

FLORIAN GERMANN

DER EMPFANG

SEP 2—OCT 21, 2023

GALERIE GREGOR STAIGER, ZÜRICH





Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Florian Germann, Cafe Central 3, 2022
Bio resin, pigments, steel, nylon
61.5 × 77.5 × 38 cm, GERM/S 133



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



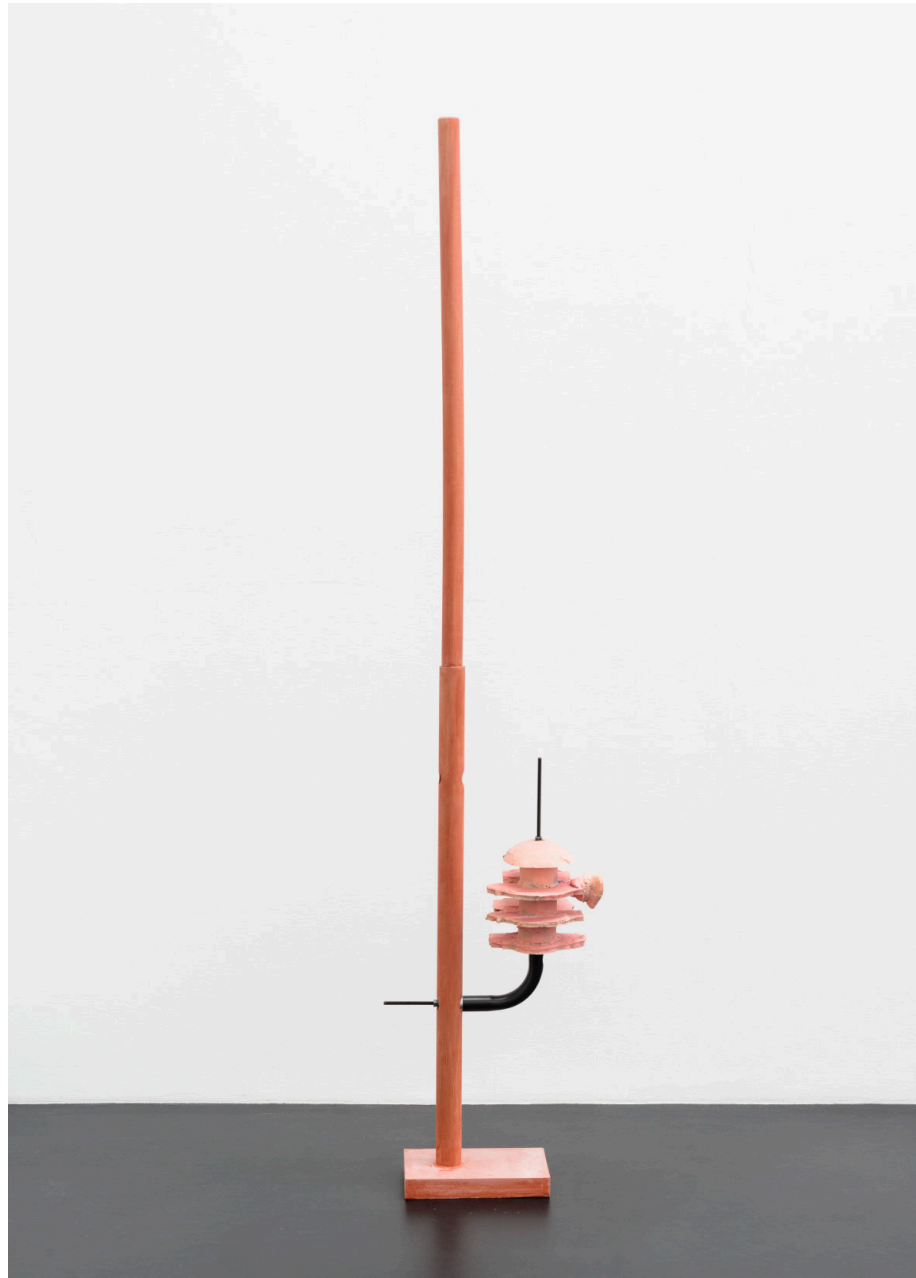
Florian Germann, Nachtclub für Nachtfalter, 2023
Bio resin, pigments, steel, opus caementicium
61.5 × 77.5 × 38 cm, GERM/S 133



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Florian Germann, Cafe Central 5, 2022
Bio resin, pigments, steel, opus caementicium
47 × 55 × 55 cm, GERM/S 132



Florian Germann, Cafe Central 6, 2023
Bio resin, pigments, steel, nylon
213 × 41 × 41 cm, GERM/S 146



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Florian Germann, Lot, 2021-2023
Steel, concrete, resin, jade, aluminum
92.5 × 37 × 29.5 cm, GERM/S 140



