

## Hanna Mattes

\*1980 in Munich, lives and works in Berlin

Inspired by early photographers, spiritualists, and psychologists around 1900, Hanna Mattes works with analogue photography in her series *Encounters*. As a continuation of the project, she realised the 16 mm film series *Supernatural*. These works document abandoned landscapes, where the apparently “natural” merges—through analogue image manipulation—with supernatural manifestations, glowing spheres, and peculiar light phenomena. Mattes employs a technique that was already used by fin de siècle photographers to “prove” extraterrestrial and irrational phenomena, such as apparitions and auras. She produces superimpositions and collages, then retouches the negatives directly. By manipulating and displacing reality, the images combine with phantasms that have crept into our collective memory—bizarre scenes, which challenge our rational perception of the material world and leave behind a sense of awe. The tension between reality and manipulation plays a central role in Mattes’ oeuvre.

For her photo series *Stones and Craters* Mattes travelled across the USA in search of meteorite craters. Parallel, she looked for interplanetary rocks, meteorites, and crystalline quartz in the mineral collections of international natural history museums. For the documentation of these rocks she used her own visual language and, again, painted the negatives of the photographed rocks. This project culminated in her book *Searching for the Cold Spot*, in which she juxtaposes the auratically charged rocks with the meteorite craters. In this way, the artist captures relics without exaggerating them or rescinding their secrets and fascination, while developing a visual interpretation that operates between documentary and mysticism.

Daniela Hahn and Andrea Lehsiak, 2019