

## Seba Kurtis; Lockdown Project

8 June – 29 August 2020

Christophe Guye Galerie is thrilled to announce Seba Kurtis' showroom exhibition *Lockdown Project* at the gallery. In the midst of his Artist in Residency at UCEN Manchester, Seba Kurtis had to continue the residency at home due to the COVID-19 lockdown. In this context, he has explored the issue of how, despite all the available information, the pandemic can often not be fully grasped. After all, the information received daily on how we are managing the pandemic consists of highly politicized briefings, charts and graphs with current statistics.

For *Lockdown Project* Seba Kurtis on the one hand uses negatives from his vast archive of images taken over the last 12 years in different conflict areas dealing with illegal immigration. On the other hand, he places colored light-correction foils, which represent these diagrams and graphics of COVID-19, on the negatives. His intention is to create a dialogue between the images from these conflict areas and the statistics of the pandemic. 'Lockdown Project' is resembling a surreal kaleidoscope - referring to the unique experiences of each individual with the pandemic and inviting the viewer to reflect on the struggles of illegal immigrants in these unusual circumstances.

Seba Kurtis was born in Argentina in 1974. He studied journalism in Buenos Aires before leaving the country for Europe in the wake of the political and economic crisis of 2001. Several years spent as an illegal immigrant have informed much of his work, which explores the personal, social and cultural impact of irregular migration. 'His photography is the sensitive extension of his robust nomad's body with its magnanimous aura. It serves him as a performative means to talk about the world and to establish connections between world history and the individual story of his life in a sophisticated manner. As an artist Seba Kurtis is constantly on the move and is unconcerned by physical or aesthetic limits. He is among those who know that photography does not represent reality but that it is able to reveal its ruggedness, complexity and – above all – its inexhaustible poetry.'

– Stefano Stoll, Director of the Festival IMAGES in Vevey

'Kurtis has been working in areas of conflict over the last 12 years and is no stranger to the harsh realities in life that illegal immigration brings. In this isolation he has reflected on and made use of his own experiences by re-visiting past projects that didn't make the final edit. He is now showing them in a new light amended by a form of intervention or collage used directly on his films to represent data on Covid-19. The information provided regarding the lockdown develops continuously - 'Map of the outbreak in Arizona', 'Confirmed cases in France', 'Care Home deaths are still rising in the UK'. Kurtis represents the governmental imposed Lockdown guidance such as social distancing, combining this data with his empty landscapes and cities to make visible the rapid spread of coronavirus.'

– Andrew Moseley