

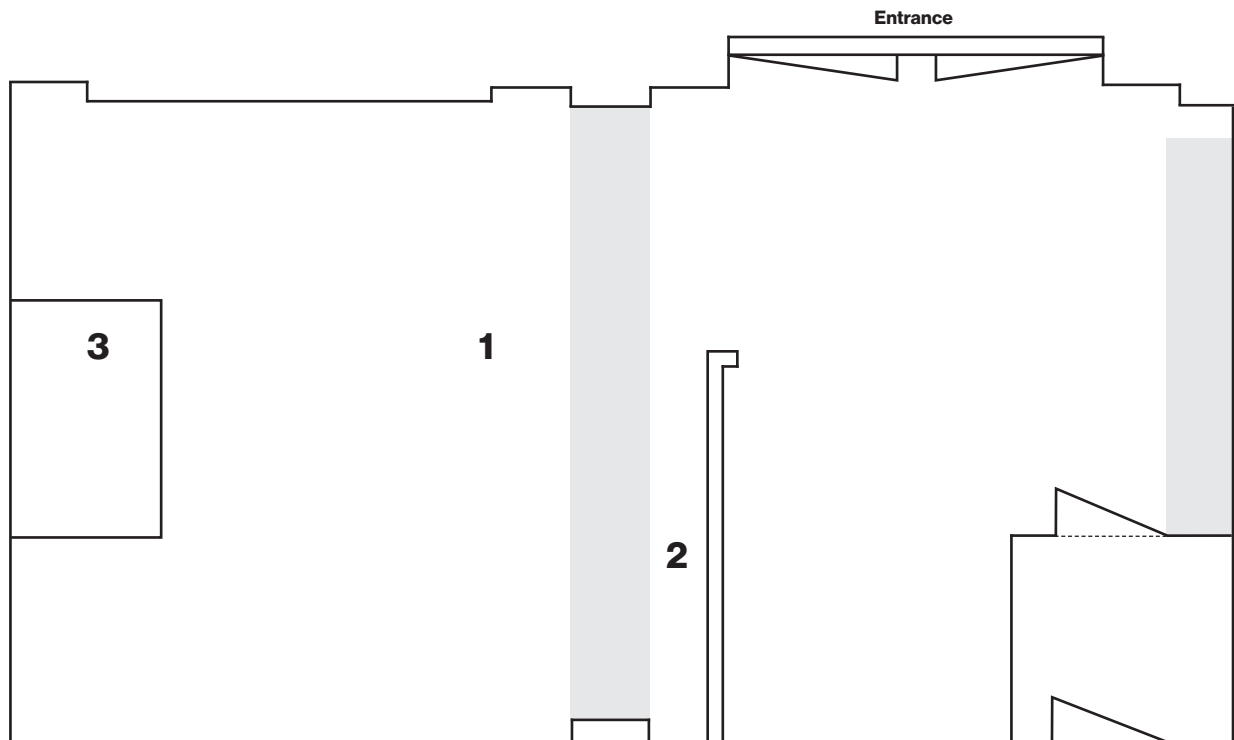
Grok

Though its sound suggests a sudden, almost guttural reflex, to grok names a mode of apprehension that slips beyond the bounds of logic – an attunement shaped by intuition and empathy. Beneath the gaze of an unresponsive eye and the tilt of a waiting figure, something carries on in its own way, and the grokking continues.

Raffaele Pola's work is dedicated to exploring the autonomous evolution, preservation, and decay of systems. Rooted in sculpture and installation, he works with dead-end materials, found objects, and various scales of dust to create tactile, precarious assemblages that suggest both growth and disintegration. For the exhibition at P////AKT, he will present a reconfiguration of *Emergence Threshold* (2024), in combination with recent works. A text by Héloïse Chassepot accompanies the exhibition.

Pola graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in 2021 and is currently completing his Master degree in Sculpture at the HFBK Hamburg.

1. *Emergence threshold*, 2024/2025
wood glue and corn starch, cardboard tube, glass, metal rods, metal wire, PVA foil, found objects, modified bitumen, varnish, motors, electrical cable, power bank, 350 × 30 × 370 cm
2. *Umarell*, 2025
wood, 60 × 170 cm
3. *Untitled*, 2025
microscope diaphragm, metal, motor, Arduino, 10 × 25 cm



Until 14 December 2025
Thursday – Sunday, 14 – 18 hrs
www.pakt.nu

In Richard Lindner's *Boy with Machine* a Légeresque body stands upright, his characteristic roundness inserted within a machine, while reciprocally this machine swathes his body. At the very moment when the historic avant-gardes began developing its interest in industrial transformations and machineries, bodies themselves began to swell, as though trying to compensate for the expansion of the industrial age.

A T-shaped sculpture lays on the floor, rerouting the circulation of my steps. Lines extend in directions that seem to be guided by their own technophilic affordances; incorporating on their ways bits and bobs like steel rods, ashtrays, bitumen, cardboard tubes and other shiny thingies. Manufactured objects and raw materials are indifferently invested in a process that feels almost digestive: things enter, are worked through, scrutinized and shaped, assimilated or rejected, forming part of a bidirectional relationship that runs from the sculpture to Raffaele, from Raffaele to the sculpture. While looking mechanical, the choices are not subject to the command of utility, but observe their own materialist specificities: a technological vitalism mise-en-oeuvre, as in Richard Lindner's painting.

The process takes quite a lot of what I dread to be destructive, what I honestly try to defend ("don't cut it!"), but which reveals itself to be a necessary phase in Raffaele's temporal stratification — "you don't make an omelette without breaking some eggs." The sculpture therefore is a site where layers of history are accumulated, concealed, and reconfigured over time. A salvage punk extrusion of technical drawings, which promises and speculates only through a private phase of sketching. In contrast to the preparatory drawings, the sculptures happen. They hold a moment in the course of events: plastic has melted, a sparkle has diminished, digestion has worked through its courses.

A figure bends. In opposition to the subject of its observation, its body has been mechanically fabricated from a single material. Although its shape can tangibly be associated with a human body, its diagrammatic style seems to cancel any prescribed course of events. The same applies to the lonely-standing iris shutter, which by opening and closing, serves the automated path of its programming. Both appear complete in form, satisfying a need for recognition and understanding, but remain incomplete in experience: their history is close to nothing. This ambivalence is furthered through the cohabitation of a spell of vitality and a penchant for artificiality: are they serious enemies? Ultimately, intermingling of vitalism and artificiality that Raffaele's work stages, proves such a distinction to be decisively pointless — as Lindner's picture predicted.