

Henk Wildschut

Shelter

Post Editions, Rotterdam, 2010

Review published in *Source* #66 p. 79

www.source.ie

Shelter represents a relatively brief sample of Henk Wildschut's ongoing study of migration, and focuses mainly upon the encampments of hopeful illegal migrants and asylum-seekers along Europe's underground hubs. Most of the images come from the woodlands near Calais – literally the final frontier.

In the self-written account that concludes the book, Wildschut outlines how he became aware of these makeshift temporary dwellings, and how he was struck by the domesticity of their inhabitants, whose tenancy might only be for a few days before they either crossed the Channel successfully or were more likely caught trying, and deported. Despite their shabby appearances, the dens' interiors were always left as carefully as possible. Wildschut successfully communicates this dignity in his quiet images, his lens never intruding with close-ups and always taken at a respectful distance from his subject.

The production of the book has a modest quality, with images printed on thin matt paper which, although feels stylish, complements the humility of the subject. Also, two different sizes of paper are bound which reflects the miscellany of the materials that make up the shelters. Familiar logos from the ubiquitous Coca-Cola to Lego appear amongst these materials, which gesture towards the ideology that the migrants have been promised. These are the only suggestions of politics that impinge upon a most politically sensitive subject.