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block to blob

flame sprayed

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IWK-DM31-HfG

Portfolio Lukas Klein

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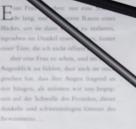
1 block to blob

2_block to blob

My diploma project details the material stream of synthetic plastics through a reverse chronological approach. It combines field research, visual documentation and material experimentation to retrace the journey of plastics from their final products back to their origins in petroleum.

'block to blob' includes visits to various sites in the production chain, such as manufacturing facilities, oil refineries, pipelines, and extraction sites, concluding in a forest ecosystem, where crude oil naturally seeps to the earth's surface. These experiences are compiled into a research publication that follows this reverse narrative.

A video installation documents the visited locations, providing visual context for the industrial processes, hidden infrastructure and the natural substance in the forest. Additionally, a series of objects made from petroleum-coated wood and polystyrene grounds the project in tangible materials.







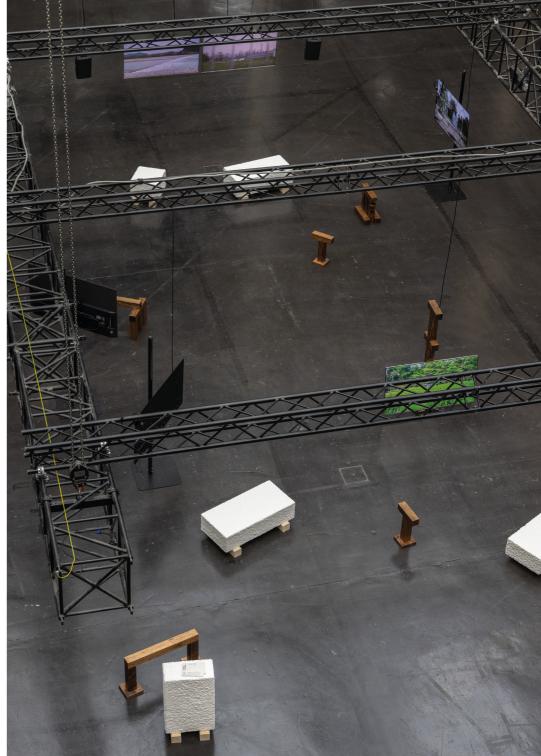
1 block to blob

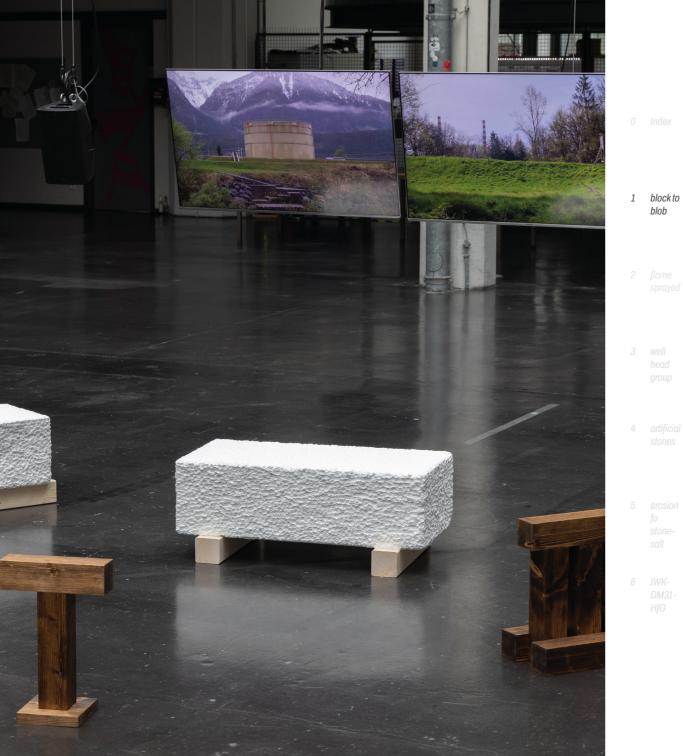
2 flame sprayed

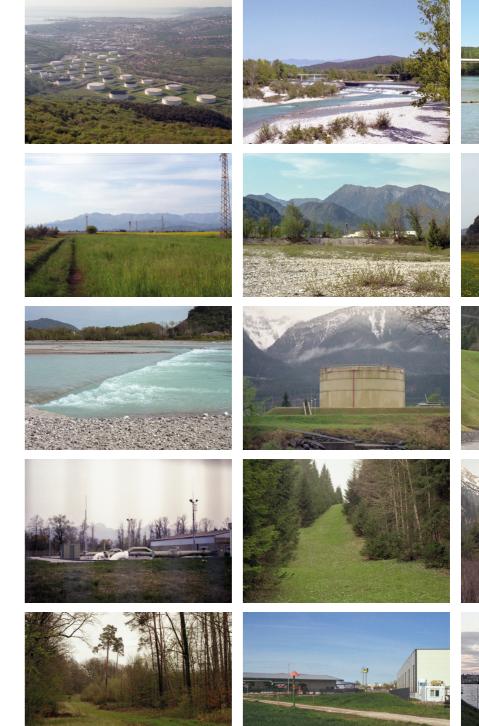
3 well head group

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008

In fact, all of these places can be found in the immediate vicinity of Karlsruhe (60 kilometers radius)

The largest chemical site in the world, the largest oil refinery in Germany, a pipeline that can be described as a geoengineering project of the 19th century, oil fields with horsehead pumps, recent drillings and discoveries of economically viable oil, as well as the supposedly first oil well in the world and a town where the identity-forming petroleum industry disappeared in the 1960s and today oil is once again seeping naturally to the surface in the forest.

