



MISCHA LEINKAUF
TRANS-SCENIC PRACTICE

in collaboration with
alexanderlevy



TOM REICHSTEIN
c o n t e m p o r a r y

3. FEB - 18. MÄR 2023



The gallery Tom Reichstein Contemporary is pleased to present the artist Mischa Leinkauf in collaboration with the gallery alexander levy. Under the title Trans-Scenic Practice, the exhibition brings together various series of works by the artist from the last four years. Mischa Leinkauf's interventions, videos and photographs deal with the hidden and forbidden possibilities of so-called public spaces. His works practice an appropriation and subversion of these very spaces through artistic settings.

The works Fiction of Non-Entry and Glory are part of a multi-media and multi-perspective discourse Leinkauf began in 2019. Through the use of his own body, through techniques of documentation or transformational processes such as combustion, he not only draws attention to its systemic construction in terms of landscape terrain but the assertions of nation-state boundaries. National borders are architectural manifestations of spheres of power, national flags the appropriate icon to it. The works visually suspend politically motivated demarcations and bring into play a critique directed against topographical and symbolic barricading. Referring to Situationist theory and practice, Leinkauf exposes the permeability and absurdity of border installations. Neither the natural resources of water, air, and earth nor social forms of life, solidarity, and intimate relationships suggest spatial demarcation. Against this background, the works call the reification and naturalness of borders into question: where there is visual separation, Leinkauf's works point to the common.

A series of photographs with the title Fiktion einer Nicht-Einreise show Leinkauf crossing the invisible borders on the ocean floor between Israel and Jordan or Egypt in the Red Sea and the Spanish enclave of Ceuta and Morocco in the Strait of Gibraltar. The respective regions are militarily guarded and secured by border fortifications, some of their fences protrude 30 meters from

the banks into the water. Behind them, a landscape opens up to which visual separation has to surrender: the sea. By leaving the overland routes, Leinkauf traces the national interspaces. Where systematic gaps arise, he reveals the absurdity of control systems in a performative way.

In *Glory* Leinkauf deals with the symbolic power of national flags. They manifest the idea of territorial affiliation and national identity. Against the background of political conflict, nation-state symbols become catalysts for the symbolic separation of 'own' and 'foreign'. Leinkauf opposes the symbolic similarities of national territories that are increasingly isolating themselves from one another. The works show the ashes of burned national flags. At the moment of destruction, the process of unification begins: the colours, forms and materiality of the flags slowly resemble each other, only the proportions preserve the difference between them. While the disintegrating surface transcends, the common foundation of social ways of life beyond national affiliation is revealed.

In Mischa Leinkauf's *Trans-Scenic Practice*, spaces become scenes for images, concerned with the structural staging of spaces that are often public, yet restricted in access or hidden.

Physical Dialectics (2022) is a series of photographs Mischa Leinkauf developed in the Ruhr region, once Germany's coal and steel centre. For the series, he has gained access to the colossal architectures of former and contemporary industry, cultural buildings, and residential complexes, becoming an observer of a multi-layered juxtaposition of human labour over the last 100 years, hidden vertically from deep underground to high behind the modern glass and steel facades of post-industrial work. Common to all the images is a solitary figure seen from behind, which provides us with access to what we see, which is a mediator and places us in relation to it. The

individual sits high above and looks out with us into the landscape and the times. Also without wings, it refers to the figure of the „angel of history“, described by Walter Benjamin as one who, driven forward by the storm of progress, looks back at the events of the past. Shot from the air with telephoto lenses, Mischa Leinkauf achieves a spatial and temporal concentration: strangely out of perspective, spaces removed from depth, architectural situations that tell of past and present, energy production and exploitation, of work and standstill.

To focus attention, to physically enter into dialogue with the environment, to climb, to subvert, to overcome, to explore interventionistically and performatively are recurring strategies in Mischa Leinkauf's practice. He is always concerned with adopting a different standpoint from which orders, architectural and political settings, or history can be observed. The perspective from which we look at realities tells a lot about their veritableness.

