02.06	14h	A guided tour of the exhibition with the curators.
02.06	15h	*Red Tape Lottery,* a performance by the Office for Joint Administrative Intelligence (Gary Farrelly & Chris Dreier).
09.06	14h	A guided tour of the exhibition with the curators.
09.06	15h	Special screening: *On Kawara is Still Alive: An Interview with Pall Thayer* (2015) by Yuki Okumura and *Searching for Takayuki Suzuki* (2016) by Gen Ueda.
16.06	15h	*Body Shopping,* a performance/ reading group by Sabrina Chou Special screening: *On Kawara is Still Alive: An Interview with Pall Thayer* (2015) by Yuki Okumura and *Searching for Takayuki Suzuki* (2016) by Gen Ueda.
07.07	15h	*General Audit,* a performance by the Office for Joint Administrative Intelligence (Gary Farrelly & Chris Dreier)

Curated by
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EN **STATE OF STATELESSNESS**

13 MAY– 07 JULY 2018

State of Statelessness may be understood metaphorically as instances of being in-between, the moment of intermission or suspension on a variety of levels. It can be used to describe the condition of an individual in an increasingly mediated society, based on ceaseless reimagining and aesthe-ticisation of self. Primarily, however, statelessness stands for the painfully corporeal condition of non-belonging and displacement forced upon so many people in, what some proclaimed to be, a new era of migration. All of these meanings gain particular validity in the context of Brussels, a metropolis projecting its image as a diverse, multilingual community, while in fact bing torn by internal divisions.

The departure point for this exhi-bition has been an attempt to identify how an why statelessness, in all its different instances, came to set para-meters for our existence. The follow up question would be, what can be done in response?
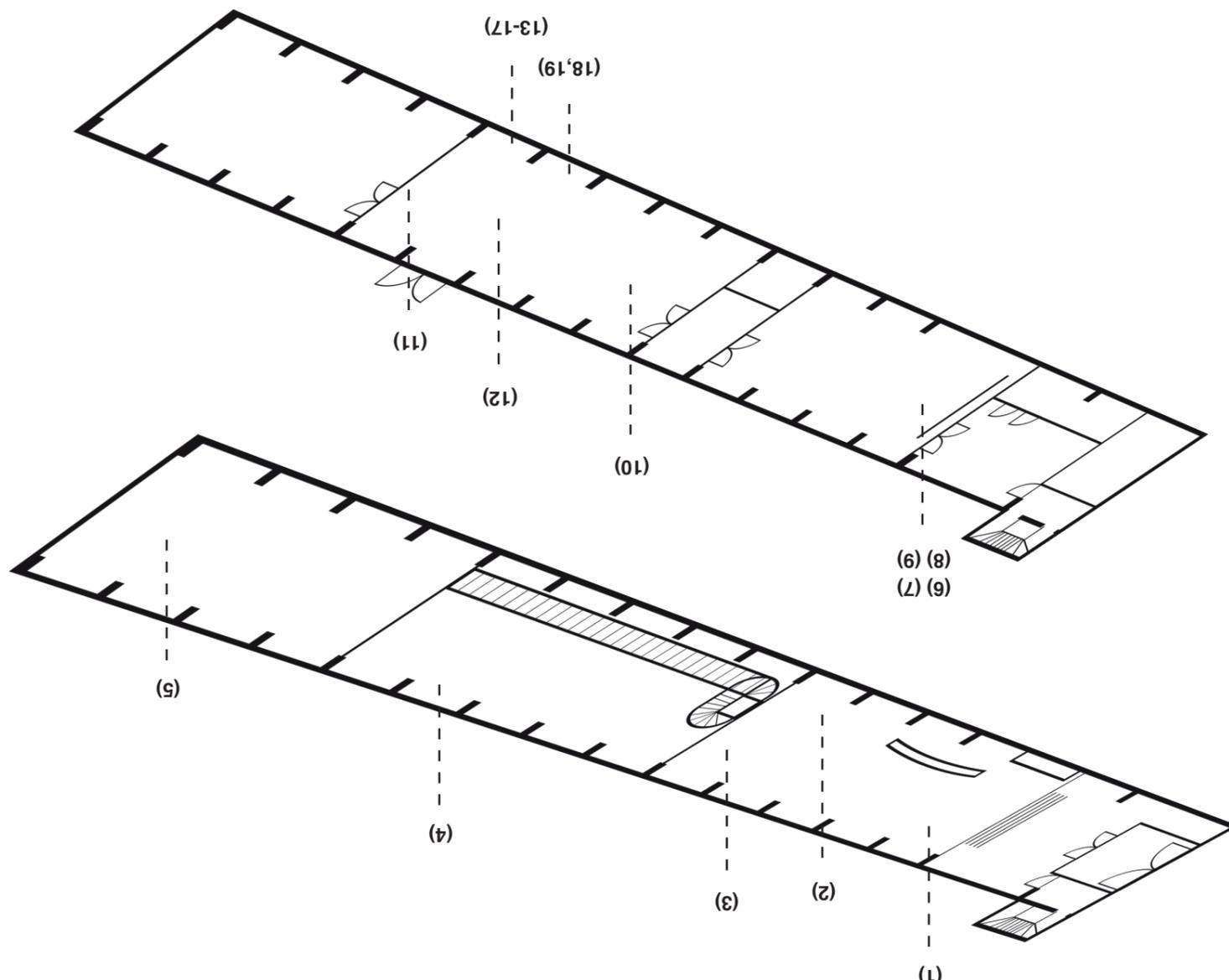
From critically observing and com-menting on the status quo to proposing alternative solutions for living together (and with ourselves), the works on show position themselves against or outside of this regime of statelessness. The 11 invited artists have assumed divergent approaches – looking back to the pre-internet era by re-examining old modes of materiality, or try to predict what may lie beyond it by experimenting with the new ones. All works on show relate in a way to the problems of identity-crisis, uprootedness, and disembodiment; to migration on the one hand and mediation on the other. In the exhibition space, fictional biographies mix with true stories so that it becomes difficult to decide which voice and evidence to follow; personal photographs turn out to be public, tears to be digital, and the tweeting artist – already dead.

