

Press Release

Stateless

A solo exhibition by Shimon Attie

1 July - 13 August 2017

Opening: 30 June, 7 pm

Press preview: 30 June, 11 pm

Artist's talk: 1 July, 3 pm

Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig is delighted to announce *Stateless*, the first German solo exhibition by NY-based artist Shimon Attie since he produced the celebrated project *The Writing on the Wall* in Berlin in the nineties. *Stateless* explores issues of flight, loss and belonging at a time when many immigrants are seeking refuge in Europe and are at risk of being banned from other parts of the Western world. *Stateless* also involves other communities, who lived, or are still living, in a situation of limbo, whether their predicament was caused by an ongoing conflict or the revocation of their citizenship and identity.



Video still from the installation *Stateless* by Shimon Attie, 2017



Stateless is named after an installation in the exhibition, which tackles the experience of Syrian refugees who have fled their war-torn country and undertaken a life-threatening journey to Europe. More broadly, this artwork addresses the reality that human existence is subjected to the uncontrollable forces of life and death. In addition to the video installation, the exhibition also includes photographs from Attie's earlier projects. *Facts on the Ground* (2013-14) delves into the physical, political and psychological landscapes of Israel and Palestine, where the brokering of the *two-state solution* is still to be brokered. *The Writing on The Wall* (1991-92) evokes the daily life of the less affluent part of Berlin's Jewish community, those originating from Russia and Poland in the *Scheunenviertel* neighbourhood in East Berlin. The Nazis revoked their nationality in 1938, one of the alienating measures suffered by these communities, before they became persecuted, deported and eventually murdered in mass.

The video installation *Stateless* has been specially configured for the raw spaces of *Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig*, a reconverted power station. It consists of a panoramic screen suspended in the former boiler room. The filmed sequences unfold as a series of slow-moving tableaux in which a group of young Syrian refugees act a metaphorical tale based on their individual experience of exile and flight. Engrossed in a game of roulette, the protagonists appear physically present but mentally absent: their deadpan expressions, slow movements and silence contrast with the brutality of their fate. No word is spoken and the ominous soundtrack oscillates between impressions of stormy seas and the pounding of an anxious heart, between the ricocheting of the roulette ball and the gripping of nails onto the tablemat. As in Agatha Christie's novel, *And then there were none...*, all but one disappear. The last one standing seemed doomed to become a living monument to the thousands who have been left behind, dead or alive.

Curator: Stéphanie Delcroix

Stateless is produced by Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig

Hours: Tuesday-Sunday 10 am- 6 pm

www.kunstkraftwerk-leipzig.de

For more information and images, please contact Susanne Tenzler-Heusler: presse@kunstkraftwerk-leipzig.com or +49 (0) 173 378 66 01



Notes for Editors:

About Shimon Attie

Shimon Attie is an internationally renowned visual artist, whose work spans photography, video, site-specific installations, public projects, and new media. Attie's work has been exhibited and collected by numerous museums, including New York's Museum of Modern Art, The National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., the Jewish Museum, New York, the Centre Pompidou, Paris, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, among many others. In addition, he has received several visual artist fellowships and awards, including the Guggenheim Fellowship, The Rome Prize, the Radcliffe Institute fellowship from Harvard University, and the Lee Krasner Lifetime Achievement Award.

About the context of *Stateless*

Curated by Stéphanie Delcroix, the *Stateless* exhibition raises questions of shared responsibility and solidarity in a climate where the German government has been much criticised by detractors at home, but also abroad, for their taking in more than one million Syrian refugees. Attie developed the material for the *Stateless* video installation while he was participating to [BeHave](#), an artist-in-residency and exhibition programme based in a former steelwork site in Luxembourg. Attie sought and met recently arrived Syrian refugees and made a single-channel film on which the video installation *Stateless* is based. The artist dedicated his initial film to “[...] *the millions of individuals fleeing the wars in Syria and elsewhere, individuals who have gambled their futures by making the dangerous journeys to Europe in hopes of finding new lives. Seven of these individuals appear in this piece.*”

About Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig

Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig is a privately run dynamic cultural centre situated in a former power plant in the Lindenau/Plagwitz district of Leipzig close to the *Baumwollspinnerei*. Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig has a multi-disciplinary artistic and cultural programme featuring contemporary art exhibitions, dance and theatre performances, lectures as well as design and literary exhibitions. A changing series of high profile immersive art installations on a range of subjects including the work of influencing artists such as the installation titled *The Hundertwasser Experience* by Gianfranco Iannuzzi.



About Stéphanie Delcroix

Stéphanie Delcroix curated *Stateless* as part of her role as director of Visual Arts programme for 2017 and 2018. She works with artists to develop projects, which define places and engage people in unexpected ways. Her practice ranges from initiating her own projects and exhibitions to responding to specific briefs. Recent projects include: [BeHave](#), an international artist Residency project and a citywide exhibition and [Relay](#), a series of temporary artworks to mark the redevelopment of King's Cross in London.

Accompanying Events Programme

During the exhibition period, various Leipzig-based charitable organisation working with refugees including the [Stiftung für Bürger](#), are organising an events programme with readings, audience participation projects and theatrical performances. Details will be available on <http://www.kunstkraftwerk-leipzig.de> nearer the time.
