

EXHIBITION “ 13 October: opening of the exhibition “Brussels, a safe haven?”™

This is a very contemporary exhibition as not a day goes by when the European politics of migration are not a topic in the media and elsewhere. This exhibition takes place in the centre of Brussels, a city home to 184 nationalities, and is the perfect opportunity to reflect on the present challenges we face in our society. The exhibition traces the immigrations routes from 1830 onwards via facts and personal witness accounts. It also presents 16 contemporary witness accounts.

On 12 October, the opening of the exhibition 'Brussels, a safe haven?' was held in the Jewish Museum of Belgium in the presence of the mayor of Brussels and a particularly large audience.

This exhibition was the result of a very fruitful cooperation between the Jewish Museum, the Belgian State Archives, CegeSoma, the Center of the Judeo-Moroccan Culture and the Brussels Centre for Intercultural Action. The exhibition would not have been possible without the help of numerous persons who were willing to testify or to lend personal items and photographs.

It covers more than two centuries of personal histories based on archives of the immigration police (kept at the State Archives) as well as personal witness accounts. These reflect the fact that Brussels has succeeded to be a welcoming city that sometimes embraced the newcomers and sometimes shut them out, as is still the case today. The history of those who were invariably labelled as aliens, exiles, refugees or immigrants is complex and it is important to bring these stories to the public by using official archives, such as the State archives and the archives of State institutions, as well as incorporating the societal and personal perspective. The richness of this exhibition is that it has looked at the push and pull factors for the voluntary or involuntary departures by listening to, gathering information and conducting interviews of witnesses.

To conclude the historical part, works of art of up and coming artists based in Brussels are exhibited. Their aim is to engage the visitor by presenting the city from different angles.

From now until 18 March, many events will accompany the exhibition: film projections, conferences and workshops at the museum, but also at cultural centres and theaters in Brussels.

Video teaser Bruxelles, terre d'accueil

The personal files of the Alien Police: more than two million records!

Practical information

Where? At the Jewish Museum of Belgium (21 rue des Minimes, 1000 Brussels)

When? From October 13, 2017 to March 18, 2018

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; Saturday and Sunday, from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Information: 02 500 88 37; georgia@jmb.org

Optional guided tours in French, Dutch or English (max. 25 persons): 60 euros

Entrance fee: 10 euros (reduced rate: 7 euros)

More details: <http://www.mjb-jmb.org>