Eléonore Saintagnan **(1)** *Ancêtres n°2, 3, 4,* **2013, 2018, ceramics, MP3 player, soundtrack 39', loop.**

Through the mouth of a small ceramic frog, Jean-Pierre Brisset tells us how he discovered that mankind descended from frogs – a theory he argued in his *La Grande Nouvelle* (1900). This extraordinary book presents his research into swimming, languages, and batrachians and delivers phonetic evidence for a purported evolution from frogs' cry to human speech. Many years later, Eléonore Saintagnan became familiar with Brisset's work and cast a series of ceramic frogs entitled *Ancêtres*, which became messengers for this alternative scenario of human origins.

Sabrina Chou **(2)** *P.A.R.A.D.E.: On Streaming Selves, Social Forms, and Disembodiment,* **2017-2018. The first version of the text was published in the** *All the Time at Work,* **2017, Galeria Labirynt, Lublin.**

"The spacelessness and statelessness of social media allows for a huge range of connectivity, of collective organization. Without being bound to geographic or nationalistic identities, voices can gather and gain traction in terms of other types of communities. (...) And often the virtual community is an extension of a physical community that already exists in space. Social media—and how it allows people to come together—has been witness to and complicit in political movements and changes in our recent history. (...) Affinity-based social formation has led to the distancing of extremes. Differing opinions are less likely to come together, even to spar. The homogenization of segments of the digital network has created an architecturally and algorithmically segregated virtual space, where left and right move farther apart and the spectrum in between falls more and more vacant".
In her analysis of social forms in both digital and real lives, Sabrina Chou addresses various, positive and negative aspects of technological immediacy, on the one hand, and the phenomenon of public gathering of protesting bodies on the other. The chapter of Chou's essay, referred to above, has informed the subject and the title of the exhibition.

