

Press Release

Exhibition: *The sea is the limit*

Recent works by: Nidhal Chamekh, Thomas Kilpper, Massimo Ricciardo, Varvara Shavrova and Susan Stockwell

Opening: Wednesday 23rd November 2016, 6-9pm

Exhibition dates: 24th November 2016 to 14th January 2017

Patrick Heide Contemporary Art is delighted to announce the group exhibition *The sea is the limit* including works by artists Nidhal Chamekh, Thomas Kilpper, Massimo Ricciardo, Varvara Shavrova and Susan Stockwell.

The width and depth of the sea have ever since impressed mankind. As an art historical motif, a literary imagery or simply as nature it evokes a feeling of desire, eternity and mystery. However, the image changes dramatically when we think about the sea in the context of migration. The infinite width of the sea turns from a romantic idea into a lethal trap, the journeys of hope into deadly tragedies.

The recent influx of immigrants across the Mediterranean or through Southeast Europe is sparking a major crisis. The question of borders and nationalism, inclusion and exclusion has become so pressing that the free movement of persons and goods, fundamental to the idea of a United Europe, are at stake.

The subject of migration, dispossession and borders is not a new one. The artists featured in *The sea is the limit* have for years worked with these major topics and don't claim to offer a realistic depiction: personal and intimate portraits with no demand for documentary evidence, no desire for a visionary statement.

Susan Stockwell's work 'Finesilver – Blackgold' for example is a historic comment on the slave trade that reminds us of contemporary imperial trades. It connects to her other major work examining many facets of the colonial trade, 'Sail Away', a flotilla of small boats made from old paper currency, stamps, tickets and maps.

Similarly Nidhal Chamekh's drawings also have a historical yet at the same time personal dimension. The Tunisian artist moves freely in the intersection between a biographical microcosm and a political framework. The drawings 'Etude d'un Habitat Fortune' and 'icare' belong to a series of drawings Chamekh made from images in the refugee camp in Calais.

Varvara Shavrova is exhibiting a new series of drawings based on images from the Irish media on the migrant crisis. The series of 37 drawings shows sketch-like sceneries in black and white of mostly migrants in motion, displayed as a loop projection in space.

Thomas Kilpper, together with Italian artist Massimo Ricciardo, is presenting collected objects that the refugees left behind in the boats that brought them to Europe. Those objects do not only witness the exertions hundreds of thousands of people went through on their journey fleeing from war zones in their home countries but also link very personal stories to broader political questions. A video of Kilpper's major project 'A Lighthouse for Lampedusa' Kilpper will be on display which offers a utopian idea and symbol while questioning the current immigration and integration policies.

The sea is the limit expresses a desire for freedom and a better life that stands in sharp contrast to the reality the migrants experience on their journeys.