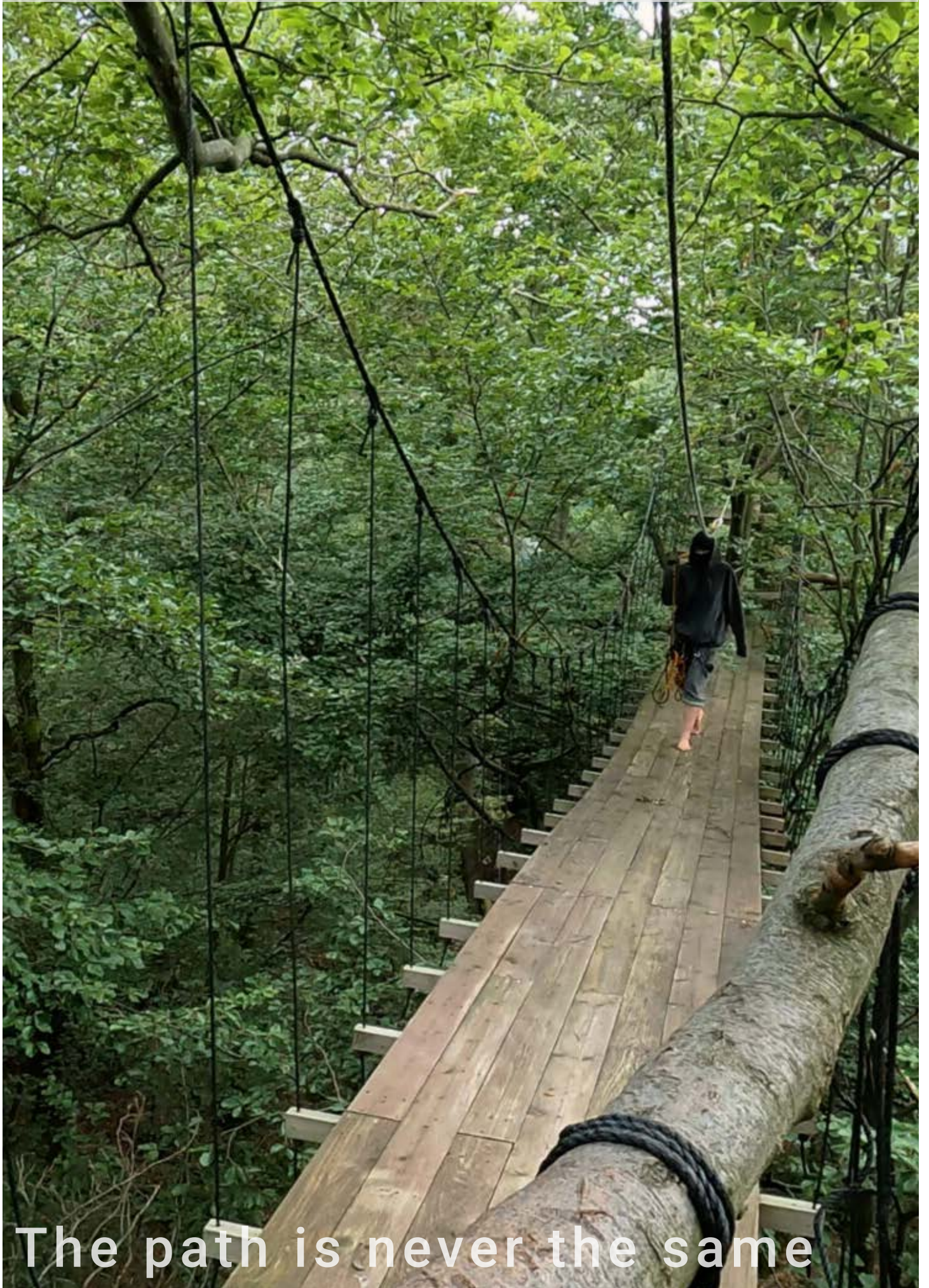


OLIVER RESSLER



The path is never the same

# The path is never the same

A film by Oliver Ressler

4K, 27 min., AT 2022

This film focuses on two complex, self-organizing systems: a forest and an occupation.

Long shots show the Hambacher Forest near Cologne, one of Germany's last old-growth forests. The forest has become the scene of Europe's longest tree-top occupation. Since 2012, about 200 people have been living in this forest to prevent its clearing by the energy company RWE, which wants to extract the lignite beneath the forest floor. In January 2020, after much of Hambacher Forest was already destroyed, pressure maintained for years by climate activists forced German politicians to order the preservation of what remained.

Meanwhile, lignite extraction continues in an open-air pit that comes ever closer and is now only a few meters from the edge of the forest. The mine fuels climate breakdown and damages the forest's ecosystem by pumping out ground water. So the occupation also continues: currently there are ten permanently inhabited *barrios*, each consisting of a camp and several tree houses.



"The Path is Never the Same", "Carbon and Captivity". Installation view: "Barricading the Ice Sheets" (solo show), Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, 2022. Photo: Jens Ziehe



"The path is never the same", 4K video, 2022

The film reflects on the forest as a living space and on the need to confront the climate vandalism perpetrated in the name of "economic activity". The people here organize non-hierarchically, standing – as one activist puts it in the film – "just like the trees, next to each other, on the same level".



"The path is never the same", 4K video, 2022



"The path is never the same", 4K video, 2022



"The Path is Never the Same". Installation view: "Barricading the Ice Sheets" (solo show), Tallinn Art Hall, 2022.  
Photo: Paul Kuimet



"The path is never the same", 4K video, 2022

Director and producer: Oliver Ressler

Cinematography and sound: Oliver Ressler

Editing: Janina Herhoffer, Lisbeth Kovačič, Oliver Ressler

Sound design, music: Vinzenz Schwab

Color correction: Rudolf Gottsberger

Title design: Nils Olger

Drone shooting: Leon Kluth

Special thanks to the speakers for sharing insight into their valuable practice, and to Reinhard Braun, Matthew Hyland, Lisbeth Kovačič.

Epigraph freely adopted from John Kinsella, *Tree Elegy Across the Biosphere in Memory of W. S. Merwin* (2019)

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