Justyna Wierzchowiecka **(3)** *Untitled (To Drain the Sea)*, **2015, HD video, loop.**

A digitally processed rotating still by Justyna Wierzchowiecka belongs to the series *To Drain the Sea*. By isolating selected images from their 'natural' surroundings and situating them in an abstracted environment, the artist attempts to create a semantic hyperbole. In this case, an imaginary tower or its silhouette appears on a black screen. By situating an architectural representation of a high-rise building, an emblematic image of corporate capitalism, within a corpus of a concrete institution, the artist initiates a dialogue with the site as well as with the other landmarks present in its vicinity. This unrealistic surrounding becomes a remnant of contemporary dystopia, filled with everyday objects and situations – believable yet somehow fictional.

Beny Wagner **(4)** *Outside*, **2017, HD video, 14', loop.**

Working in moving image, text, installation and lectures, Beny Wagner constructs non-linear narratives that investigate ecological, linguistic, and technological modes of mediation and how these give shape to the parameters of consciousness and perception. *Outside* traverses two metabolic paths in an attempt to forge a reciprocal relationship between the two. Moving from the metabolism of the human body to the metabolism of waste infrastructures, the film creates an inverted exchange wherein the concealment of waste inside the human body turns to the concealment of the human body inside waste.
This boundary, separating waste from production, would seem to contain an underlying set of moral implications. The film considers these as situated somewhere between law enforcement and class structure as defined through labor positions.

Meggy Rustamova **(5)** *(dis)Location*, **2013, HD video, 13', loop.**

In *(dis)Location*, Meggy Rustamova investigates the relationship between visual narrative, storytelling and the construction of memory, on both individual and collective levels. By assembling various archival photographs and narrating their progression, the artist constructs a story in which the distinction between the personal and the universal, reality and fiction becomes blurred. This method recurs in Rustamova's practice, in which she often experiments with moving image to address the topics such as language, identity and displacement.

Gen Ueda **(6)** *Entre Le Vide*, **2017, HD video, 13', loop.**

In his textual video *Entre Le Vide*, Gen Ueda takes as a point of departure a figure of French art-house cinema, the film director Gaspar Noé. As the plot unfolds, Noé slowly becomes the main character of his own movie, *Enter the Void*, and he must face the plot in which he is entangled. Reworking Noé's original intrigue, Ueda ultimately grants the film director the position of an omniscient character through a complex system of moving subtitles and intertwined narratives. *Entre Le Vide* is one of the latest developments within Ueda's practice, investigating written cinematic materials as an alternative way of addressing a spectator.

Jonathan Vinel **(7)** *Martin Pleure*, **2017, HD video, 16'24", loop.**

If Martin cries, it is because his friends left. They not only left, they disappeared and Martin is determined to look for them all over the city. Despite his relentless efforts, Martin fails and there is nothing to calm his nerves. His sadness turns into anger and his fear of loneliness excites violence. The abandoned character begins to roam the city, giving vent to his rage. *Martin Pleure* is set entirely in the virtual universe of Grand Theft Auto V, an open-world game, which allows players to

develop non-linear, almost unlimited scenarios. With its polygon characters and flashy visual effects, *Martin Pleure* deals nevertheless with real emotions and almost palpable feelings, enhanced by the uncanny, concrete materiality of the protagonist.

Yuki Okumura **(8)** *On Kawara is Still Alive: An Interview with Pall Thayer*, **2015, HD video, 29' 18". Courtesy the artist and MISAKO & ROSEN, Tokyo.**

Over the last 9 years, a twitterbot @On_Kawara has been posting daily the sentence 'I AM STILL ALIVE', a message that the Japanese conceptual artist On Kawara conveyed himself over three decades and nearly 900 telegrams, in what can be considered his most personal durational performance. In this video, Yuki Okumura interviews Pall Thayer, an artist and the mind behind the twitter account. In 2014, upon the passing of On Kawara, Thayer had to face the decision, whether to abort the project...
In this and many of his other pieces, Okumura takes as a starting point not so much the work of another artist as the figure of the artist in itself, and the almost mythical aura surrounding it. In relation to this material, Okumura assumes a position of an editor and researcher on the one hand, and a medium or surrogate on the other.