In the following chapters, my journey to these places is structured using the terms downstream, midstream and upstream. This categorisation takes synthetic plastics, however artificial they may seem to us, back to the natural product from which they were originally made. The downstream and upstream chapters are numbered chronologically in the production process. They are therefore organised in reverse order from two to one.

Narrative mode

The idea of portraying the production process of polystyrene in reverse chronological order comes from a 1958 film.

Le Chant du Styrène is a 13 minutes documentary film by Alain Resnais that documents the production of polystyrene. The film was commissioned by the French chemical company Péchiney15 and shows the production process of polystyrene chronologically backwards, starting with the finished products and ending with the fossil raw materials in tanks. Resnais and his cameraman Sacha Vierny use

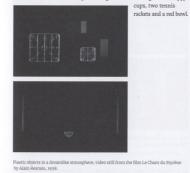
009

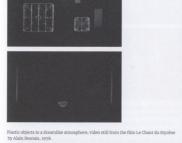
them appear almost abstract.18

strong synthetic colours to depict the industrial process in visually impressive images.16.17 The camera captures both the mechanical precision of the machines and the fluid movements of the chemical processes. The recordings focus on the various stages of processing, whereby the machines and materials are filmed in a way that makes

Following an intro, the film begins with images of distorted, colourful plastic objects growing like plants from the bottom of the screen in a dreamlike atmosphere. Some of the objects bend as if they have been given water again for a long time.

An off-screen voice says: "Oh plastic matter. Where do you come from? Who are you? And what explains your composition?" Other everyday objects made of plastic can be seen in a similar way: A storage container, fridge doors, sippy







022

At the beginning of the 17-minute promotional video Schaumgeboren (Foam Born), a volcanic eruption is shown in black and white. After images of large clouds of smoke and burning forests, a stream of molten lava can be seen flowing down a slope. A narrator's voice says:

> ing. [...] The glowing pulp solidifies into lava and foamy, porous pumice a stone that floats."





olcano eruption, video still from the BASF advertising film Schaumgeboren, 1962.

