

## Ron Amir

### *Somewhere in the Desert*

14 September – 2 December 2018

**Press preview: Thursday 13 September 11am–2pm**

**Official opening: Thursday 13 September 6–10pm**

The Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris is delighted to be presenting the exhibition *Quelque part dans le désert/Somewhere in the Desert* by Israeli photographer Ron Amir. Already shown at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem in 2016, the exhibition – 30 large-format colour photographs and 6 videos – looks at the living conditions of Sudanese and Eritrean refugees in the Holot detention centre in the Negev Desert, which has since been shut down. In flight from terrorism and oppression in their home countries, these migrants were not able to live or work legally in Israel. While allowed to come and go freely during the day, they had to check in and out each morning and evening.

Dating from 2014–2016, Ron Amir's photographs document the refugees' daytime activities, showing how, in the desert and with no resources, they set about shaping a shared everyday existence. Using sticks, sand, stones and all kinds of abandoned bits and pieces, they managed to put together community huts, tearooms, sporting facilities, improvised ovens and other additions to the spartan facilities provided at Holot.

We don't actually see the refugees in the photographs: instead Amir conveys indirectly but clearly their sensitivity, creativity, and instinct for survival. Linger over what at first glance looks like a landscape, we discover eloquent testimony to a patient waiting for freedom, to togetherness and to the hope of finding a home.

One of the things that mark out Amir's work is his active involvement in the lives of the – as a rule socially marginalised – communities he photographs. His initial visits to Holot had no particular purpose apart from getting to know the asylum seekers. From the outset, though, the boundaries between art and political action began to blur, and in contrast with traditional documentary and press photography, Amir's images carry several messages at the same time. Speaking of communal distress while revealing the prolific inventiveness of its victims, they are both chronicle and metaphor.

#### About the artist

Born in 1973, Ron Amir is an atypical figure on the contemporary photography scene in Israel. Well known for his long-term, socially committed projects, he has had numerous solo and group exhibitions in Israel and abroad. He lives and works in Tel Aviv.

This event is part of the 2018 France-Israel Season



Ron Amir  
*Bisharah and Anwar's Tree*, 2015

**Museum director**  
Fabrice Hergott

**Exhibition curator**  
Noam Gal

**Curator at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris:**  
Emmanuelle de l'Ecotais

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**Visitor information**  
Musée d'Art Moderne  
de la Ville de Paris  
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75116 Paris  
Tel. 01 53 67 40 00  
www.mam.paris.fr

During the renovations, use the Seine-side entrance:  
12-14 avenue de New York 75116  
Paris – Metro: Alma-Marceau/Iéna

Open Tuesday – Sunday  
10 am – 6 pm  
Open late Thursday 10 pm

**Admission 7€**  
Concessions 5€

Cultural programme  
Information and bookings  
Tel. 01 53 67 40 80



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Manifestation organisée dans le cadre de la Saison France-Israël 2018