



NEW RELEASE

Sebastian Sardi
Black Diamond

Texts by Jenny Maria Nilsson, Sukruti Anah Staneley

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The devastating environmental aspects of coal usage and a close portrait of the people who are extracting it from the ground in Eastern India.

A thick layer of fine dust covers everything in this apocalyptic landscape. The ground is burning, and a vast area is oozing with toxic gases, fire, and smoke. Amongst all of this, there are people digging in the soil with their bare hands. In Jharkhand, India, coal is mined everywhere. The locals call it »Black Diamond«. There is a fragile balance between nature and mankind. The human inability to break patterns is painstakingly visible in these photographs, as we knowingly keep on extracting the ground beneath our own feet.

Sebastian Sardi began his work on photographing mines in 2008. *Black Diamond* is a close portrait of the people who extract coal, as well as an exploration of our dualistic human nature.

»This body of work is not an intervention; it does not presume to change the course of this devastated landscape, but it does attempt to create awareness in order to influence the situation. It removes the anonymity of the faces to make crucial connections with the people, instead of with the manufacturers and the machines. These portraits go in close to search for a relationship, making and holding eye contact. In each of these portraits, the people stare back, through the camera and then through the pages at you. As you hold this book and read this essay, someone, somewhere, is mining some coal to power your printers, laptops and mobile phones. They do not ask for much more than acknowledgement. These portraits are a pause; the people take a break from their work to look up. This is a strenuous form of livelihood with a tremendous cost.«

– from the text by Sukruti Anah Staneley

»As a Swede from Stockholm you feel distanced from the coal industry, Sardi says, but fuel from coal is the biggest contributing factor to human-generated carbon dioxide emissions and global warming. The companies keep their attention on profit, workers are forced to accept low wages, and the suffering of people, animals and nature are not taken into account. (...)

Have we gone too far in mistreating our planet? Have we somewhere along the way passed the breaking point and sealed the destiny of the human race without even knowing?«

– from the text by Jenny Maria Nilsson

Sebastian Sardi was born in 1983 in Stockholm, Sweden. At the age of 22 he started taking classes in analog photography at the Peoples University in Stockholm, later he studied photography at Fatamorgana the Danish school of art and photography. He published his first photobook *A Cirkusz* in 2012. Sardi was winner of the Lensculture Emerging Talent Award 2018. He lives and works in Malmö and Copenhagen.

Exhibitions

Gallery Moment, Ängelholm, Sweden

September 15 – December 22, 2018

LensCulture Emerging Talent Award 2018

Klompching Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

December 12 – 22, 2018

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