

THE SCHIRN KUNSTHALLE FRANKFURT PRESENTS A NEW WORK BY THE VIDEO AND INSTALLATION ARTIST NEIL BELOUFA

## **NEIL BELOUFA: GLOBAL AGREEMENT**

**AUGUST 23–OCTOBER 28, 2018**

The Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt is presenting a new work by the award-winning video and installation artist Neil Beloufa from August 23 to October 28, 2018. For this the artist has created walkable sculptural installations in the Schirn Rotunda, which is freely accessible to the public, as well as in an adjoining exhibition space.

The exhibition “Global Agreement” is dedicated to the human body and its discursive and political importance. It shows Neil Beloufa’s latest interest in the army, weapons, fitness, beauty, and the body cult as well as in the staging of power. Power is a central, recurring theme in his work—the social conflict between majority and minority, between dominance and oppression, as well as the power of images for our perception of reality. The question why people join the army was the starting point for several interviews with male and female soldiers from different countries via the video chat service Skype. Beloufa established a variety of profiles in different social networks for research purposes in order to establish contact with the community and to learn about it through the various exchanges. The soldiers mostly use a specific form of self-representation in their profiles on Facebook and Instagram—often in poses adopted from the fashion and lifestyle industries. In these video interviews with the artist, they talk about their everyday working routine, how they live, for example in the respective military camps and bases, their reasons for joining the army, their hopes and fears during their possible and actual assignments, and their lasting experiences while serving their country. Beloufa presents a selection of the interviews on monitors. In the adjoining exhibition space he screens a film which consists of the material of the interviews.

The film as an artistic medium constitutes the focus and point of departure in Beloufa’s oeuvre. He uses its production parameters, such as set, lighting, perspective, and editing, for the development of his videos, sculptures, and installations. These installations and spaces are forms of expression of the film narrative; the narrative is portrayed in and on them in each case. Fiction and reality fuse in Beloufa’s videos. Viewers become irritated by their own perception and eventually can no longer distinguish between truth and falsehood. In his works Beloufa also frequently examines art and his own activities as an artist. His works are produced collaboratively with the aim of eliminating the singular position and the subjective perspective of the actual author. In “Global Agreement” the artist raises questions concerning physical presentation as well as the reception and involvement and/or positioning of the viewer. In doing so he works with strategies that defy clarity. The films, sculptures, images, and their artistic assembly in installations; the creation of a position for the observer; the manipulation of the artistic material; and hence the manipulation of the viewers, ultimately deconstruct the idea of an authority of the artwork. The statements in Beloufa’s works with regard to their artistic composition and references; the statements of content and discursive layers; the statements of a position in general, are contradicted by his work and lead nowhere. Like the film narrative in “Global Agreement,” apparently the video is not completed yet. Beloufa leaves the question regarding a continuation of the work open—it represents the beginning of an investigation instead.

“Neil Beloufa: Global Agreement” is supported by the Museumskooperationspool der Stadt Frankfurt am Main.

“Power and its social manifestation constitute central themes in the oeuvre of Neil Beloufa. But this is only one aspect. What seems far more important is the question as to how power structures can be challenged. At the beginning there is Neil Beloufa himself, his role as an artist, and his aspirations to work autonomously and free from external expectations. By examining established

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structures of power—including, incidentally, those of the art business—he invites us to recognize their absurdity. I am delighted that we are able to present Neïl Beloufa's latest work at the Schirn", says Dr. Philipp Demandt, Director of the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, about the artist.

The curator of the exhibition, Matthias Ulrich, on the latest video by Neïl Beloufa: "Political and social conflicts in the global present are increasingly being transferred to the Internet. Neïl Beloufa's point of departure in his work lies there, where the verbal and visual arguments of millions of users not only find expression and a forum, but also constitute their own reality. In doing this, he follows a simple rule: he creates situations in which the protagonists speak of things that could have happened or not. In the next step these situations are repeated as if they were being observed once more—the fiction, the commentary on the fiction, and finally the commentary on the production of a fictional situation are combined artistically."

Neïl Beloufa (\*1985 in Paris) lives and works in Paris. He studied at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts and the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, as well as the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, and the Cooper Union, New York, among others. His works have already been shown in numerous group and solo exhibitions, including the K11 in Shanghai, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the ICA, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, and most recently at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. In 2014 Neïl Beloufa took part in the Shanghai Biennale and the 55th Biennale in Venice in 2013, as well as at the Contemporary Art Biennale in Lyon. In addition he has shown his video works at numerous international film festivals and his first feature film at the Berlinale in 2017. He has been awarded numerous prizes, including the Meurice Prize for Contemporary Art 2013, the Audi Talents Award 2011, and the Agnès B. Studio Collector Award 2010.

## OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION AND SUMMER PARTY

The exhibition "Neïl Beloufa: Global Agreement" will be opened on Wednesday, August 22, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. with the annual Schirn summer party. Visitors can look forward to music by the DJane and producer Perel. Perel, whose real name is Annegret Fiedler, recently released her debut album with the New York Label DFA Records. On "Hermetica" she fuses dance music with powerful songs. At the Schirn summer party she will sing live to one of her DJ sets. The team from Badias Catering will be offering snacks and drinks. The exhibition will remain open on this evening until midnight.

**VENUE** SCHIRN KUNSTHALLE FRANKFURT, Römerberg, 60311 Frankfurt **DURATION** August 23–October 28, 2018 **INFORMATION** [www.schirn.de](http://www.schirn.de) **E-MAIL** [welcome@schirn.de](mailto:welcome@schirn.de) **TELEPHONE** +49 69 29 98 82-0 **FAX** +49 69 29 98 82-240 **ADMISSION** The admission to the exhibition is free **PUBLIC INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION** Wed 7:00 p.m., Sat 5:00 p.m., Sun 4:00 p.m. **CURATOR** Matthias Ulrich, Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt **CURATORIAL ASSISTANT** Johanna Laub, Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt **THE EXHIBITION IS SUPPORTED BY** Museumskooperationspool der Stadt Frankfurt am Main **TECHNICAL PARTNER** Samsung Electronics

**SOCIAL MEDIA** The Schirn will be communicating about the exhibition in the social web **HASHTAGS** #NeilBeloufa #GlobalAgreement #Schirn **FACEBOOK, TWITTER, YOUTUBE, INSTAGRAM, PINTEREST, SNAPCHAT** [schirnsnaps](https://www.schirn-magazin.de) **SCHIRN MAGAZIN** [www.schirn-magazin.de](http://www.schirn-magazin.de)

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