

HOŠEK CONTEMPORARY

— EST. 2016 —

ALEJANDRA HORSLEY - IDA

Opening reception: 22nd May 2025, 6 - 10 pm

Exhibition period: 22nd May - 1st June 2025

Ida is a site-specific installation that shares its name with the former coal-transporting ship in which it unfolds – known today as the gallery ship *Heimatland*. At the heart of the work lies a reflecting pool, surrounded by nine mirrors set into the ship's walls. Together, these elements evoke a quiet choreography between earth, water, and air – natural forces that have shaped both the vessel and the human experience.

As visitors descend into the space, they encounter what appears to be a portal – an aperture of coal and water – opened in the ship's hull. This threshold dissolves the boundaries of time and place, momentarily suspending the viewer between *Heimatland's* current identity and the memory of *Ida*. The carbon used throughout the installation stands as a material embodiment of the earth, anchoring the work in *Ida's* original purpose as a coal transporter.

Circling the portal, the viewer is met by nine mirrors, each one marking a passage in a larger cycle. The first mirror is largely veiled in magnetized iron powder, a nod to the ship's industrial legacy. With each step, the veil gradually recedes, until the final mirror – the reflecting pool – offers a clear, unobstructed reflection. This slow unveiling echoes *Ida's* transformation – from vessel of labor to vessel of memory, and now, vessel of art.

Ida invites her visitors to linger in the tension between past and present, material and reflection. In following the mirrored path, viewers are encouraged to examine not only the ship's metamorphosis, but also the shifting contours of their own identities. The installation becomes a meditative experience – an environment that holds space for memory, dissolution, and transformation.

Text © Christine Schmelter

About the artist

Alejandra Horsley (b. 1991, Mexico City) is a Mexican Canadian artist whose work bridges the disciplines of art and spatial design. With a background in interior architecture, their practice is rooted in installation and sculpture, guided by an enduring exploration of materiality, light, and spatial experience. Through the creation of immersive environments, Alejandra invites interaction and contemplation, exploring how physical space can shape perception and provoke emotional resonance. Their work seeks to ignite thought, foster dialogue, and celebrate the quiet poetry of the built environment – offering moments where form, light, and matter converge to open new ways of seeing and understanding.

Hošek Contemporary

Established by Petr Hošek in 2016, Hošek Contemporary is a gallery and art residency located on a historical cargo ship anchored near Märkisches Ufer in Mitte, Berlin. The gallery focuses primarily on site-specific pieces, performing arts and experimental sound works co-curated by Linda Toivio. During the spring and summer months, the gallery is hosting weekly improvised and experimental music installations, with local and international musicians.

MS Heimatland

Built in 1910 in Fürstenberg an der Oder, MS Heimatland was initially operating under the name Ida and used for transporting coal to Charlottenburg. After the Second World War, the 58-meter long cargo ship was renamed Heimatland, meaning "homeland". Until the 90s, the ship was sailing on Elbe and Havel, moving other boats, sand and chipping. It served for artistic and cultural purposes for the first time in 2002, when German sculptor Christiane Möbus chose it for her Nackte Tatsache Tatsache project. Finally, in March 2018, Heimatland became the main exhibition space and artist residency of Hošek Contemporary. The boat is permanently anchored in the historical harbour of Berlin.

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