The next scene, now in colour, shows several stones next to a Styrofoam® cuboid. While half of the stones float under water, the Styropor®

023 cuboid lies almost completely on the surface of the water, even though it is much larger. 'Foam-born like pumice, but 20 times lighter is foam made from Styropor®'.



Pumice stone next to a block of foamed polystyrene, video still from the BASF advertising film Schaumgeboren, 1962.

Unlike the description of the origin of pumice stone, the explanation of the creation of Styropor® does not start with the extraction of ancient materials from the depths of the earth, but in a strictly organised, busy chemistry laboratory. An employee pours white pellets into a rectangular metal mould, which he closes with a lid. After turning various taps, he removes the mould from the system and knocks the finished white cuboid onto a colleague's desk.

070

1 block to

blob

Behind the stream, there was a small slope leading up. It looked as if the pipeline had originally been laid above ground and then covered with soil. On the upper side of this hill, short grass grew, in which the track of a car or tractor was visible. On the slopes of the rise, bare bushes grew, creating a bizarre sight: it formed a raised avenue bordered by bleak bushes on the right and left. The path at the top of the flat area felt like a catwalk at a fashion show. I followed this path uphill for a few curves. Here I thought going on a pilgrimage on foot, similar to the Way of St. James, would work very well. There was a path kept clear of plants, marked at regular intervals by marker posts. However, as I walked on, I remembered that the pipeline was routed in a tunnel at the end of the valley that was not accessible. If you had followed it on foot, you would have had to cross the mountain.





Stop 28

The village of Muggia is located southeast of Trieste in Italy, on the other side of the bay. The Panorama Hotel advertises its excellent location on a hillside and a so-called 'seaview' from the rooms and the breakfast terrace. Guests have uploaded photos showing the seaview across the bay of Trieste: a full rainbow stretching from the container port to the oil and chemicals terminal on the other side of the coast. At the reception, I was shown the best fish restaurants and places to go out. In reality, however, I spent the whole evening at the window, monitoring the ships off the harbour every minute with the MarineTraffic app. Without information about ships entering the harbour, I could only see that five oil tankers were now anchored off the harbour.

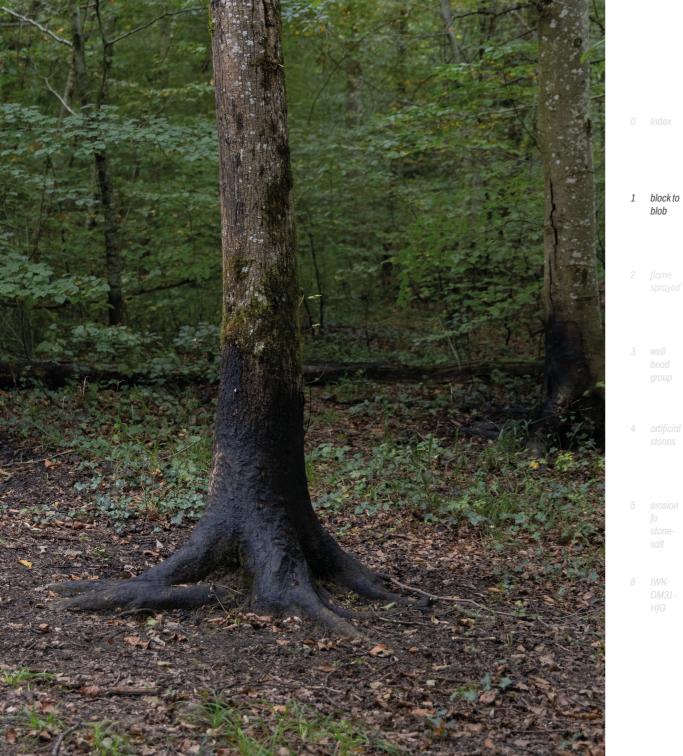












blob





3_the well head group

In preparation for a workshop at the German Pavilion of the Venice Architecture Biennale 2023, we found out about a 13th century Venetian wellhead which is today in the courtyard of the Wartburg Castle in Eisenach, Germany. This seemingly untransportable object with it's highly nomadic journey provided us with a point of entry into a shared and intertwined history of maintenance, care and restitution.