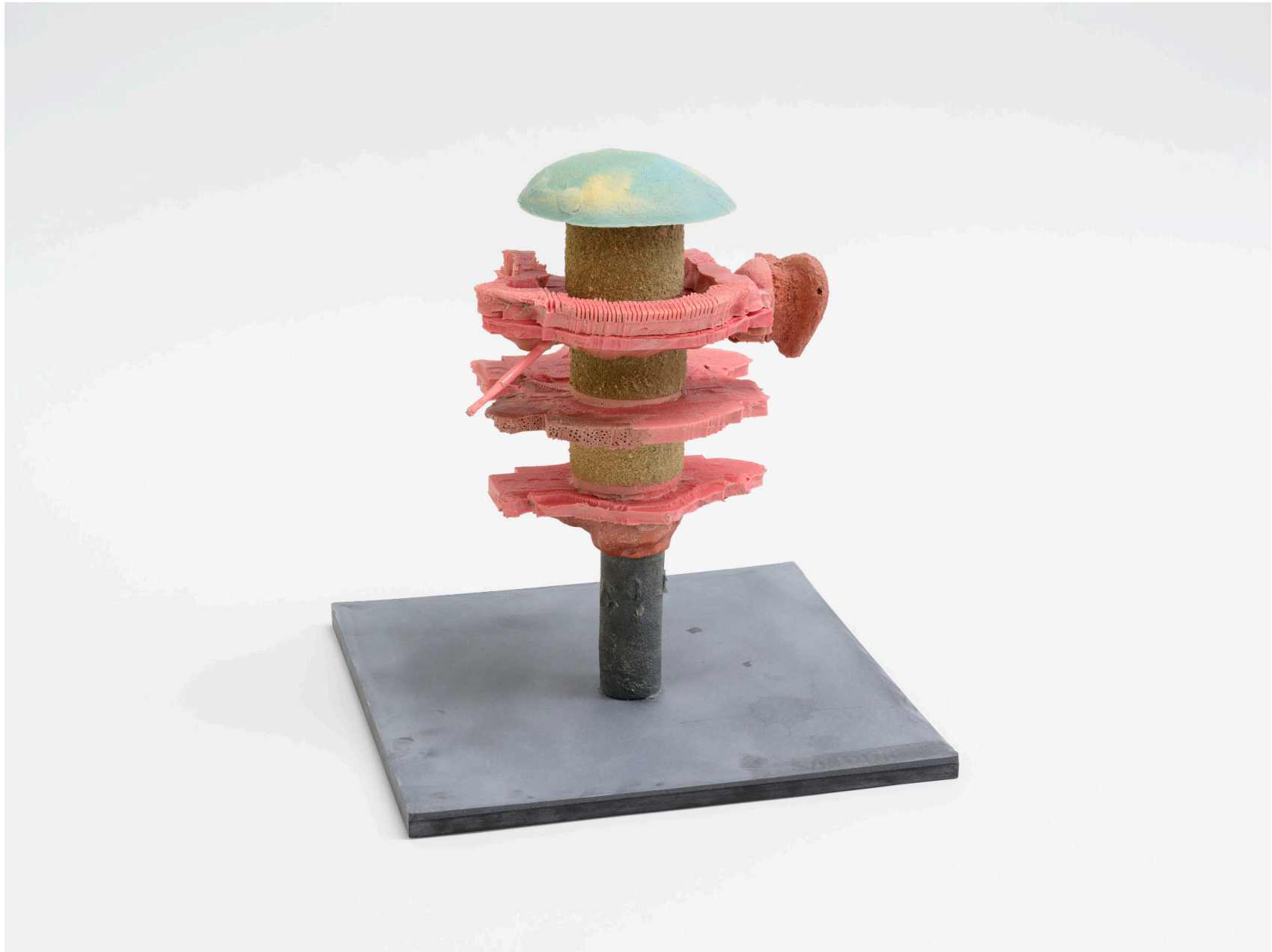
Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
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Florian Germann, Nachtclub für Nachtfalter, 2023
Bio resin, pigments, steel, opus camentitium
37.5 × 35 × 41.5 cm GERM/S 139



Florian Germann, Cafe Central 1, 2022
Bio resin, pigments, steel, pom
31 × 27 × 27 cm, GERM/S 135



Florian Germann, Cafe Central 1, 2022
Bio resin, pigments, wood, steel, rope, pom
31 × 27 × 27 cm, GERM/S 136



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Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
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Florian Germann, Cafe Central 4, 2022
Bio resin, pigments, steel, opus caementicium
25.5 × 59.5 × 54.5 cm, GERM/S 141



Florian Germann, Motherboard 6, 2023
Bio resin, pigments
11.5 × 24 × 25 cm, GERM/S 152



