

# IKON

## Exhibition Guide

**Adel Abdessemed *Happiness in Mitte***

**9 April – 30 May 2005**

**Various locations throughout the building**

*Happiness in Mitte* by Algerian artist Adel Abdessemed consists of seven videos pieces played on separate monitors in non-gallery spaces throughout the Ikon building. It depicts cats drinking from bowls of milk, left by the artist outside his studio in the Mitte district, Berlin. The cats are strays, thin and hungry. As we watch them tentatively lapping the milk, anxiously looking out for danger, we are unsettled, particularly perhaps because these are domestic animals. We worry about them living outside the safe environments they have been bred for.

At first glance the work may seem simple, but it is rich with possible meanings. The predicament of the cats, for example, can easily be read as a comment on the exclusion and displacement of people in today's politically unbalanced world. This is a theme that frequently occurs in Abdessemed's work. And likewise, a belief in the difference made by optimism and generosity.