2023

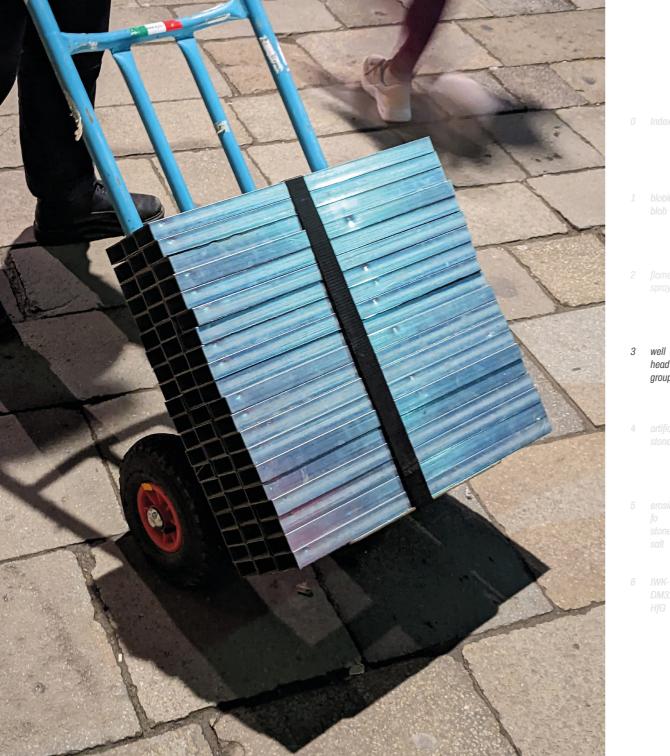
After 3d-scanning the well-head and taking its digital copy with us (back) to Venice, we found traces of the exact object in the local city archives and libraries. We used material from the German Pavilion depot to translate the fountainhead into a seemingly heavy but fractal and movable piece. It was then set up at the reconstructed locations, thereby connecting research with a local context.

Work by: Arianna Ballin, Pierre-Eric Baumann, Marta Frasson, Carolina Lara Simunovic, Suwon Lee, Lukas Klein, Lasse Peters, Dario Schmid.



