

As a program of Kyoto Experiment 2022, Kyoto Art Center is pleased to present the exhibition “Mischa Leinkauf – Encounter the Spatial.” This year’s festival takes the idea of “New tekuteku” as a framework for thinking about how we can transcend the zeitgeist positively. “Tekuteku” is a Japanese word that expresses walking, and the keyword “New tekuteku” proposes new discoveries and new insights about the expression of ‘walking.’

Mischa Leinkauf is a Berlin-based artist who has actually traveled around the world with his own feet. He is also a pioneer of artwork which has been expanding the possibilities of the act of walking. He sometimes goes underground cities, and even walks under the sea. In this way, he encounters spatial phenomena that we are not usually aware of, but which certainly exist around us, and creates unique video works. What exactly is ‘walking’ for Leinkauf? As a reference point for his method, he mentions ‘Dérive’ in the theory and practice of the Situationists. This term was one of the concepts proposed by French philosopher, and filmmaker, Guy Debord in a group formed in 1957 called the ‘International Situationists’ and in a magazine of the same name. The avant-garde activities of the Situationists, which were centered in Paris and had a major influence on the revolts of May 1968, were primarily concerned with how to criticize the accelerating consumer society after World War II. One of their experiments, ‘dérive (=drifting)’, was a way of looking at the city from a new perspective against this social background through alternative ways of walking.

Just ‘drifting’ may sound like wandering aimlessly, but according to Debord, “Dérives involve playful-constructive behavior and awareness of psychogeographical effects,

and are thus quite different from the classic notions of journey or stroll.” In this meaning, Situationists walk in order to recapture and reconstruct the sensory and social characteristics of the environment around them, while consciously deviating from the zoning of modern cities. Unlike typical sightseeing, drifting, a way of walking that observes all the factors at play and gives itself over to them in an improvised and deliberate way, enables the discovery of gaps or errors in urban space and social institutions that are otherwise overlooked.

And the unknown territory that exists in our periphery is what Leinkauf named ‘the Spatial’ in the title of the exhibition. The two works presented in this exhibition, “Fiction of a Non-Entry” and “Endogenous Error Terms,” are video recordings of the space that Leinkauf encountered as a result of drifting. The images appear to be scenes from another world, somewhere far away. In reality, however, reflected in the landscape are borders, and infrastructures, which are both supposed to support our daily lives in places we don’t normally see.

Please take a look at the images projected on the gallery walls, listen to the sounds that fill the room, and immerse yourself in the space that Leinkauf has encountered. What we experience through the exhibition space is not merely a pleasant and peaceful story. What Leinkauf’s real-life experiences reveal is the unstable and profound space that exists behind the scenes of everyday life. And what the work presents and opens up outside the exhibition space is a foothold for drifting into a space that allows us to re-envision our world.

Keisuke Nakaya
(KYOTO ART CENTER / KYOTO EXPERIMENT)

ミーシャ・ラインカウフ
Encounter the Spatial — 空間への漂流
2022-10-1 (土) — 10-23 (日)
10:00 – 20:00

Entrance Free

On 10-1 (Sat.)
open until 22:00

1 Fiction of a Non-Entry

2019, 1-channel-video installation, 4K, 17:00 min., stereo, loop
Underwater camera: Paul Rohlf, Sound design: Ed (Inland) Davenport
courtesy the artist & alexander levy Berlin - VG Bild/Kunst

We see the figure of Mischa Leinkauf from behind – as he walks slowly with his gaze forward, the sand on the ocean floor disperses. The video shows the artist crossing 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 title of this work refers to the expression “Fiction of Non-Entry (Fiktion der Nicht-einreise)”, which stems from the German refugee policy. This policy states that the arrival only occurs once migrants have been legally recognized, regardless of their physical presence in the territory.

In other words, the state claims to possess no obligation to provide rights to incoming migrants, even if they cross the border and reach the transit zone before immigration.

Leinkauf uses these words to focus not on the overland routes which would be arduous to traverse, but on the bottom of the ocean beyond the reach of humans. He dived into yet another gap in the system of national borders. If you didn't know anything about it, we would just see the beauty of walking with fish in the vastness of the sea. But at the same time, his performance attempts to reveal the absurdity of a huge invisible system there.

