



## Other Worlds

Jan Dotřel is a photographer and curator who connects both of these disciplines with his long-term interest in science, especially astronomy. His photographic focus is defined as non-figurative, conceptual photography, focused primarily on the representation of the landscape.

However, in his series *Other Worlds*, his aim is not to capture nature as such, but to use its morphology for metaphorical messages and compare it to landscapes that are inaccessible to us - those that are not on the surface of the Earth. The observation of the landscape in his work is based on the borrowed way in which astronomy looks at the objects of its investigation, i.e. through the lens of a space probe. Images from flyby, orbital satellites or rovers are exact, contain numerical data or codes and are intended for the most detailed analysis possible. Although they are often formally imperfect and their aesthetic value is not the goal, they have their own specific visuality that opens up a completely new way of seeing.

Jan Dotřel identifies himself with the probe's eye, observes the landscape with it, examines its specific types and fragments and looks for similarities with alien landscapes, which he examines primarily from the point of view of astrobiology and astrogeology. For this similarity, the most effective landscape appears to be desolate, damaged and devoid of obvious signs of life. Thus, the subject of observation is, for example, deserts and areas affected by industrial mining. The morphology of these "wastelands" is based on an investigation, analysis and experiment with the strangeness of the landscape. Former riverbeds, manifestations of volcanism, exposed tectonics and blown sand dunes are common features of extraterrestrial bodies with our Earth. For example, the author goes to kaolin mines, where he uses the variety of colors and textures, surface variability and the abundance of erosion formations, or explores the tailings of large power plants – huge areas of liquid ash mixed with muddy sediments of various compositions.

Photographs are taken using classic analog medium format technique or digital form and are then put together to create wider perspective units. This perspective often uses changes in scale – micro shots become macro and tens of centimeters become tens of kilometers. With its character, the *Other Worlds* series approximates classic landscape photography, but goes beyond it with video art and conceptual work. The meaning of these disciplines is shifted to the level of a metaphor simulating a wider reality that the human observer could not yet see with his own eyes.

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