head group





head group





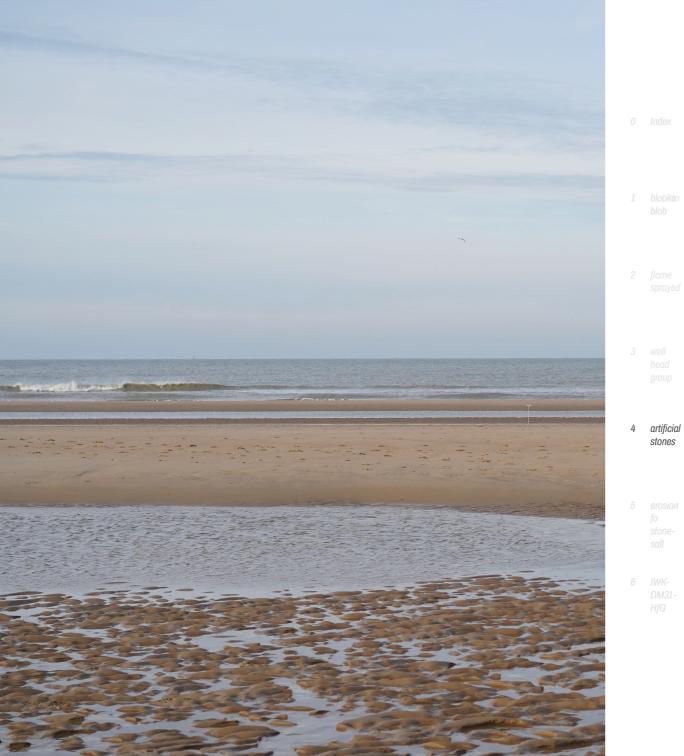
artificial stones

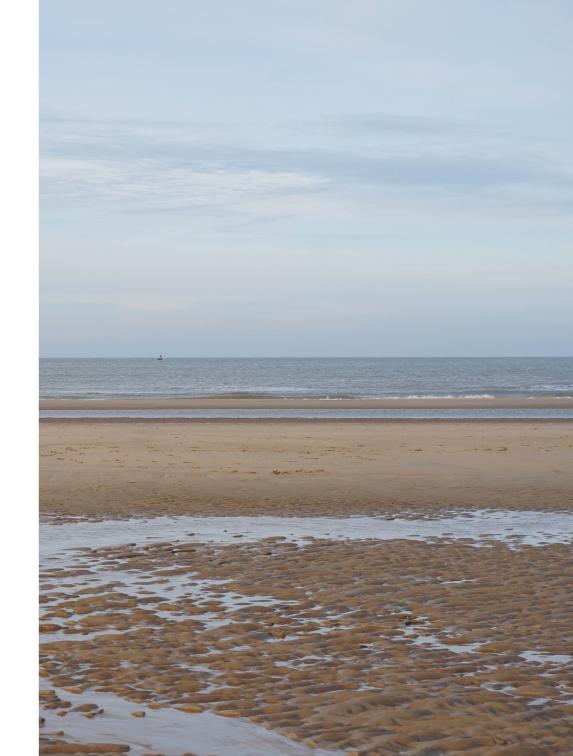
4_artifical stones

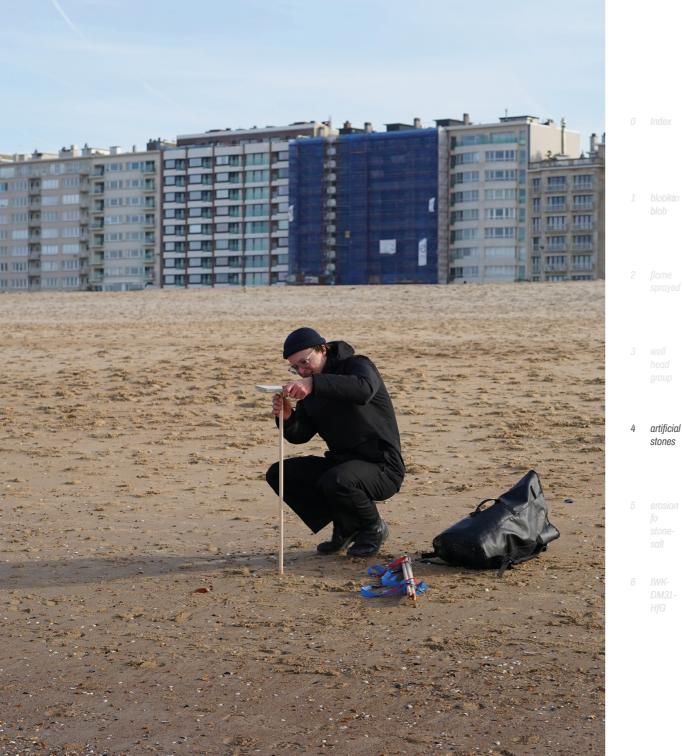
2021-2022

Many stones that wash up on the beaches of the North Sea coast are waste products of various industrial processes. Between shells, sand and driftwood, they reveal the blurred line between natural and cultural objects (ecofacts/artefacts).