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



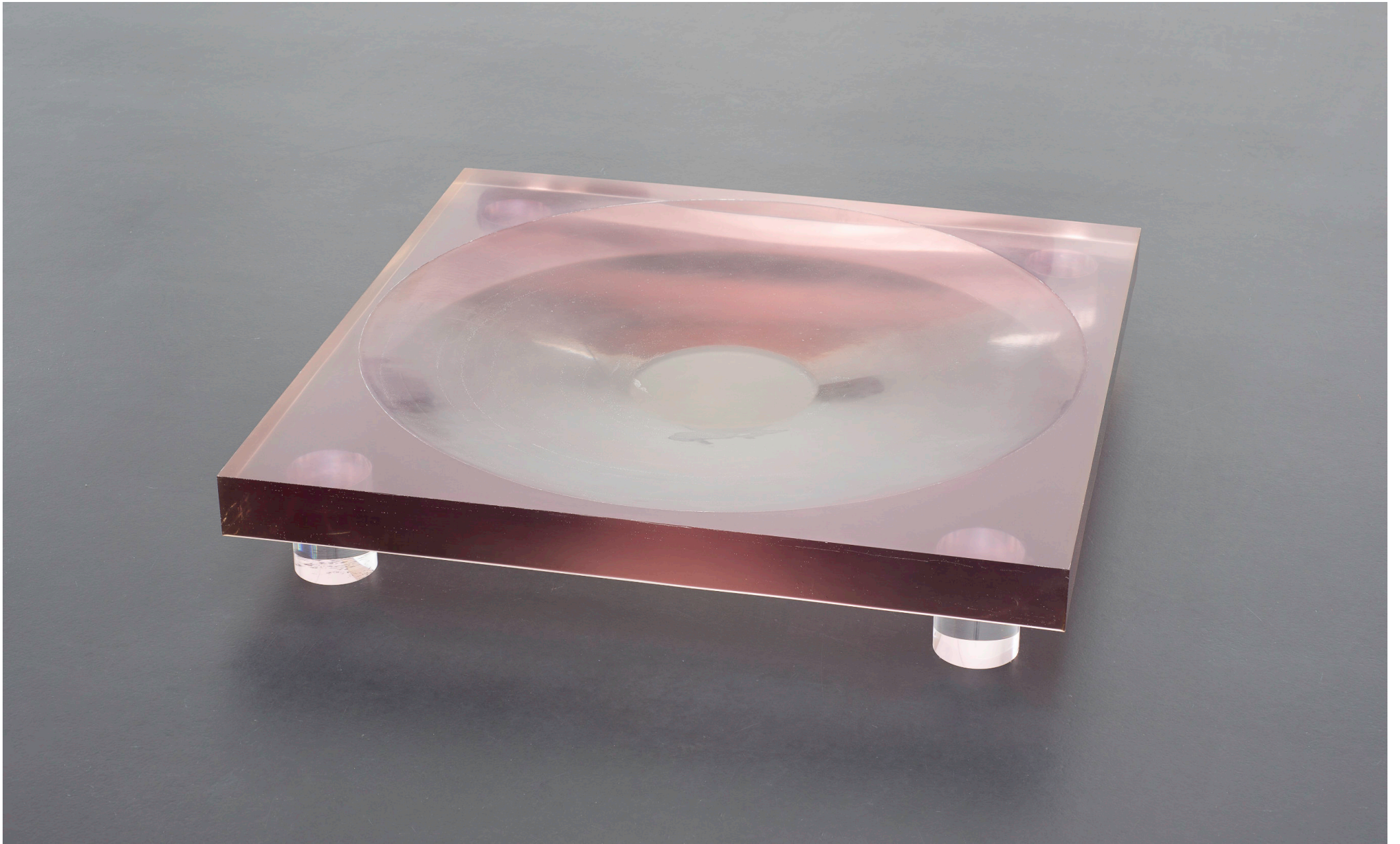
Florian Germann, Motherboard 4, 2023
Bio resin, pigments
12.5 × 24 × 25 cm, GERM/S 150



Florian Germann, Motherboard City, 2023
Bio resin, pigments, steel
35 × 24 × 25 cm GERM/S 137



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Florian Germann, *Empfänger*, 2020-2023
Bio resin, fuel pigments, acrylic, 16 × 99.5 × 99.5 cm
GERM/S 145



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Florian Germann, Untitled, 2023
Opus caementicium, hematite, steel
60 × 48 × 29 cm, GERM/S 142



