Most Satisfying, 2018

HD-video with sound, loop, 1 min. [STREAM](#)

The work plays with the category of so-called “oddly satisfying videos” that circulate on social networks—recordings of automated production lines which serve as a stimulating form of entertainment. The advent and popularity of such videos in the 21st century reveals a desire of the public to indulge in consuming the images of hyper-rationality and hyper-productivity while simultaneously escaping into distraction. The yearning for the rationality of production lines also implies a nostalgic look back on the economic and societal system of Fordism.

STATEMENT

In my practice, I want to pursue questions about the evaluation of past and future. I am interested in how these two temporal dimensions are connected, and how these concepts are employed in the creation of technological and economic narratives.

In 1927, Siegfried Kracauer described the aesthetics of the assembly line as a mass ornament, as “the aesthetic reflex of the rationality to which the prevailing economic system aspires.”¹ In my 2018 video work *The Most Satisfying*, I depict myself, multiplied, like workers in an assembly line, building up a wall of bricks. The work refers to the category of so-called “oddly satisfying videos” that circulate on social networks—recordings of automated production lines which serve as a stimulating form of entertainment.

Nonetheless, the production of commodities has ceased to be the backbone of our economy. Instead, all eyes have turned to the great promise of technological innovation. The charts in *Salvation Curves* (2019), conceived by a respected Google engineer, assert an ever-accelerating progress of technology which will ultimately appear to explode into infinity.² Despite the current environmental and economic crisis, this emphasis on the future remains characteristic of the leading industries of our time. One could also characterize the early 21st century as “a cultural moment when digitopian futures are routinely invoked to hide the present in all its unhappiness.”³

What remains is a present in which our view of the past is warped, and expectations of the future counteract an improvement of the present. Unmoored from any sense of a purposeful historical process, my works examine the seemingly contradictory yearnings of our time, yearnings for rationality and transcendence, for hyper-productivity and distraction, for the past, and for the future.

¹ Kracauer, Siegfried (1995). *The Mass Ornament*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

² cf. Kurzweil, Ray (2005)

³ Eshun, Kodwo (2003). Further Considerations on Afrofuturism. *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 3(2), pp. 287-302

Jonathan Steiger

***1997 in St.Gallen (CH), lives and works in Zürich**

Education

- 2017 -2020 BA Fine Arts at Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK)
- 2016 - 2017 Foundation course at Zurich University of the Arts
- 2011 - 2015 State College for Higher Education (specialised subject Fine Arts)

Exhibitions / Projects (selection)

- 2020 *From Noise to Silence*, group show at Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn & Taxis Bregenz
- 2020 Initiator of RIVET, artist run space at ZHdK, together with Julia Nusser
- 2019 Contribution to *Before and after 2020*, zine, no reason studio, Hong Kong
- 2019 *Protection*, collaborative zine with June Fischer and Ryoko Ogiwara group show at POST Bookstore Ebisu, Tokyo
- 2019 *PALMA PIXTON ZIGA ZERO*, group show at ZHdK
- 2019 Residency & group show at Gasthaus Hirschen, Muotathal
- 2019 *Fabrication of Relics*, group show, CCM Hong Kong
- 2019 *Into the Pit*, group show at Nest, Zürich
- 2019 *Marmor malen*, showcase at Palace St.Gallen
- 2019 Werkdiskurse organized by Nadia Veronese, Kunstmuseum St.Gallen
- 2019 *Feast of the Peasant*, group show at RETA, Zürich

5/2020

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