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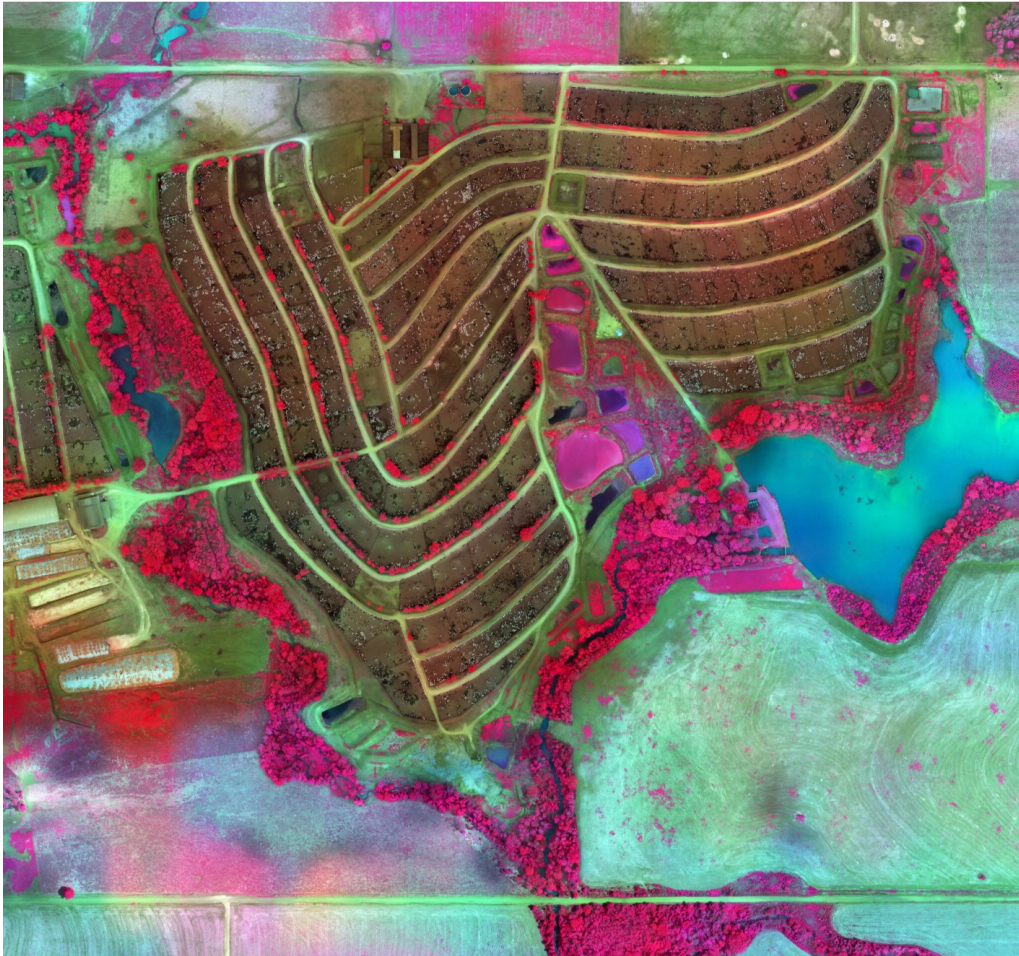
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The New York Times

Mitter, Siddhartha, 6 Art Gallery Shows to See Right Now, The New York Times, April 28, 2021

6 Art Gallery Shows to See Right Now

Gerald Jackson's collages; Precious Okoyomon's reimagined ecosystem; Damien Davis's sculptures; Beverly Buchanan's "shacks"; and more.



Richard Mosse's "Intensive Cattle Feedlot, Rondônia" (2020) is an example of his use of multispectral photography to examine how deforestation, mining and commercial agriculture are altering ecosystems in Brazil. Richard Mosse and Jack Shainman Gallery

Richard Mosse

Through May 15. Jack Shainman Gallery, 513 West 20th St and 524 West 24th Street, Manhattan, 212-645-1701, jackshainman.com.

The land is iridescent pink, purple and teal in Richard Mosse's bravura aerial images of the Brazilian Amazon. Elsewhere it recedes into familiar-seeming greens and browns, but with tonal effects that show both the advanced technology used to capture these pictures and the artist's considerable compositional role in their manipulation.

The sites are mainly points on the "arc of fire," from Rondônia in the southwest to Pará in the north, where in dry season fires are set to clear rainforest for cropland. In 2019, these fires reached a decade peak, generating global consternation. Mosse, who is Irish and lives in New York, traveled to Brazil soon after, equipped with a drone-mounted multispectral camera that detects nuances in soil, vegetal condition, and much else beyond the human eye.

Now at Jack Shainman Gallery, his finished images are big — a triptych of the Crepori River, in the Amazon basin, stretches almost 15 feet — and the effect is magnetic. The eye works to decode the landscapes: dull nubs of felled trees; a pond in red, full of lines that are actually caimans; a sudden well-ordered zone — a cattle feedlot. In the pervasive sense of seepage and fragility, Mosse achieves, quite elegantly, a central aim in his work, which is to convey world-changing phenomena beyond the limits of documentary photography.

The technology here is used both by scientists working for conservation and agro-industrial conglomerates that undermine it. In past projects, Mosse has used heat-sensing surveillance tools to photograph migrants and refugee camps, and old military infrared film to document war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The methodology can be a bit sinister, but also illuminating. Up close, depicting human subjects, his work has sometimes verged on the lurid. Here, however — despite the earnest title "Tristes Tropiques," referring to the dated Claude Lévi-Strauss anthropology classic — the work gains from altitude and becomes a welcome project in critical cartography.

SIDDHARTHA MITTER