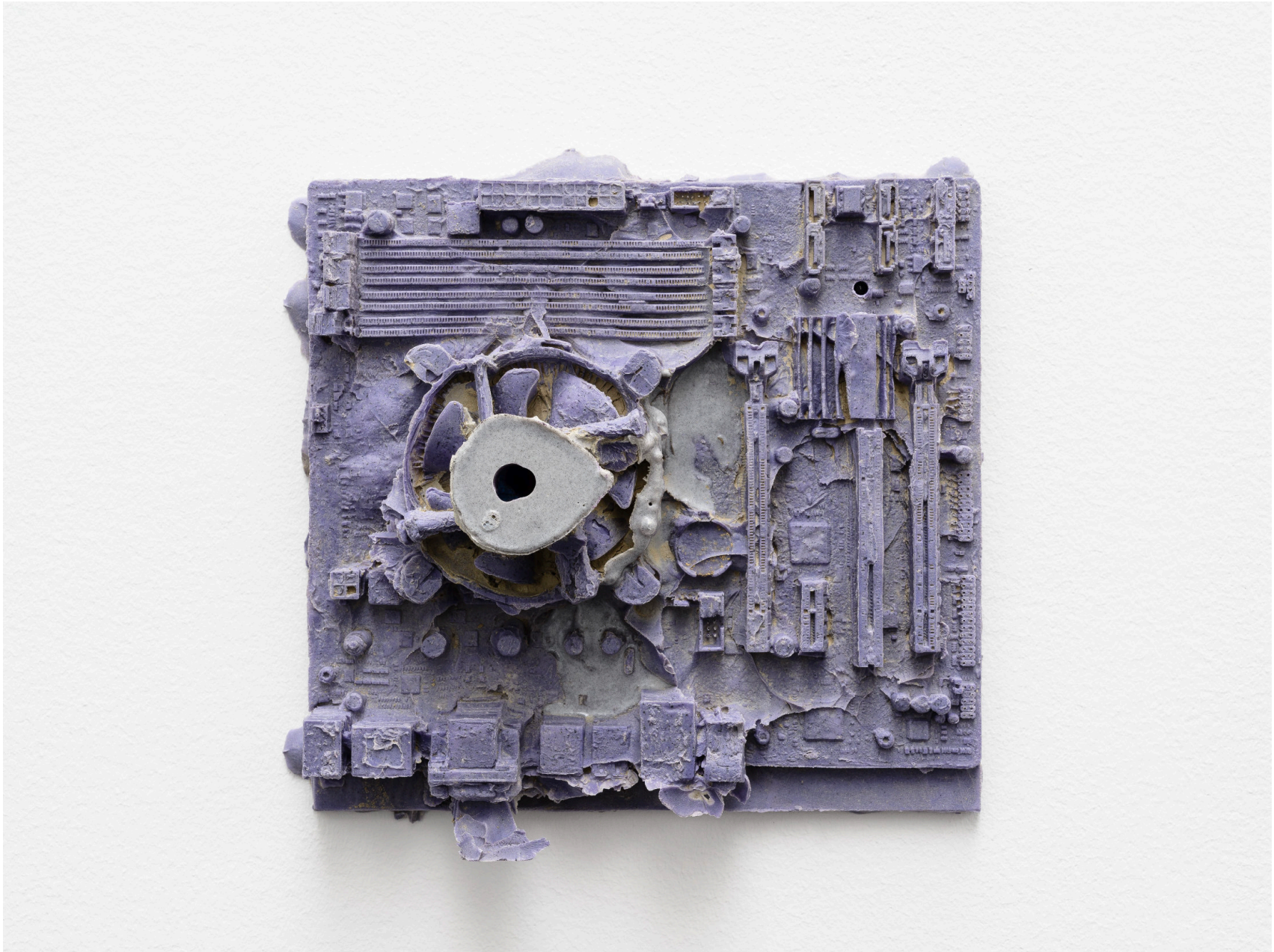
Florian Germann, Untitled, 2023
Opus caementicium, hematite, steel
49 × 48 × 33 cm, GERM/S 143



