

KUNSTHAL CHARLOTTENBORG

Press release

Copenhagen, June 12 2017

Ai Weiwei creates a captivating work across the facade of Kunsthal Charlottenborg for World Refugee Day

With more than 6000 life jackets from refugees collected at the Greek island of Lesbos, the world-renowned artist Ai Weiwei creates an installation on the facade of Kunsthal Charlottenborg in the centre of Nyhavn, Copenhagen. The installation officially inaugurates the 20th June and will be on view until October.

Exhibition period: June 20 – October 1 2017

Official inauguration and opening: Tuesday June 20 from 4pm-7pm.



Ai Weiwei, "Soleil Levant", 2017. Life jackets in front of windows of facade. Installation view, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, 2017. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by David Stjernholm.

The opening of Ai Weiwei's (b. 1957 in Beijing, China) new installation, produced specifically for Kunsthal Charlottenborg and Copenhagen, will take place on United Nations International Refugee Day (20th June 2017). Named *Soleil Levant*, the installation barricades the windows of Kunsthal Charlottenborg with more than 6000 salvaged life jackets collected from refugees arriving at the Greek Island of Lesbos.

Focus on the humanitarian crisis

With this installation, Ai Weiwei hopes to bring focus to the refugee crisis currently taking place across Europe. According to UNHCR, 1,377,349 individuals arrived in Europe via sea in 2015 and 2016. In the same period, over 8000 individuals have died or disappeared attempting this journey. It is the wide-spread humanitarian crisis, which Ai Weiwei aims to bring focus on.

The name of the work stems from Claude Monet's painting *Impression, Soleil Levant* from 1872, which depicts the harbour in Le Havre at the end of the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian war. Whereas Monet's landscape

painting captures the political and social reality of its time with its cranes, steamboats and industrialisation, Ai Weiwei's *Soleil Levant* draws attention to the political and social reality of today through refugee lifejackets.

World-renowned artist and activist

Ai Weiwei is one of the most respected living artists in the world today. His work – across sculpture, architecture, installations, music, photography and film – always challenge and encourage critical debate. He has previously exhibited at ARoS, Louisiana and Arken in Denmark, where his works are also part of the museums' permanent collections.

In 2011, Ai Weiwei was detained in China for 81 days without charges and had his passport confiscated. He did not get his passport back from the government until 2015. Since relocating to Berlin following the return of his passport, many of the artist's latest works focus on the refugee crisis of present-day Europe.

The installation *Soleil Levant* for Kunsthall Charlottenborg officially opens on United Nations World Refugee Day, (the 20th of June) and will be on view at the facade of Kunsthall Charlottenborg until the October 1, 2017. The project is curated by Luise Faurshou from ART 2030 and Michael Thouber from Kunsthall Charlottenborg. The project is supported by The Obel Family Fund, Platform A/S and The Danish Arts Foundation.

ART 2030 connects art and the UN Global Goals

ART 2030 unites art as the key to open people's hearts, minds and imagination for the world we want by 2030. ART 2030 is a movement of visionary artists and influencers in the art world, who are determined to reinstate the role for art in a bigger world context and make their contributions visible for sustainable development.

Facts about the installation

Ai Weiwei: *Soleil Levant*

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Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Nyhavn 2, 1051 København K

Read more about the installation: <http://kunsthallcharlottenborg.dk/en/exhibitions/ai-weiwei-soleil-levant/>

Facebook event for the inauguration: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1199611413482077/>

Hashtag for social media: #awwcharlottenborg #aiweiwei #artforglobalgoals #art2030

Press material

Press material, including pictures in high resolution, can be downloaded from the description of the exhibition on the website of Kunsthall Charlottenborg: <http://kunsthallcharlottenborg.dk/en/exhibitions/ai-weiwei-soleil-levant/>

For more information and material please contact

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