2 Endogenous Error Terms

2019, 1-channel-video installation, HD, 19:30 min
courtesy the artist & alexander levy Berlin - VG Bild/Kunst

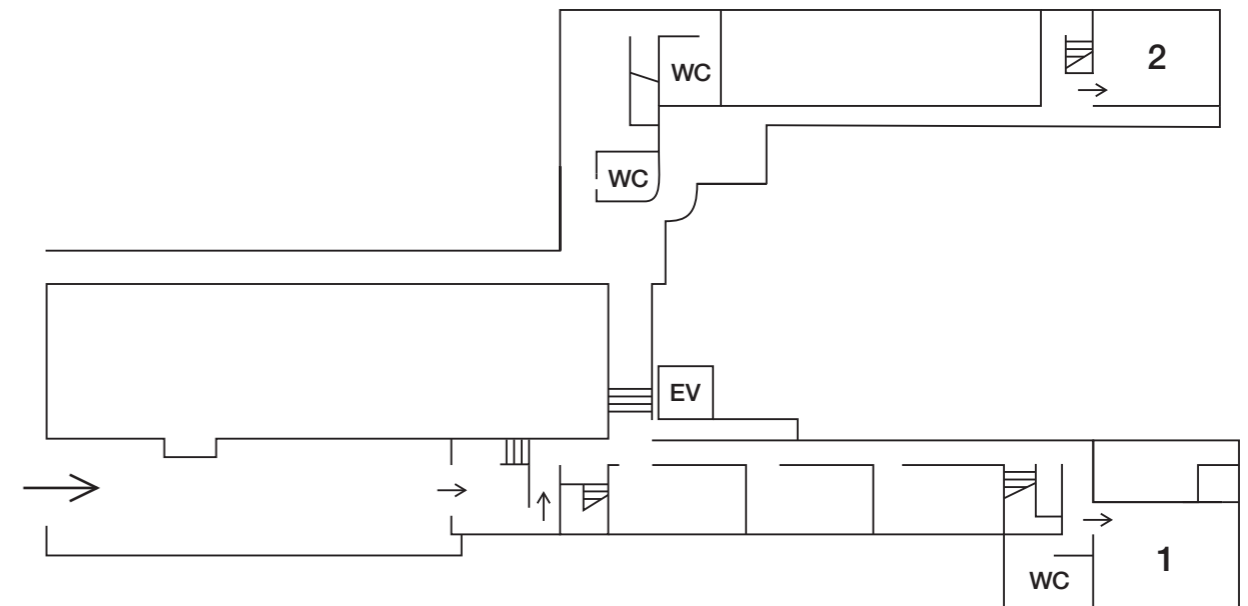
Starting in Tokyo immediately after the Tohoku earthquake, Mischa Leinkauf has moved to Karakorum (Mongolia), Moscow and Yekaterinburg (Russia), Munich (Germany), Vienna (Austria), Florence (Italy), Athens (Greece), among other places – delving into the massive infrastructure, such as underground waterways, sewers, and shelters which uphold the security of each city.

When Leinkauf encountered this underground environment, which people never recognize in their daily life, but which is ad-

acent to urban life, the spaces seem to him like gaps mistakenly generated in the interior of the city. This video work “Endogenous Error Terms” observes the outside world from the darkness of these structures.

Take a close look at the light coming from the other side of the tunnel and listen carefully to the various sounds echoing from the ground. Through his experience, we can become aware of the existence we have unconsciously passed, the environment, and the systems that surround us.

Gallery North | South



Mischa Leinkauf

Berlin born and based artist Mischa Leinkauf deals with the hidden possibilities of urban environments and various kinds of limitations of spaces through borders, rules, architecture and barriers. By intervening in quasi-natural systems of order, he provokes situations that create temporary irritation and open up spaces for recoding. In particular, Leinkauf focuses on the borders between public and restricted-access or

non-public spaces. His cross-media artistic practice includes performative interventions, video installations, films and photographs. His works are shown internationally at film festivals, museums, art spaces and galleries including Berlinale, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Kunstmuseum Bonn, ZKM Karlsruhe, Manifesta 11, Moderna Museet Stockholm and Helsinki Art Museum.

Video setup: Kotaro Konishi
Sound setup: Sho Takiguchi
Graphic Design: T. S. Wendelstein (75W), Minami Shimakage
Coordination: Keisuke Nakaya (Kyoto Art Center)

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