

PAN

AMSTERDAM

GALERIE HELDER



Absence, Hohe Tauern Gorge

2022, PhotoRag Baryta paper on Dibond, framed

Vincent van Gaalen (NL 1984) travels to the last dark areas of Europe, where the night-time darkness has not (yet) been displaced by artificial light. In the midst of this darkness – surrounded by nothing more than his photo equipment, a tent and some rations – Van Gaalen photographs our human absence. Leaves, stones, water and air catch the light of the moon and stars. The deepest black looms, contours are amplified. In this dark world, reason makes way for imagination and darkness takes away control. The landscape remains barely visible - but palpable all the more.

'Absence' is an ongoing project that Van Gaalen started in 2020. In his work he studies the age-old friction between the human urge to create and the autonomy of nature. The renewed interest in ecology and society is reflected in the photo series 'Absence'. For example. In the Netherlands, Terschelling is the only place where it really gets dark and where people and animals experience nature freely and unhindered. In this way, Van Gaalen shows how, even close to home, nature is slowly sliding off the map.

