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HIDDEN STATEMENT – ART IN AFGHANISTAN

May 30, 2023 – ongoing

LAUNCH OF THE FIRST EXHIBIT: Tuesday, May 30, 2023

DIGITAL: <https://www.kunstverein-wiesbaden.de/ausstellungen/digital>

Landing Page: <https://onlineviewingroom.com/hiddenstatement>

Afghanistan is not only dominated by poverty and natural disasters, but also by terror, arbitrary rule, massive corruption, enormous restrictions on freedom and again increased attacks. This threatening situation not only complicates the everyday life of the people, which is characterized by violence, permanent concern for people close to them, fear, flight, but also resistance, but also brings artistic creation to a virtual standstill. On top of that, the Taliban have completely banned the artistic depiction of living beings, especially humans. Works of art were and are being destroyed by the artists themselves for security reasons, or they fell victim to looting and targeted destruction during house searches or had to be left behind when people fled. However, many works still exist in secret, others only in documentation. At the same time, artists are still resisting, expressing their opinions through their work – against all obstacles and prohibitions.

In order to help art in Afghanistan regain visibility, the artistic positions, which have been made anonymous for security reasons, will be presented to the worldwide public in continuous, digital solo exhibitions under the title **Hidden Statement – Art in Afghanistan**. After two years, they will finally regain artistic visibility and recognition, as well as the opportunity to once again participate in the international art discourse.

Following the idea of the *Central Collecting Point* Wiesbaden as a hub for a reconstruction of the museum landscape after WWII, a **digital archive of Afghan art** is being created to prevent further irreplaceable losses of Afghan culture.

For the ongoing digital exhibitions **Hidden Statement**, Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden cooperates with the **German Academy Rome Villa Massimo**, the **Goethe Institute Rome**, the **Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach**, **Walter's Cube New York** and the **weißensee school for art and design berlin**.

For the digital exhibitions **Hidden Statement**, Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden makes available its Belle Etage, digitized by *Walter's Cube*. More than 150 artists in Afghanistan will be given the opportunity of a digital solo exhibition to save their artworks from total erasure. For security reasons, the names of the artists will not be disclosed until they are safe. The exhibitions will be compiled by various artists and curators and will be published on the website of the Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden at regular intervals.

The **Goethe Institut Rome** and the **Deutsche Akademie Rom Villa Massimo** are jointly organizing a roundtable discussion with Afghan, Italian and German participants on May 30, 2023, in which the current situation in Afghanistan will be examined from different perspectives. Contemporary art production has

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been a difficult endeavor in Afghanistan for many years. Thanks to the successful evacuation of **Rahraw Omarzad** (director of CCAA - Center for Contemporary Art Afghanistan) and his family of four to Rome, which is mainly due to the tireless efforts of **Carolyn Christov-Barkagiev**, we have been able to hear a little of the Afghan scene in Rome in 2021. Villa Massimo is following with great interest the development of the **CCAA in Exile**, recently founded in Frankfurt at the impetus of Omarzad, and is committed to maintaining the link between Afghanistan, Germany and Italy. The **Hidden Statement** opening with an event at the Goethe Institute in Rome is an important step in this effort to keep the Afghan art scene internationally connected. The Goethe Institut plans to continue this cooperation in Germany as part of the Afghanistan focus of its project "*Goethe-Institut in Exile*" in autumn 2023.

Already with its campaign '*To Be in a Time of War*', based on the initiative of **Yama Rahimi** the **Offenbach University of Art and Design** has collectively expressed its awareness and sympathy for the situation of the people and especially the art students in Afghanistan. The appeal for donations enabled seven art students from Kabul to make their way to Germany. In close cooperation with the **Institut for spatial strategies of weißensee school for art and design**, concepts of presentation are developed in a workshop. **Walter's Cube New York** supports the humanitarian project by conducting workshops on creating digital exhibitions within the platform and providing technical support.

Walter's Cube is a digital platform that aims to democratize access to art and exhibitions by eliminating physical and temporal boundaries between art spaces and their potential audiences. *Walter's Cube* scans institution spaces and creates their digital twin to make them accessible 24/7 from all over the world. Having digitized over 1,000 exhibitions, providing new opportunities for artists and curators to realize exhibitions in a digital format by archiving existing exhibitions or creating and publishing new exhibitions that don't exist in real life. Proudly taking part in **HIDDEN STATEMENT**, a project that shines light on the dire humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. Standing in solidarity with the Afghan people, we provide underrepresented and silenced Afghan artists the platform to showcase their work in the digital twin space of the Nassauische Kunstverein Wiesbaden, recognizing the impact of art in uniting people by transcending cultural and societal barriers.

Aid - A helps artists from all over the world who are persecuted in their home countries because of their personal commitment to freedom of expression, human rights and democracy, and who are prevented from working in the fields of theatre, visual arts, literature, film and music. The artists are often forced to leave their countries and build a new existence in exile.

The project **Hidden Statement** is made possible by the support of the **of the Cultural Office of the State Capital Wiesbaden – FLUXUS SEX TIES Kunst Sommer 2023**



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DATES/

Thursday/Friday, May 11-12, 2023

Workshop Walter's Cube

@ weißensee school for art and design, Berlin

Thursday, May 30, 2023

Launch of the digital exhibition project HIDDEN STATEMENT

@ Goethe -Institute Rome

@ Digital: <https://www.kunstverein-wiesbaden.de/ausstellungen/digital>

INSTAGRAM @kunstverein.wiesbaden

#HiddenStatements #artinAfghanistan #KunstvereinWiesbaden

Friday to Sunday, June 30th – July 2nd 2023

Opening Festival of the Afghanistan Programm

@ Goethe Institute in Exile

Information about further events and programmes will follow shortly.

ADMISSION /

Access to the digital exhibition is free of charge at any time and from anywhere.

DONATIONS /

Aid – A for direct support of the artists:inside on site in Afghanistan:

IBAN: DE14 4306 0967 2071 1467 00

Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden for the realization of further digital exhibitions within the project **Hidden Statement**.

IBAN: DE 7951 0500 1501 0000 0997



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