

SHIRANA SHAHBAZI

New Good Luck

June 8 - July 26, 2019

Book launch: Sunday, June 9, 3-4pm

A new group of works by Shirana Shahbazi (*1979 Tehran, Iran; lives and works in Zurich) will be presented in the gallery's project space. A number of mid-sized format works that were created in the context of the simultaneously issued photo book and which draw upon the artist's three-month stay in India are on show. The motifs collected on the journey are fragmentarily dissolved from their actual narrative and are subjected to a very intimate creative process on the basis of her artistic repertoire. It is experimentation with the original subject of the picture and its photographic quality conceptually mixed with classical lithographic printing techniques. As in previous series such as *Tehran North* from 2015, Shahbazi is interested in how a journey and the encounters experienced can be perceived photographically without them being externally determined by the visual power of the culturally charged and often very overwhelming colourfulness of the locations. It is the making of collages without physical intervention: the snapshots, which often show anonymous individual people in architectonic space or in a landscape, are taken apart and reshaped, their colour taken out of them or reconfigured like a reset. Carefully selected colour areas of luminous intensity are layered on top of each other and dissolve or densify. These areas, which sometimes protrude far beyond the edges of the actual scene, flow together with selected openings and break open the composition like a prism. The photo book that accompanies the exhibition, produced in cooperation with Manuel Krebs, and which as in past projects plays a very central role in the artist's research, was not least responsible for pointing the way for this method. The publication and the artist's stay in India was made possible with the support of Pro Helvetia. The book will be published at Sternberg Press and is available at the gallery.

Shahbazi's works are represented in the collections of important institutions all over the world such as the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Tate Modern, London; the National Museum of Photography, Copenhagen; the Sprengel Museum, Hanover and the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich. Important recent solo exhibitions include at Kunsthaus Hamburg (2018); Istituto Svizzero, Milan (2018); Museum Fotogalleriet, Oslo (2017); KINDL, Berlin (2017); Camera Austria, Graz (2016) and Kunsthalle, Bern (2014). Currently Shahbazi's works are on show in the Niko Pirosmani group exhibition curated by Bice Curiger at the Fondation Vincent Van Gogh (until 30 June). Shahbazi has been known for her art in public space since 2005: in 2015 she participated in the renovation project of the ZKB (Zurich Cantonal Bank) and in 2017 designed the walls of the new Axel Springer office, both in Zurich.

Shahbazi has been awarded the Prix Meret Oppenheim 2019, which will be presented on 10 June as part of the Swiss Awards.

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