Gen Ueda **(9)** *Searching for Takayuki Suzuki*, **2016, HD video, 37'40".**

This documentary film is based on both public and personal archives on the Japanese football player Takayuki Suzuki. After the rising football star had been transferred to the Belgian football club KRC Genk, his performance dramatically fell. From the promising beginnings to his disheartening decline, Gen Ueda followed the career of Suzuki, who became almost the artist's alter ego. Superimposed over the timeline of Suzuki's career, Ueda presents a series of videos that captured moments from his daily life, while awaiting the final goal.

The videos are a part of the public programme.

Marijke De Roover **(10)** *The Eggcellent Adventures of Marijke De Roover, (TEDx Musical on Non-Nuclear Parenting). Part 1. A Womb of One's Own, 2018,* **performance, video, 22'19", loop. Courtesy the artist & Tatjana Pieters Gallery, Ghent.**

Surrogacy, egg donation, adoption, and co-parenting create or offer a certain hope for gay couples, but they are also only a starting point for rainbow couples to raise their children. In her TED-inspired musical, Marijke De Roover deals with questions regarding the nuclear family, the relationship between feminism and motherhood, and the ethics of reproduction. TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) talks address a wide range of topics, often through storytelling. The speakers are given a maximum of 18 minutes to present their ideas in the most innovative and engaging way possible. In 2010, noted statistician Nassim Taleb called TED a 'monstrosity that turns scientists and thinkers into low-level entertainers, like circus performers'. De Roover chooses this format for her musical lecture performance to combine (pseudo-)scientific research

with personal experience. She includes music and musical theater to evoke emotional reactions in the audience, reflects on personal setbacks, and – through fairytale-inspired songs – attempts to create a myth of origins of conceiving and raising a baby in a non-heteronormative family.

OJAI: Chris Dreier & Gary Farrelly **(11)** *world map*, **2018, wallpaper/ drawing/ digital print, 205 x 383 cm.**
(12) *correspondence display*, **2018, postal correspondence (multiple elements), glass and mdf, 160 x 80cm.**
(13) *Rotterdam skyline*, **2018, embroidery on postcard, 17.5 x 11.5 cm. Courtesy private collection, Brussels.**
(14) *British pavillion*, **2016, embroidery on postcard, 14.5 x 10 cm.**
(15) *Trudeau airport*, **2016, embroidery on postcard, 14.5 x 10 cm.**
(16) *subject 1/ straightsploitation 1*, **2018, embroidery on screengrab, 17.5 x 11.5 cm. Courtesy private collection, Brussels.**
(17) *subject 2/ straightsploitation 2*, **2018, embroidery on screengrab, 19 x 13.5 cm.**
(18) *finance tower*, **2016, video, 1'53", loop.**
(19) *pedestrian tunnels*, **2017, video, 7'14", loop.**

The content presented by the Office for Joint Administrative Intelligence (OJAI) incorporates research and experiments conducted by its members, Gary Farrelly and Chris Dreier, on the manifestations of power through social, political and architectural structures. This research feeds OJAI's mapping exercises, registering systemic behaviours and moments of violent disruption. In the video works, instructive spoken elements are overlaid with footage shot during research field trips in Brussels, Berlin, Dallas, and Wuppertal. Besides the exploration of bureaucracy and organisational structures on the macro-level, OJAI is also interested in the mechanisms of control by means of a self-imposed regime of repetitive tasks and ongoing auto-documentation, the process referred to as 'self-inventory'. Through the intimate format of a postcard (of which sentimental value has been enhanced by the meticulous act of embroidery), OJAI presents various subjects transformed into objects of desire and displaced from their original (heteronormative) context, in this way turning the underlying societal convention against itself.
The correspondence display offers an insight into the written exchange between Dreier and Farrelly, from which OJAI originated in 2015, and which remains central to the practice. The comradeship of the postal transaction subverts the atmosphere of officialdom present throughout the project, situating OJAI somewhere between institutional critique, over-identification, and structured intimacy.