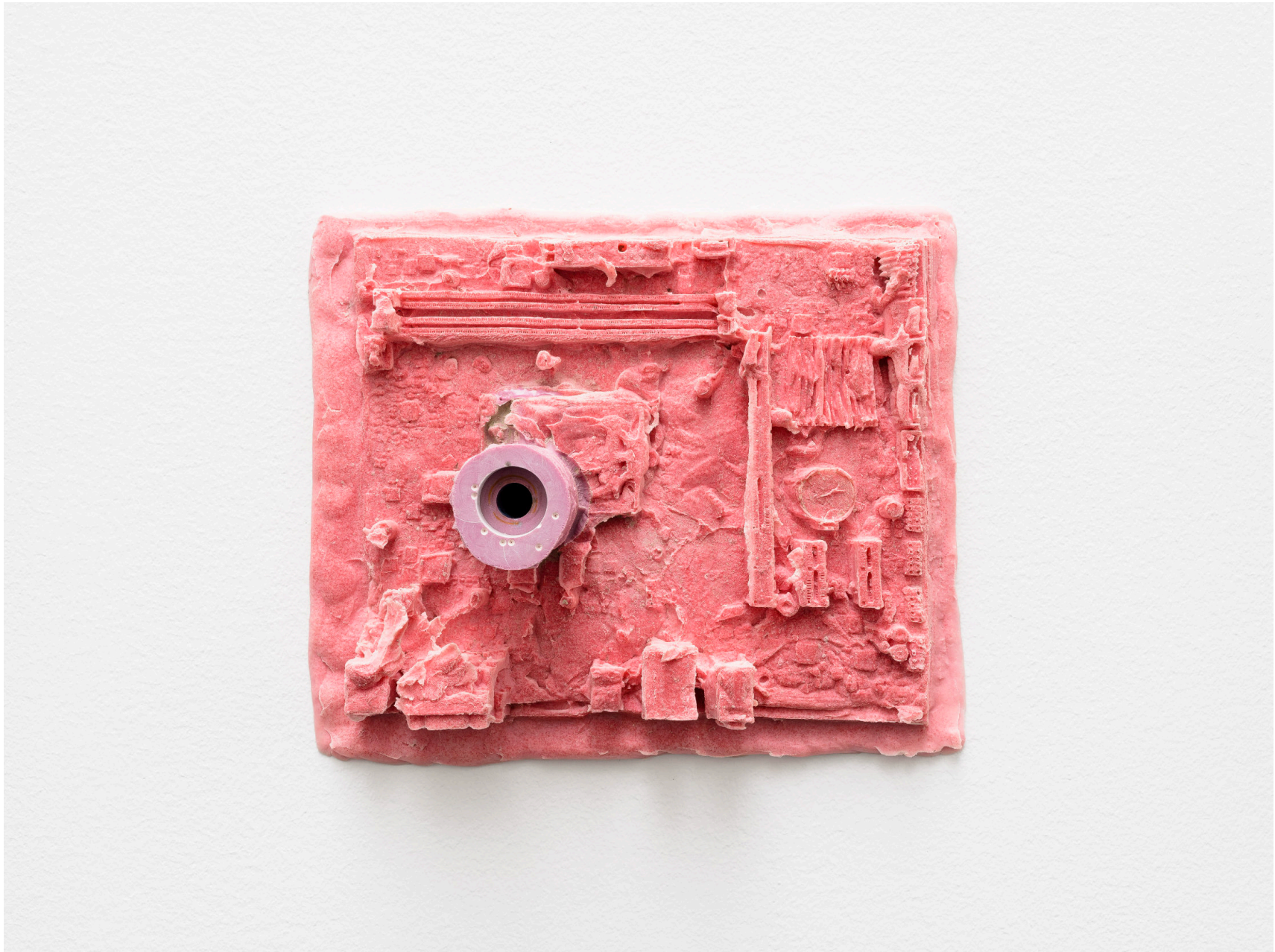
Florian Germann, Untitled, 2023
Opus caementicium, hematite, steel
56 × 50 × 37 cm, GERM/S 144



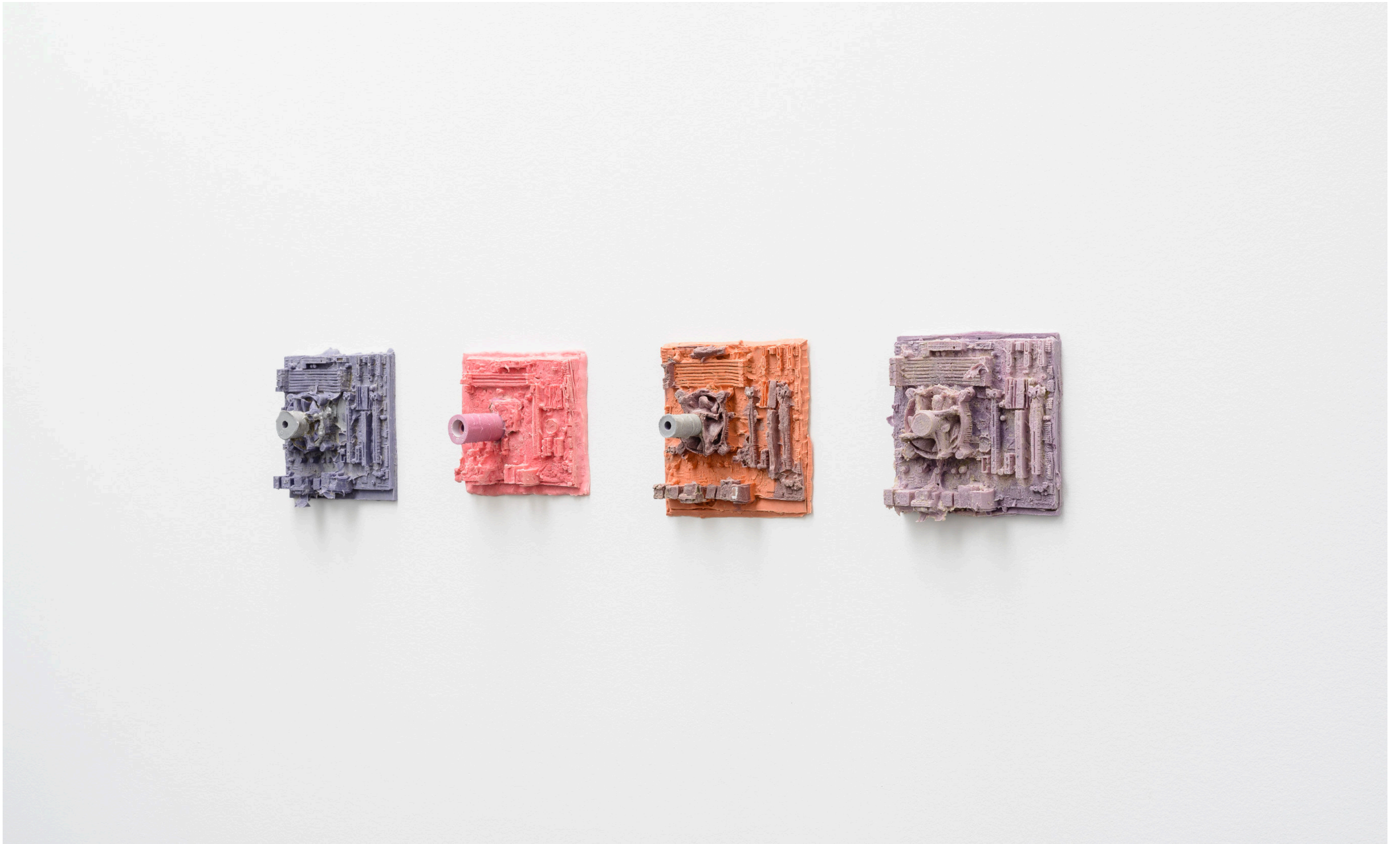
Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



