

Francis Irv

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rachel Fäth

(Coördinator)

October 1 - October 28, 2023

For her first solo exhibition in New York, Rachel Fäth has installed five steel objects in Francis Irv's new location on the corner of Walker and Centre Street. Four heavy-duty mounts made of square steel tubing extend out from the walls of the gallery at various positions. Roughshod "extenders" laden with stray markings, fingerprints, streaks of paint, stickers, and loose coins hitch to and supplement the standardized mounts, offering minimal extension with maximal material force. On the back wall, a fifth mount points toward an exposed red brick chimney. Departing from her standard square backing plate, this mount is welded to a crude arch that vaguely corresponds to the rounded art deco windows visible across the street, and in place of an extender, a welded steel brick protrudes out from the mount's opening. Fäth's strategic array of steel mounts creates a system of relations between different points in space. Each point corresponds to another, forging approximate connections, loose repetitions, and endless deferrals.

Fäth's mounting systems often consist of two parts: a mount and an extender. To make the mounts, she welds a 4-inch tube to a large, flat steel plate, which is then sandblasted to produce a soft gray monochrome surface that is receptive to the touch. These standard tubes are made of hot rolled steel, a cheap, ubiquitous, and pliant type of steel used to manufacture things like electric cars and luxury condos. The extenders, on the other hand, are made of harder, more reflective cold rolled steel, used sparingly in industrial manufacture due to its more complex production process. The brick, like the extenders, is made of flat, cold rolled sheets, welded by hand to the form and dimensions of a standard clay brick.

Fäth sources her steel from a supplier called Rapid Steel that operates out of an old steel plant in Long Island City. Once a major site of industrial manufacturing along the East River, the defunct steel plant, Thypin Steel, has since been repurposed as a site for steel distribution. In the long course of deindustrialization, it's easy to forget there once was a time when Big Steel was synonymous with "America," Andrew Carnegie and J.P. Morgan, steel-framed skyscrapers and miles and miles of railroad track. Despite the waning of big manufacturing, steel remains symbolically rich, a nostalgic reminder of Keynesian stability—centralized labor, strong unions, the family wage—and, culturally, an inescapable allusion to the monumental aesthetics of postwar modernism, such as Serra's large-scale works of forged steel.

Despite its weighty materiality, Fäth uses steel for the purposes of abstraction: to make lines and patterns, compositions in space. Painted red and yellow lines on the body of the extenders gesture at directionality and speed, while loose coins wedged between the layers of steel sheets prompt a question about value. Coins and steel are bound up in seemingly different systems of value, one of exchange and the other of use, however, as Fäth intuits, they are both part of the same system, part of the upside-down world of commodities. As objects with storied pasts, Fäth's mounting systems exist within a chain of relations, always referring elsewhere. One mounting system, for example, points out the window toward the ever-changing Manhattan skyline, obstructed by the ongoing construction of Chinatown's mega jail, a 300-ft tower projected to be the tallest jail in the world. Fäth's deliberate arrangement of steel mounting systems directs us toward barely perceptible details, whether architectural or infrastructural, past or present, in order to begin the process of demystification.

- Eva Cilman

Rachel Fäth (b. 1991, Berlin) lives and works in New York. Selected solo and two-person exhibitions include *Invisitor*, diez, Amsterdam (2023); *HAUS*, Shahin Zarinbal, Berlin (2022); *Lock*, Loggia Loggia, Munich (2022); *Die zwei Seiten der Medaille* (with Johannes Büttner), Mauer, Cologne. Selected group exhibitions include *WEATHERING*, Kai Matsumyia, New York (2023); *CREWED*, New Jörg, Vienna (2023); *The Age*, Shahin Zarinbal, Berlin (2022); *Jahresgaben*, Kunstverein Munich, Munich (2022); *Under the Volcano II*, Lomex, New York (2022); Haus Wien, Vienna (2021).

