



Systemans\_001.jpg

Manheim, NRW, Germany

A small village close to an open pit coal mine, the church is one of the few buildings still standing as the village is being demolished to make place for the expanding coal mine.



Systemans\_002.jpg

NRW, Germany

A wayside cross in the landscape and a bench for travellers to rest on. In the background an open pit coal mine can be seen.



Systemans\_003.jpg

Lausitz, Germany

A locomotive carrying coal-wagons from the nearby mine to the coal powered power plant seen in the background. On the locomotive a futuristic vision has been painted contrasting the old coal technology.



Systemans\_004.jpg

Cottbus, Lausitz, Germany

A street scene in Cottbus, the economic and cultural centre of the Lausitz coal region. As Germany is preparing to fade out fossil energy sources the city is looking for new economic structures to replace the old.



Systemans\_005.jpg

Bitterfeld-Wolfen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany  
In the GDR the city was an important location for its chemical industry. Right next to it now lies a huge lake where before an open pit coal mine provided direct access to energy. The city was also known for being one of the most polluted places in the world at the time.



Systemans\_006.jpg

NRW, Germany  
A street ends abruptly at the border of a village that will soon disappear to make place for the expansion of a coal mine.



Systemans\_007.jpg

Lausitz, Germany  
A sign at the entrance of one of the new artificial lakes, created from the huge deserts that are the now closed open pit coal mines. The sign has disappeared after the picture was taken by me.



Systemans\_008.jpg

NRW, Germany  
Farmers are working on a Strawberry field right next to a coal mine. In the background one of the huge coal excavators is visible.





Systemans\_009.jpg

Lausitz, Germany

A memorial rock with a plaque has been put at the side of one of the many new artificial lakes created in the last years. It remembers a village that used to be where now the lake lies. The village was destroyed to make place for a coal mine.



Systemans\_010.jpg

Bitterfeld-Wolfen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany

The lake formally known as “Silverlake” is being covered with soil to contain the remaining pollution in the ground. The lake got its name from when it was so polluted that it had a silver layer floating on its surface.



Systemans\_011.jpg

Lausitz, Germany

This region, marked by the decades of coal mining, the end of the industry has further amplified a rising presence of far right groups in public. Here a flag related to the Nazi regime is visible at the entrance of the village.



Systemans\_012.jpg

Lausitz, Germany

In this picture the presence of the far right groups is less obvious, less aggressive, however the eagle integrated into the garden fence signals a potentially strong nationalist ideology.



Systemans\_013.jpg

Niederaußem, NRW, Germany  
In the background of this small town the worlds 7th most polluting power plant can be seen right next to residential areas.



Systemans\_014.jpg

NRW, Germany  
For many people the sight of the dimensions of an open pit coal mine becomes a tourist destination. Here one can catch some sun and look at the invasive practice of coal mining live.



Systemans\_015.jpg

NRW, Germany  
This picture was taken from a garden at the end of a residential street from where its owners have a view on the Niederaußem power plant.



Systemans\_016.jpg

Lausitz, Germany  
A tourist platform to overlook the slow flooding of a former open pit coal mine. It can take up to 7 years to flood the whole mine and in this case it might take even longer as the region has increasingly serious water shortages due to several dry years in a row.



Systemans\_017.jpg

#### Lausitz, Germany

Parts of an old coal-excavator have been transformed into a bridge allowing tourists to walk over the water and get a better view. In the foreground wine grows on the shores of the artificial lake, a sight that shows a possible future for this former coal-region. Still it is a long way and what has been lost on the way can not be recovered as the regions tries to find a new identity in renaturation and tourism.