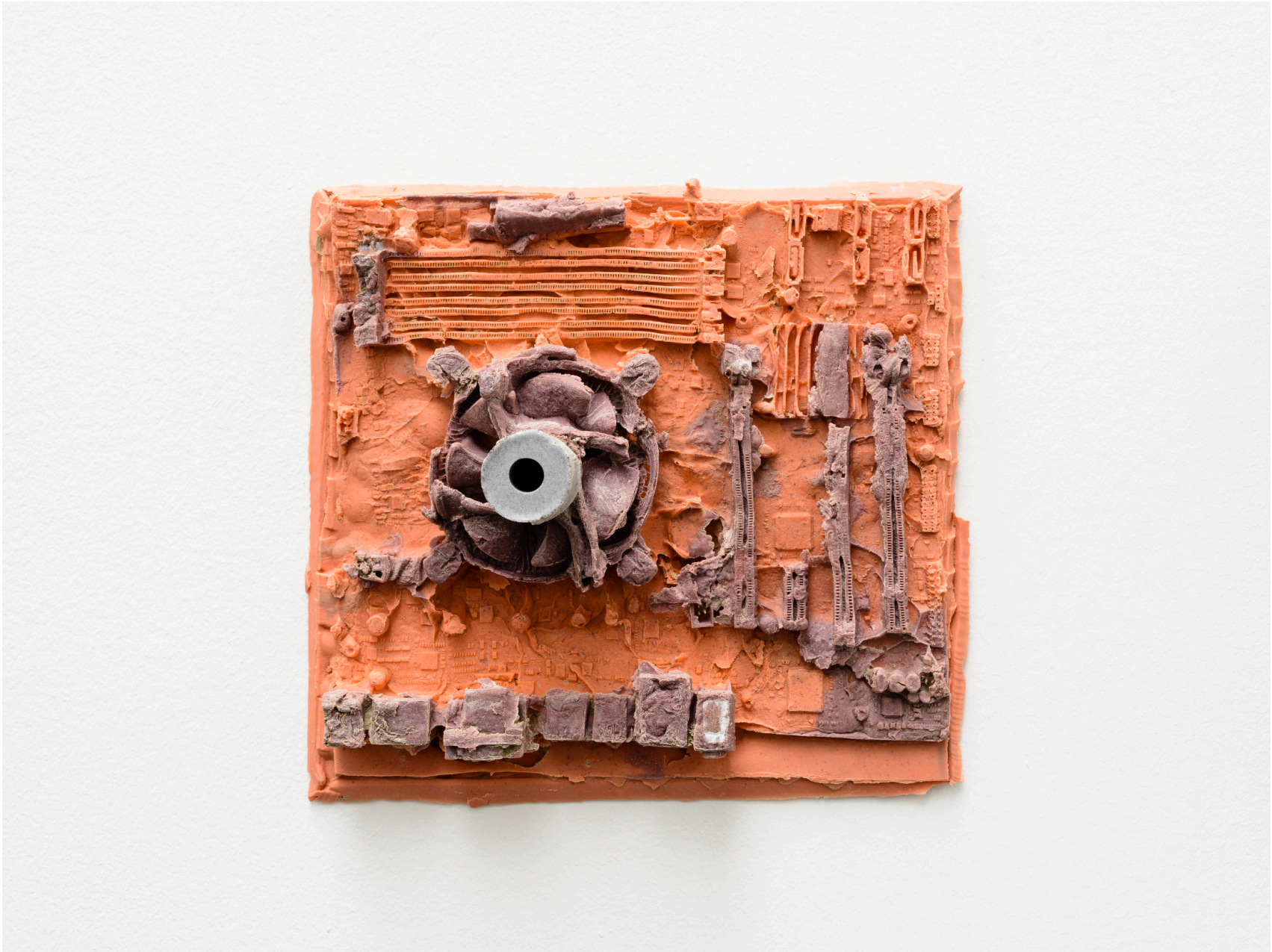
Florian Germann, Motherboard 3, 2023
Bio resin, pigments
8 x 24 x 25 cm, GERM/S 149



