



**8th - 22nd June 2018**

**Open Wednesday 3 - 9pm, Friday 6 - 11pm**

Ben Nathan, seventh artist-in-residence at Collectif Nabuchodonosor, presents 'Nouveau Quartier' at Barnabu. The exhibition showcases portraits taken in St-Cyr Square in Béziers' St-Jacques neighbourhood. Forty-four images are displayed in Barnabu on two wooden structures that stand in cement filled beer cans. Sixteen portraits are fly-posted on two boarded-up shop fronts in the adjacent square.

Ben turned a beer can into a pinhole camera<sup>1</sup> to take these portraits. The images are captured on light-sensitive paper pre-loaded inside the can. This DIY device produces a print on each take, then developed as a negative in the darkroom in Barnabu's cellar.

Each portrait is an encounter between the artist and his subject in the public space, on the five-way junction that is St-Cyr Square. To get the best results, Ben takes his pinhole camera images outside - good light is needed for a quality portrait. Beyond this practical side of things, Ben's intervention in the public space is of great interest to the Collectif. His approach coincides with the Nabuchodonosor's questioning of the use of public space, its challenging of residents on their creative role in that space, and provoking thoughts on their place in the city.

<sup>1</sup> Pinhole camera: A simple camera without a lens but with a tiny aperture, a pinhole – effectively a lightproof box with a small hole in one side. Light from a scene passes through the aperture and projects an inverted image on the opposite side of the box, which is known as the *camera obscura* effect.

In parallel to the exhibition the artist was commissioned to produce an A2 poster for the Chouchoux 6th edition, 700 copies. This quarterly newspaper accompanies the show.

Ben Nathan studied at The Slade School of Fine Art and the Royal Drawing School. He recently completed a residency at ZK/U, Berlin. In 2017 he earned a place on the London Creative Network programme at [ s p a c e ]. His recent shows include OPENHAUS and Modular Relations, ZK/U (2017/8). [K-rei- t], 43 Inverness Street (2015), Pyeong Chang Biennale, South Korea (2015). NANJI TANKS, SeMA Nanji Residency, Seoul Museum of Art, South Korea (2014).

His Barnabu residency is part of Collectif Nabuchodonosor's 'The meetings of Nabucho – sharing of know-how' project co-funded by the CAF, the CGET and the Béziers-Mediterranean district.

**Barnabu**  
**2 place St-Cyr**  
**34500, Béziers**  
**France**