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FLOATING MEDIA INSTALLATION “NIGHT WATCH” VISITS THE SHORES OF NYC TO PRESENT MOVING PORTRAITS OF NEW YORK ASYLEES

More Art collaborates with multidisciplinary artist Shimon Attie and refugee empowerment organizations to present a floating multi-media film experience during the UN Annual General Assembly

August 21, 2018 – New York, NY – On **Thursday, September 20, 2018**, **More Art** – a NYC-based nonprofit organization that fosters collaborations between professional artists and communities – will present “**Night Watch**” by Shimon Attie. The first collaboration between Attie and More Art, “Night Watch” is a floating film installation featuring 12 recent New Yorkers fleeing violence and discrimination in their homelands, who have had their applications for political asylum in the United States approved. The portraits of asylees (largely LGBTQ and youth) will traverse New York City’s waterways during the **United Nations Annual General Assembly**, bringing world leaders and local New Yorkers face-to-face with some of the most vulnerable people who are currently being turned away by governments around the world.

Displayed on a 20-foot-wide by 12-foot-tall LED screen mounted aboard a large, slow-moving utility vessel, “Night Watch” is a silent, but deeply human floating film. Each day, the public can track the boat to attend historical tours, cultural events, and workshops/training related to immigrant rights. Public programs are produced in collaboration with the film’s subjects, Immigration Equality, Safe Passage Project, RIF, and Queer Detainee Empowerment Project.

“I intend to use the language of contemporary art to create new representations for how we see the other or the outsider,” said Shimon Attie. “If we go beyond the legal distinctions -- between someone who is an immigrant, versus someone who is a refugee, versus someone who is applying to have their asylum application approved, versus someone who’s had their application approved -- ultimately we’re talking about the outsider. The person who’s vulnerable and in need of a safe harbor.”

“Night Watch” is a new media experience that blends politically-engaged art with new technologies to address the urgent social issues facing asylees in the US and abroad. It was produced in close collaboration with Immigration Equality, Safe Passage Project and RIF, and in consultation with ORAM, New Women New Yorkers, and New York for Syrian Refugees. Around the world, it is a crime or fundamentally unsafe to be LGBTQ. Countries are shutting their borders to refugees. In the U.S., the government has implemented a series of new policies that restrict access to the opportunity to seek or obtain asylum, and youth are left alone to represent themselves in courtrooms.

“At a time of social and political turmoil, projects like “Night Watch” bring stark attention to the actual people affected by the knee-jerk decisions of short-sighted politicians,” said Micaela Martegani, Director and Curator for [More Art](#). “By looking into the eyes of individuals whose lives are at stake, we are confronted by a direct and unflinching gaze that should bring us out of our somnambulistic state and spur us to action.”

“As the UN General Assembly convenes in New York City, Immigration Equality is excited for world leaders and New Yorkers to engage with “Night Watch,” said Jackie Yodashkin, Public Affairs Director for [Immigration Equality](#). “Given the current attacks on the asylum system in the U.S., and grave mistreatment of LGBTQ refugees around the world, it is a critical time for this powerful artwork.”

“Night Watch’s” route and schedule will be contingent upon rising tides, ferry schedules and water current speeds to optimize visibility. Attendees will be able to follow “Night Watch’s” journey and view the traveling film and public event series on the waterways on set days throughout the week. The installation will begin on Staten Island, and travel along the shores of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Roosevelt Island, Governors Island, The South Bronx, Liberty Island, and New Jersey. The project can be sighted along the urban coast and at shoreline parks from September 20 to September 27, 2018.

“Night Watch” prioritizes participation, approaches timely issues respectfully and poignantly, and encourages solutions-based dialogue and action. The projects commissioned and produced by More Art are anchored by sustainable collaborations with grassroots organizations addressing social justice issues specific to their communities.

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“Night Watch” is supported in part by The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, Lambent Foundation, New York Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, and generous individual donations.

About Shimon Attie

Shimon Attie is a visual artist and photographer whose artistic practice includes creating immersive site-specific installations and public artworks in a wide variety of media, contexts, and communities. Attie’s works include on-location media installations, immersive multiple channel video works, performance, photography, sculpture, and new media and hybrid forms. In many of his projects, he engages local communities in finding new courses for representing their history, memory, and potential futures, and explores how contemporary media may be used to re-imagine new relationships between time, space, place and identity. He is particularly concerned with issues of loss, communal trauma, and the potential for regeneration.

About More Art

Over the past 14 years, More Art has developed a body of work on issues of immigration through both its public arts commissions and artist fellowship programs. During this time, More Art has led workshops with recent and undocumented immigrants, which have greatly informed the process and final display of commissioned public arts projects that reach over 10,000 New Yorkers each year. Given the history of New York City as the American hub for newcomers, “Night Watch” highlights these very same waterways that served as an integral passageway to the American dream of freedom and the pursuit of happiness.

About Immigration Equality

Immigration Equality is the nation's leading LGBTQ immigrant rights organization. They represent and advocate for people from around the world fleeing violence, abuse, and persecution because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV status. Since 1994, Immigration Equality has been proud to advocate for and represent lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ), and HIV-positive immigrants seeking safety, fair treatment, and freedom. Immigration Equality’s work impacts both the individuals we serve and the immigration system as a whole.

About Safe Passage Project

Safe Passage Project was created to address the unmet legal needs of indigent immigrant youth living in New York by providing these indigent youth with basic advice and assistance. They work with volunteer attorneys to provide representation for unaccompanied minors in immigration court. Safe Passage provides training, resources, and mentoring to volunteer attorneys regarding Special Immigrant Juvenile (“SIJ”) status as well as other possible immigration alternatives for children.