The work artificial stones deals with the subject in three different ways: First, in a theoretical, scientific way in short texts, what, how, where and when different types of artificial stones have found their way into the environment. Secondly, in an informative way, by presenting the stones found on site at the beach on pedestals to initiate conversations and discussions. And thirdly in a cinematic way by documenting the process of restoring the original appearance of the stones before they entered the North Sea environment.











stones





5_erosion of rock salt

erosion

fo stone-

salt

2023

Rock salt is Germany's most visible by-product of mining. It is particularly eye-catching in the central region of Germany (Thüringen and Hessen), where it appears in the form of imposing white mountains in the landscape. These so-called Rückstandshalden (residue deposits) are created as a by-product of the extraction of potassium salt, which in turn is crucial for the production of fertilisers. Once the rock salt has been moved via conveyor belts to one of the dumps, the official movement of the material ends for the industry.

In the artist residency at the Junge Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, I explored the movement of materials by finding an experimental approach to rock salt and its tendency to erode from water (a process which has great consequences on the surrounding ecosystem of the salt mountains).

"Go! Kunst Bewegt" Junge Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, 21.10.23 - 11.02.24.



fo stonesalt





erosion

fo stonesalt







IWK-6 DM31-HfG

5_IWK-DM31-HfG

2022

*IWK-DM31-HfG, a research project on the past of the building of the Karls*ruhe University of Arts and Design and the remains of the former branch of the ammunition factory, was part of the exhibition "Munitionsfabrik -Ausstellung zur Geschichte eines ungeheuren Raums" in summer 2022 Initiated by conversations with Stefan Krass, this work has taken me far away from classic product design through city archives, photo collections, online forums and area explorations to conversations with local residents, showing how history can be read in objects and what value lies in documenting them.

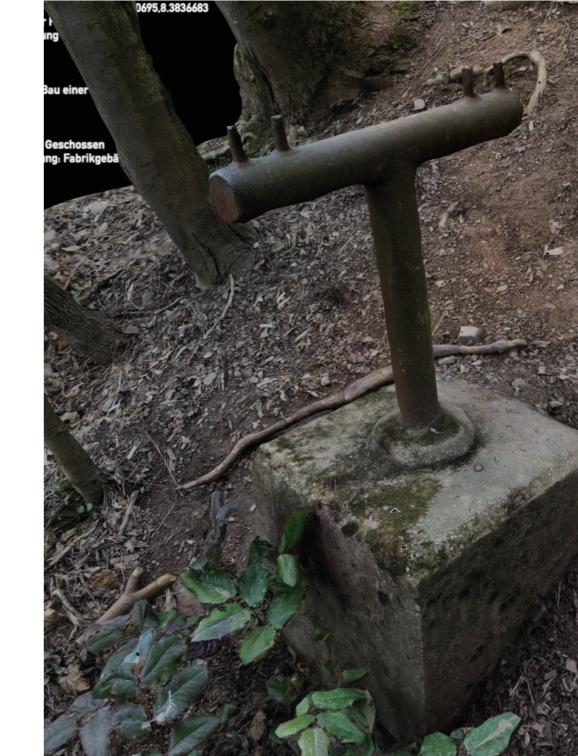


Assective STP 1847
Benerick Germann, Jack Steven, WW, Galashed) und Minen Entwicklung der Frank
Benerick Germann, Jack Steven, WW, Galashed) und Minen Entwicklung der Frank
Benerick Germann, Jack Steven, Benerick Kann, Beneri

2004 Verfügten Griechische Streitkräfte über ca. 795 000 Di-Bundeswein abgab 2007 Umbenennung der WKA AB in KUKA (von Keiter und Kna-2019 Mindeslens 554 Opfer von Landminnen, Opfer 8007 Zivlibevö-2020 Massive Landminnen-Kontamination (mehr als 100km²¹ im Lan-Bundeswein noch im Bestizv von 186 DM-31 NP/Imen "Retaine,



6 IWK-DM31-HfG



Portfolio Lukas Klein

Augustastr. 5 76137 Karlsruhe +49 17682393593 hello@kleinlukas.eu 15.07.98/ Epsom (GB)