

PEOPLE ON THE WAY

Johan Heylen



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In cooperation with the Contemporary Art Committee, KU Leuven

The Faculty Club Leuven

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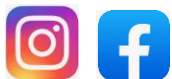
Creatures move under a pale sky, shadows in search of something unnameable. Each pair of feet touches the earth, but their souls float, en route to a place they will never quite reach. The road is long, winding, and the destination constantly changes shape. Wind whispers secrets, but answers remain hidden behind the horizon. Sometimes they intersect, the wind caresses the shadow and the horizon kisses the soul. But in the end, everyone travels alone, searching for a deeper meaning. People on the way to a place that doesn't exist.

Johan Heylen's oeuvre is characterized by mysteriousness and an undefinable sorrow. This causes feelings of melancholy, but also triggers a form of recognition amongst those who are amazed at the absurdity of existence. The artist is inspired by the work of mystics, existentialists and metaphysicians. The incomprehensibility of "Being" and the position of humanity in this mystery is a recurring theme. Creatures walk around aimlessly, with no hope of salvation or forgiveness, ignorant of their guilt, and not understanding their punishment. There is a holy horror, which stems from a radical alienation. Despite the substantial adversity portrayed, Johan's work contains a vulnerability and tenderness. Everything is ambiguous, every painting is multi-layered. The works succeed in putting their finger on the wordless wound and shifting the attention from the banal material to the mystical unspeakable. Any attempt to put these works into words folly, since the unspeakable cannot be lucidated.

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10% of the proceeds from artworks will go to the **Inloophuis Leuven**, a warm meeting place for people with cancer and their loved ones (<https://inloophuisleuven.be/>).

Photo: "Ca voulait dire, on est heureux"