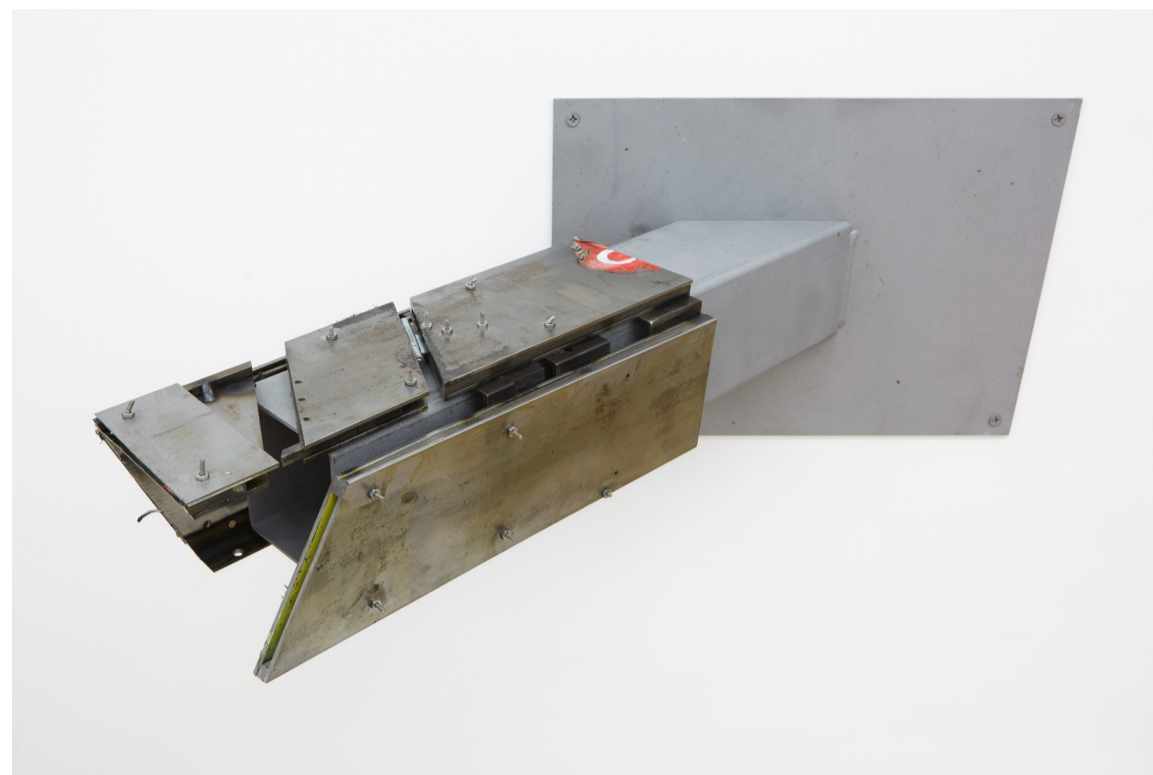
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CHECKLIST

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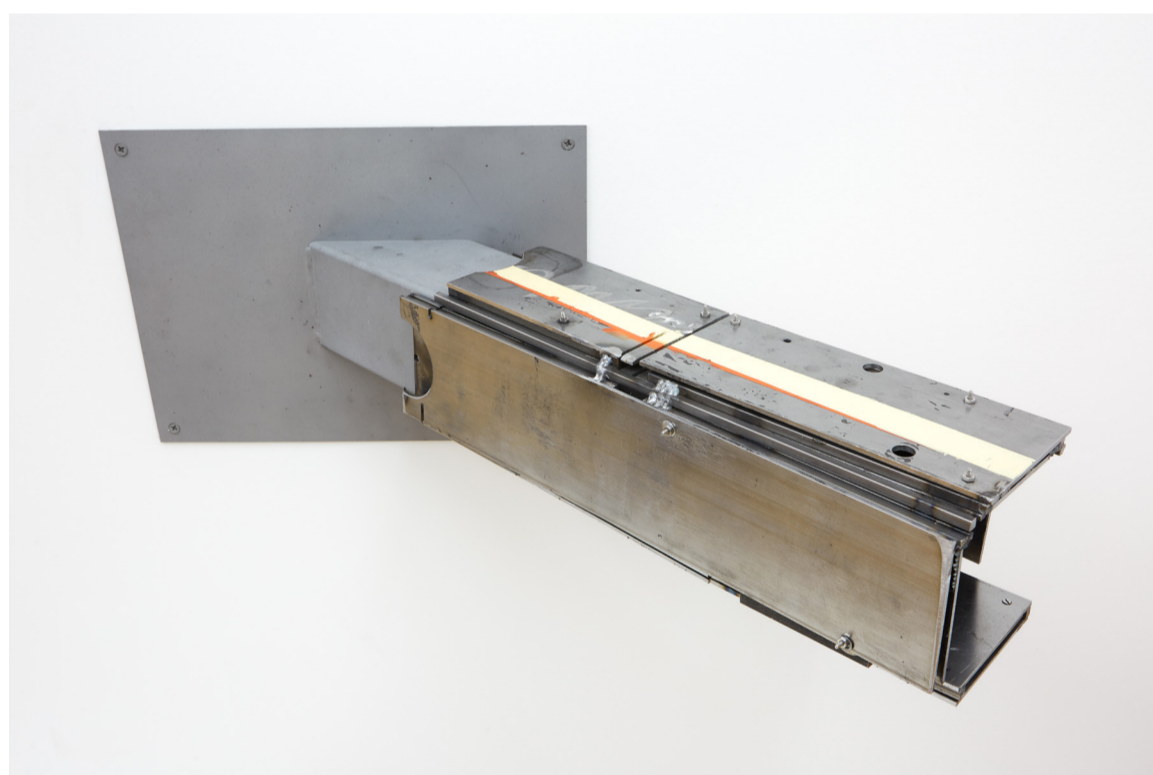
Rachel Fäth
Mount with Extender, a
2023