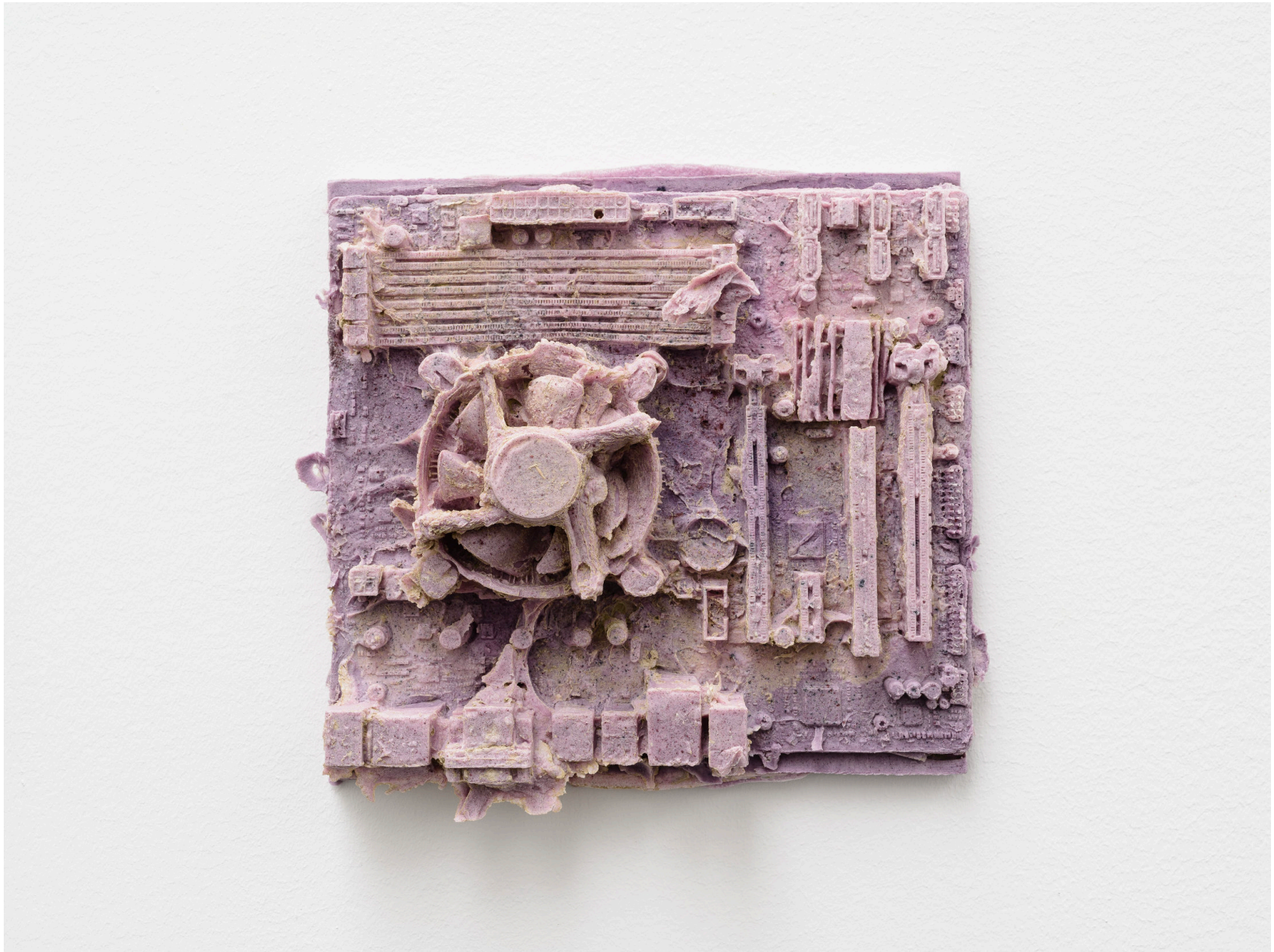
Florian Germann, Motherboard 1, 2023
Bio resin, pigments
8 × 24 × 25 cm, GERM/S 147



Florian Germann, *Der Empfang*, 2023
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Florian Germann, Motherboard 2, 2023
Bio resin, pigments
10 x 24 x 25 cm, GERM/S 14 8



Florian Germann, Motherboard 5, 2023
Bio resin, pigments
7.5 x 24 x 25 cm, GERM/S 151

FLORIAN GERMANN

Der Empfang

September 2- October 21, 2023,

In his fifth solo exhibition at Galerie Gregor Staiger, *Der Empfang* (The Reception), Swiss artist Florian Germann (*1978, lives and works in Zurich) presents a selection of works related to his public art projects for the first time, which have been part of his artistic practice for several years. In addition to his interest in literary, cinematic, historical, but also scientific figures, motifs and fields of knowledge, which he takes up with his sculptural arrangements, the transformation of energies can be described as one of the leitmotifs in Germann's work.