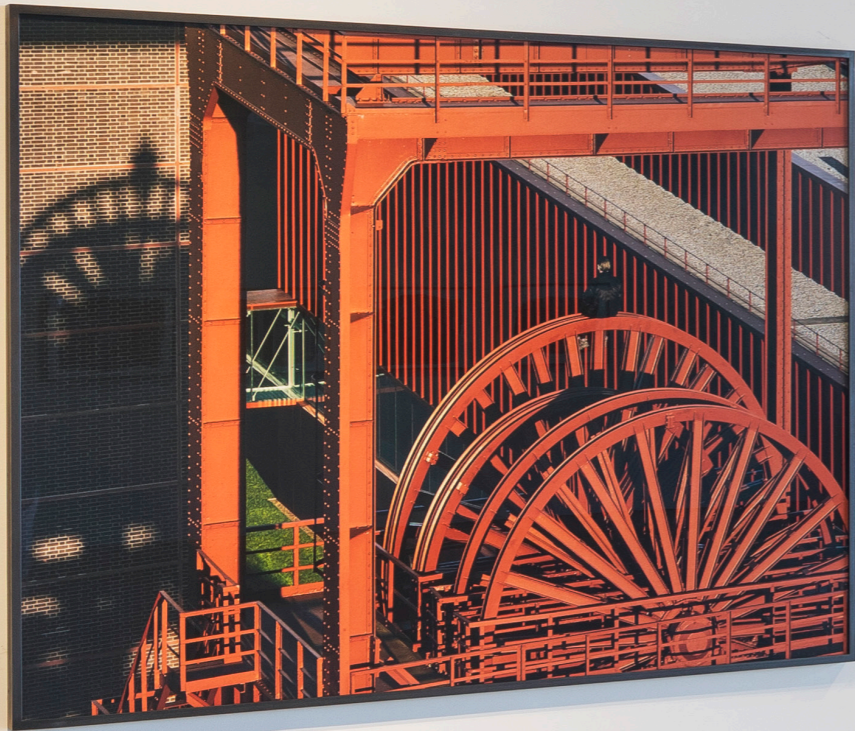
Text excerpts by Almut Poppinga, Kim Gabriel





