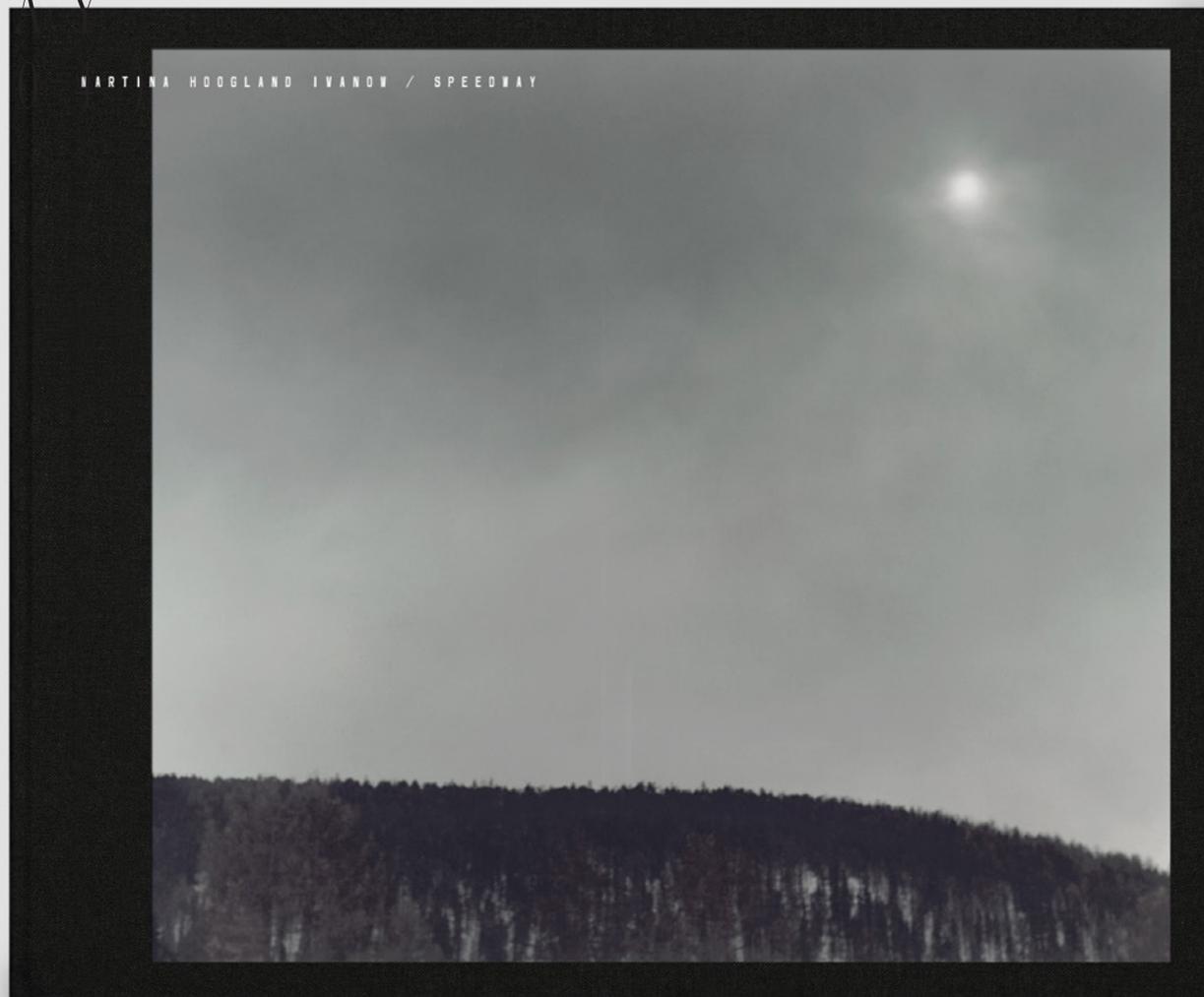


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MARTINA
HOOGLAND IVANOW
— SPEEDWAY
(L — B . 0



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M A R T I N A
H O O G L A N D I V A N O W
— S P E E D W A Y
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IN THE LOOP

Speedway Series by Martina Hoogland Ivanow

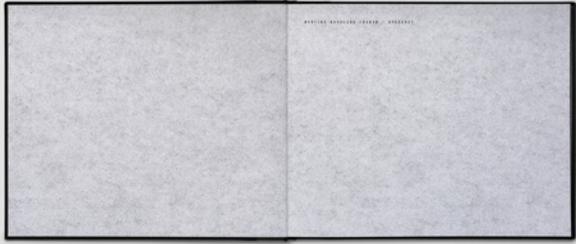
In the frozen dead of night a group of speedway riders circles a dirt track. Gathered under the racetrack lights in an almost ceremonial fashion, they seem like a secret society engaged in an enigmatic ritual. Yet, any clear answer about what we are actually witnessing keeps slipping away, like rain on a windshield.

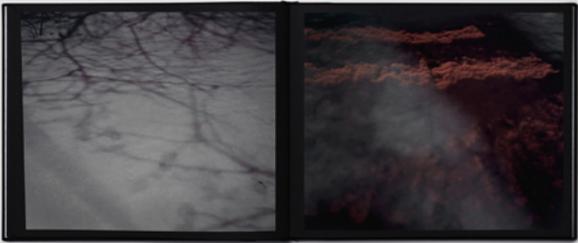
This is the darkly opaque universe that Martina Hoogland Ivanow's »Speedway« beckons us to enter. A world of minimal molecular motion. A landscape of ice, snow, dirt and night. One in which shadowy speedway bikers – almost as an afterthought – seemingly race to outduel the overwhelming forces of nature rather than compete with each other. Perhaps just to keep themselves warm. But nature is indifferent and unforgiving. It keeps on winning, forever on the verge of turning everything into an arrested state of ice and darkness.

Moving from one image to the next we hope to get closer to the real action. But the deeper we immerse ourselves into this universe the slacker the ties to the real world become, allowing the fictional dimension of photography to take hold. The unfamiliar overlaps the familiar. Without realizing it we find ourselves in a twilight zone where reality meets the dream and the drivers turn into leather-clad, one-gear, no-brake ghost riders.

The primal scene of Hoogland Ivanow's images is a fitting metaphor for the estranging effect that »Speedway« has on the viewer. The race track is after all a loop where the start and finish are arbitrary points. Working along the lines of this logic, Hoogland Ivanow's images tell a circular story without a determinable beginning or end. The viewer ultimately decides exactly where this story starts and finishes, with every such decision being radically subjective and provisional.

Thus, if there were an ideal way to navigate through the Möbius-like trajectory of »Speedway«, it would probably be a kind of sideways approach. Viewing the images can start anywhere and follow its own particular rhythm, decreasing and increasing the speed of viewing, not unlike the speedway racers themselves broadsiding into the bends of a race track. The story ends when you turn your gaze away from the images. Glancing at them again you soon realise that a new story has already begun to unfold.





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