Sandblasted steel, cold rolled steel, hot rolled steel, screws and nuts, coins, sticker, plastic, boiled linseed oil, paint
11 x 28 x 22 in.
27.94 x 71.12 x 55.88 cm



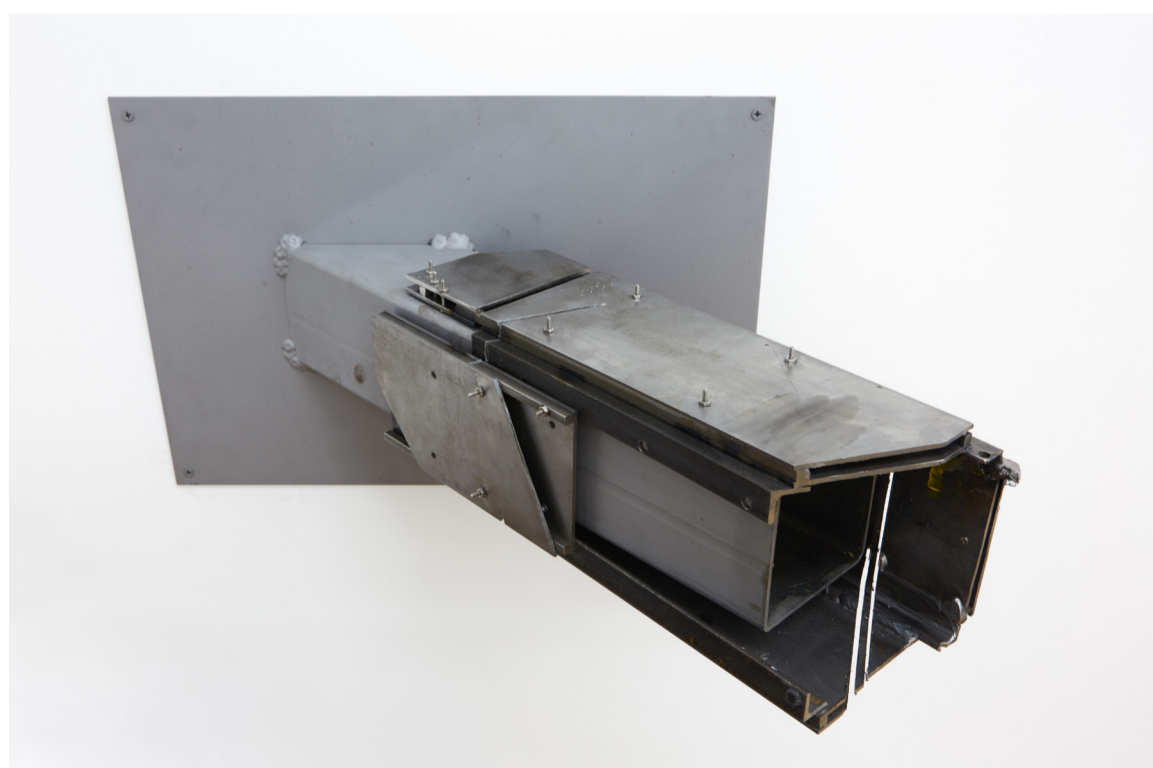
Rachel Fäth
Mount with Extender, b
2023

Sandblasted steel, cold rolled steel, hot rolled steel, screws and nuts, coins, magnets, tape, paint
15 x 26 x 26½ in.
38.1 x 66.04 x 67.31 cm



Rachel Fäth
Mount with Extender, c
2023

Sandblasted steel, cold rolled steel, hot rolled steel, screws and nuts, coins, paint
11½ x 29 x 24 in.
29.21 x 73.66 x 60.96 cm



Rachel Fäth
Mount with Extender, d
2023

Sandblasted steel, glass, paint, magnet, cold rolled steel, hot rolled steel, screws and nuts, thread, sticker, boiled linseed oil
13 x 25 x 22 in.
33.02 x 63.5 x 55.88 cm



Rachel Fäth
Mount with Brick
2023

Cold rolled steel, hot rolled steel, paint
11½ x 18 x 13 in.
29.21 x 45.72 x 33.02 cm