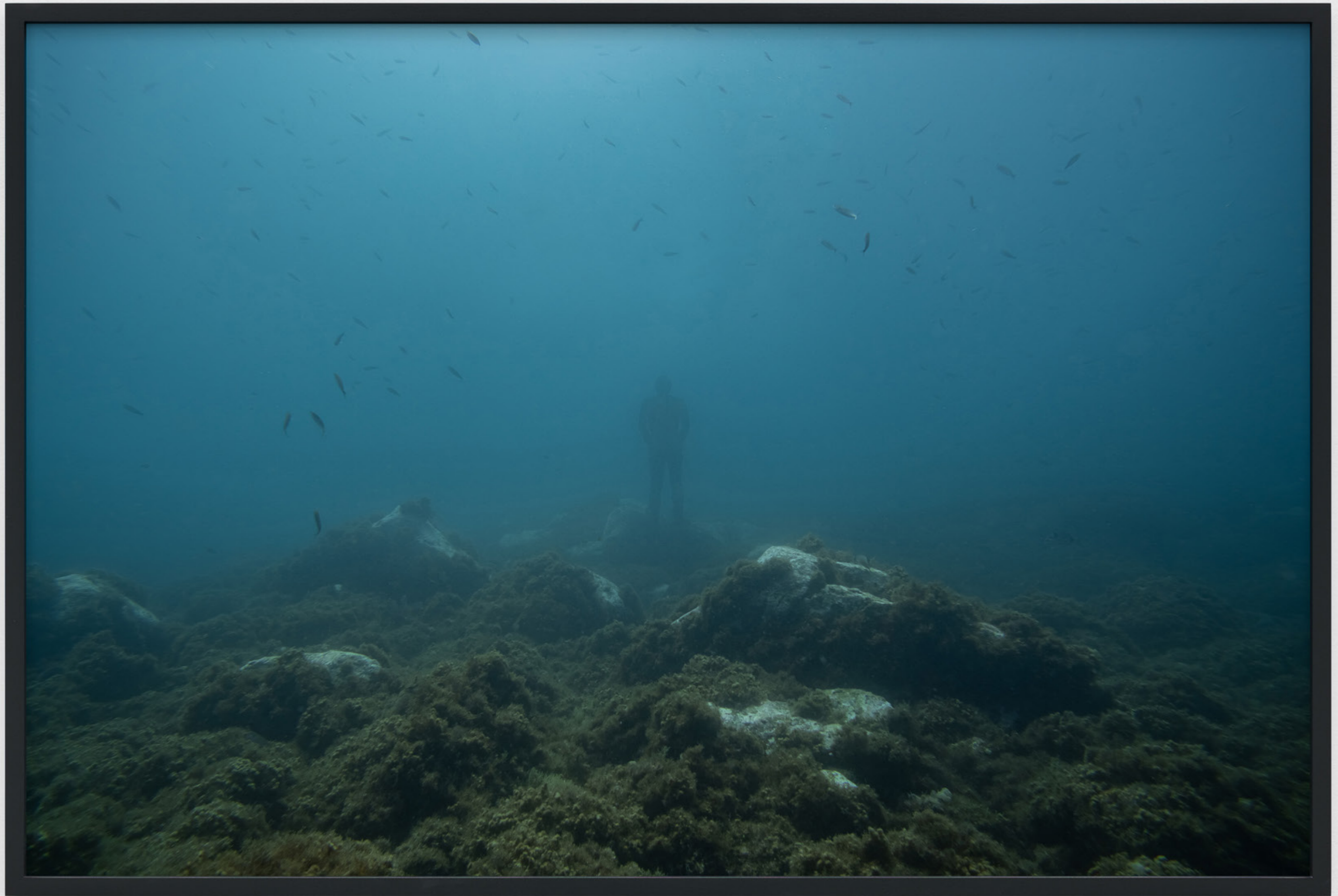


Installation view MISCHA LEINKAUF *Trans-Scenic Practice*, 2023

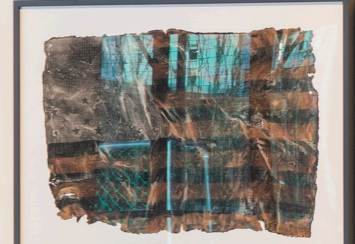


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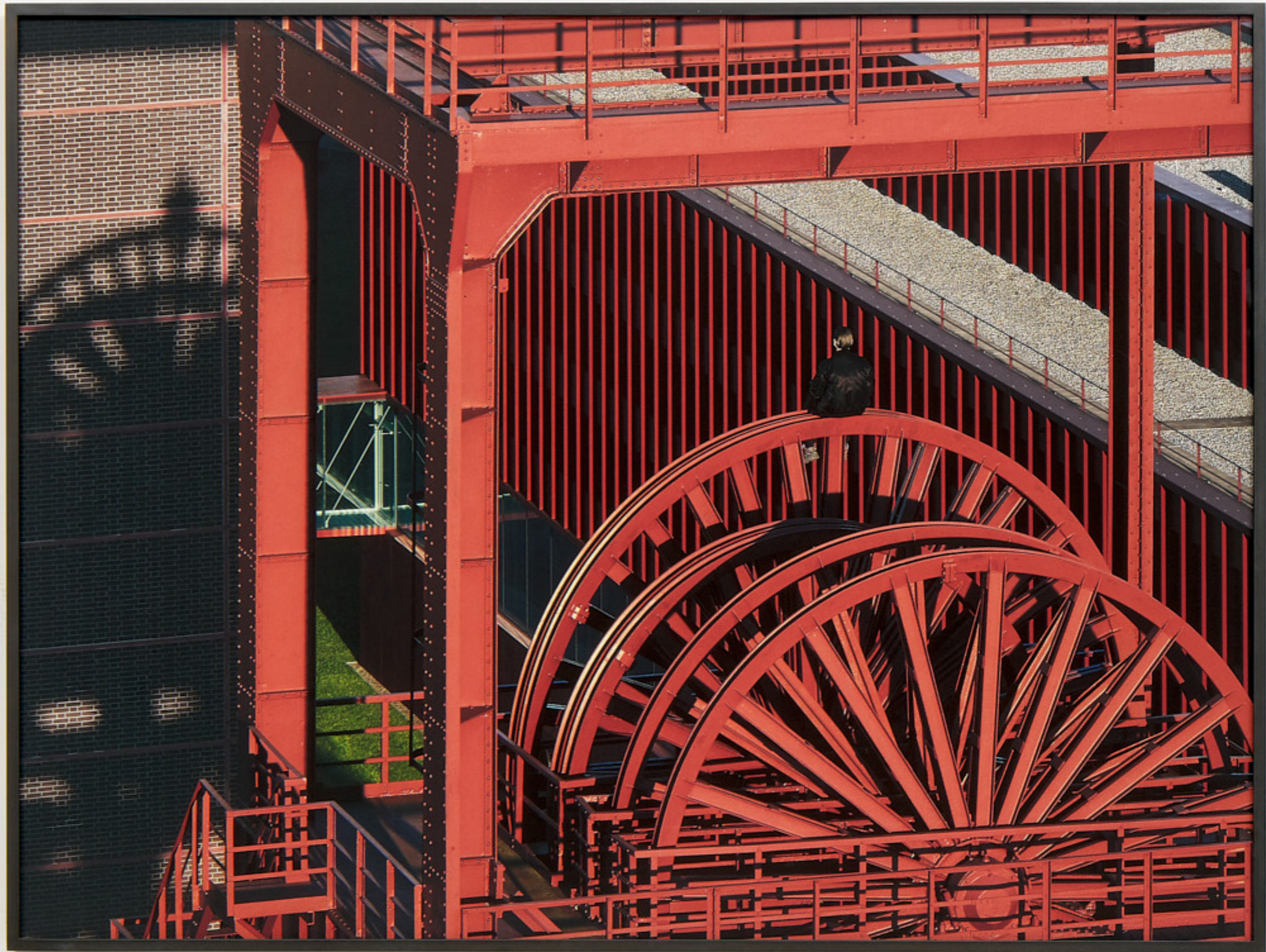
Mischa Leinkauf „Fiktion einer Nicht-Einreise (Marokko + Spanien)“ 2019, Archival pigment print, 100 x 150 cm, 1 of 3 + 2 A.P.(#1/3)



Installation view MISCHA LEINKAUF *Trans-Scenic Practice*, 2023



Mischa Leinkauf „Glory (Europa)“ 2021, Printed cotton flags, acrylic paint, burned, 60 x 85 cm





Installation view MISCHA LEINKAUF *Trans-Scenic Practice*, 2023



Mischa Leinkauf „Physical Dialectics III“ 2022, Archival Pigment Print, 150 x 200 cm, 3 + 2 A.P. (#1/3)





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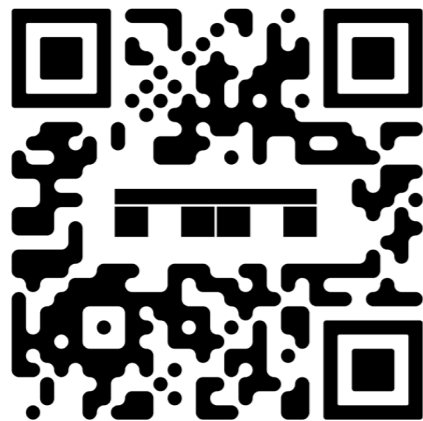
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