Model building - the making of concrete, three-dimensional, physical objects, dioramas or miniatures - has fascinated people for centuries. The simplified, scaled-down replicas of planned objects or (living) areas show how something could be: the models, which are used in different areas, are to be understood as a form of visualization of a future thing. Models of artists in particular - we often encounter them in the context of art-in-architecture projects - are characterized by profound reflections on spatial contexts and social forms. At the same time, the moment of failure is often inherent in them, insofar as the projects designed with the models often cannot be implemented on a larger scale. Thus, they break away from their purely "utilitarian function" and often take up utopian approaches - one of the most famous examples is, for example, the *Monument of the Third International* (1919–20), an unrealized tower project by the Russian artist Vladimir Tatlin. In contemporary exhibition history, too, artists such as Isa Genzken (*Modelle für Aussenprojekte*, Bundeskunsthalle Bonn, 2016) dedicate entire exhibition projects to such models of realized and unrealized outdoor projects.

Germann's current exhibition can also be located in this art-historical tradition, as his artistic practice has been characterized by working in outdoor spaces from the very beginning. The starting point of the exhibition are three projects that respond to invitations for public art competitions: *Lot* (2019-23) as part of the new construction project of the Eichrain retirement center and housing estate, Zurich; *Café Central* (since 2022) as part of the new construction project Glaubten-Areal, Zurich) and *Nachtclub für Nachtfalter* (since 2023) as part of the new construction project Campus der Schule Wattwil. Germann presents the various models that were created in the process of working on the projects. They are not individually shown on white pedestals, however, but staged in an installative structure. This not only encompasses his models, but at the same time relocates the gallery's reception and office to the center of the exhibition space. An interior architectural intervention that is not only a possible variation of unusual display, but can also be read in the tradition of institutional critique. In the sense of revealing and making visible different "commissioning bodies" - in this case the gallery and the city/canton as patrons of art-in-architecture projects - the installation brings into focus the different requirements and valid sets of rules of the various production fields within the arts.

The exhibition title, *Der Empfang* (The Reception), can be seen to relate not only to the exhibition display, but also specifically to the individual proposals of the public art projects. Often, a commissioning body also formulates wishes for inclusivity and diversity in extensive project specifications. Germann's "Kunst-am-Bau" proposals literally welcome not only people but also

other living beings and offer them living space. The sculpture *Lot*, which can be described as a tree-like structure with several branches, forms a space for migration and integration, a residence for small animals such as bats, swallows and other bird species and wild bees. Like his earlier sculptural works and installations, *Lot* "lives" from the moment of activation and participation. In their performativity - which arises in the interaction of different living beings - these as well as Germann's other works can be read as a continuation of the tradition of a social sculpture. For example, the artist describes his *Café Central* project as a "center for birds and people, [as] a modular, multifunctional sculpture rich in potential for performance and action." His current project, *Nachtclub für Nachtfalter* (Night Club for Moths), as the title implies, will also be a habitat for insects, "a living work of art to suit the tastes of pollinators, a city with an airport managed autonomously by insects." The color concept for the sculpture was chosen to provide insects with as familiar an environment as possible - pinks and yellows are reminiscent of flowers such as lilies or roses, and their pollen, respectively. To this day, architectural art projects that simultaneously have the character of a "biotope" and were also designed as such are a rarity. An exception is, for example, Meret Oppenheim's fountain on the Waisenhausplatz in Bern, which was very controversially discussed when it was inaugurated in 1983 and is met with great enthusiasm today. More and more, the need for biodiversity in urban spaces is being recognized and, in some cases, actively demanded.

Complementing this, Germann is showing a new group of sculptures in the exhibition whose materiality relates to the models on view. The bioresin floor sculpture *Untitled* (2023), which can be read as a connecting work to Germann's earlier series of bioresin-cast wall sculptures, is characterized by a circular depression. Associations with a basin or a satellite dish are evoked and again lead back to the exhibition title - here "reception" is extended to a metaphysical level. The wall sculptures *Untitled* (2023), which from a formal aesthetic point of view present themselves as a hybrid between physical instruments and modernist architectural fragments, are made of a concrete that has been used since the 2nd century BC and was already mentioned by the Roman architect, Vitruvius, as *Opus Caementicium* in his *Ten Books on Architecture*. Germann created the color - a faint mauve - by adding pigments of hematite, colloquially known as "bloodstone". The water-resistant material is characterized by its rough-porous surface, which can also provide a habitat for micro-organisms and various plant species such as moss. Thus, these sculptures are also characterized by their performative potential and tie in with the idea of a sculpture that not only evolves, but creates (living) spaces.

Dr. Raphael Gygax