

Press release

Richard Mosse | *Broken Spectre*

17 September 2021 – 31 October 2021

Opening: Friday, 17 September 2021, 6 – 9 pm

An exhibition by carlier | gebauer at AKKURAT Labs x Fahrenheit

carlier | gebauer is pleased to present *Broken Spectre*, the gallery's fifth solo exhibition by Irish artist Richard Mosse. Working between documentary forms and contemporary art, Mosse has consistently leveraged photographic technologies in reflexive ways to create potent forms of storytelling.

Broken Spectre is the result of careful study of ecocide in the Brazilian Amazon. An estimated 99% of deforestation in the Amazon results from illegal activities, explicitly encouraged by the Brazilian government and global investment, yet the scale and effects of such ecological changes are not easily revealed through conventional photography. Illegal logging, land invasion into protected forests and indigenous territories, massive meat and soybean farming, and illegal gold mining occur on a vast scale, devastating the world's most biodiverse rainforest and contributing directly to climate change. Mosse has searched for activated ways of photographing these processes.

The exhibition opens with a new single channel video installation with sound designed by Ben Frost. An aerial video camera tracks over topography of mass deforestation, extractive violence and forest dieback, indexically revealing the health of the earth below using scientific multispectral sensors. Multispectral cameras carried by satellites orbiting earth are used by scientists to understand the scale and velocity of environmental devastation. Capturing specific bands of solar radiance in the infrared and near-infrared wavelengths reflected from the foliage below, this data can reveal conditions of ecological degradation that are difficult or impossible to perceive with the human eye. The camera was custom built according to Mosse's design and operated by cinematographer Trevor Tweeten.

An accompanying series of multispectral maps were made with a mapping camera designed and sold to agribusiness and mining companies to exploit the environment. Using the camera against its intended purpose, Mosse flew it over remote sites of environmental crimes across the Amazon rainforest. Composited using orthographic software and processed using GIS (geographic information systems) techniques, Mosse gathered the data into intensively detailed topographical maps that yield disarming aesthetic force while revealing traces of these complex ecological narratives, at turns geopolitical, multinational, local and cultural, the effects of which can be difficult to perceive in time and space.

A series of gold-toned analogue silver gelatin prints, intimate in scale, were made with a long-discontinued monochrome infrared film medium named Kodak High Speed Infrared. Mosse has used this extinct heat sensitive medium to document sites of deforestation and extractive violence. In the process of making these images, the film's emulsion was damaged by environment conditions, resulting in a patina of tears, scratches, fingerprints, and other debris that Mosse employs to visually express global heating while pointing to the limits of representing climate change itself. The infrared medium registers the forest's vast amount of chlorophyll, a carbon absorbing asset in fighting climate change which is being burned on catastrophic levels. The artist revisited and rephotographed specific sites along what is known as the 'arc of fire', to examine the temporal process of turning rainforest into cattle pasture and soy fields.

Broken Spectre addresses not only the limits of storytelling and human perception, but also the limits of our globalized economy – our unwillingness to contain environmental catastrophe and suicidal addiction to growth in a post-capitalist world.

Richard Mosse (b.1980, Ireland) lives and works in New York and Ireland. He has been awarded the Prix Pictet (2017), the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize (2014), a Guggenheim Fellowship (2012), and has represented Ireland at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). This year, he received his first major survey exhibition, *Richard Mosse, Displaced*, at MAST Foundation, Bologna, Italy. An immersive video installation accompanying *Broken Spectre* is currently under production. Co-commissioned by the National Gallery of Victoria and the VIA Art Production Fund, the work will debut in London in 2022. In association with this new project, Mosse has been awarded a 2021 residency with Arts at CERN, Geneva and Serrapilheira in Brazil. Recent solo exhibitions include *Incoming* at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2019), National Gallery of Art, Washington DC (2019), and the Barbican Art Gallery, London (2017). Mosse has also received solo exhibitions at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (2015); FOAM, Amsterdam (2014); Portland Art Museum (2014); National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2014); Nasher Museum of Art, Durham (2014). Recent exhibitions include RAY Triennial at MMK, Frankfurt, Germany (2018); Hamburg Triennial of Photography, at Hamburger Kunsthalle, Kunstmuseum Basel, and Akademie der Künste, Berlin (2018). He has published seven books