

HUGGING & WRESTLING

CONTEMPORARY ISRAELI
PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Yael Bartana

Rina Castellnuovo

Natan Dvir

Barry Frydlander

Ori Gersht

Dana Levy

Adi Nes

Michal Rovner

Rona Yefman and Tanja Schlander

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CLEVELAND

HUGGING & WRESTLING

CONTEMPORARY ISRAELI
PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

MARGO ANN CRUTCHFIELD

THIS EXHIBITION IS
DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY
OF ROSALIE AND MORT COHEN

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART **CLEVELAND**





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Contemporary Israeli Photography and Video* on view
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PREVIOUS PAGE **Barry Frydlander**, *Bombamela*, 2000
Chromogenic Color Print
34 x 110.5 inches
Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

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CONTEMPORARY ISRAELI
PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

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Ori Gersht, *Ghost, Olive #2*, 2003
C-print mounted on aluminum
49 x 58.5 inches
Courtesy of Jill Furman Willis and Richard Willis

FOREWORD

OVER THE PAST DECADE, TEL AVIV HAS EMERGED AS A CENTER for artistic activity and many interesting and noted artists on the current contemporary art scene hail from Tel Aviv. The two vital mediums of photography and video, in particular, reflect the strength of contemporary Israeli artistic expression.

Hugging and Wrestling: Contemporary Israeli Photography and Video recognizes the vibrant diversity of Israeli artists based in Tel Aviv, focusing on nine artists who examine their cultural heritage. The artists on view have multiple perspectives on life and culture in Israel today. They grapple with the complicated realities of an extraordinary country, while also wrestling with political discord and religious divisions. Thus the title: *Hugging and Wrestling*. The exhibition does not look at art from a specifically religious perspective, but religion is inevitable in the formation of Israeli identity. While the exhibition does not take a political point of view, politics are an inevitable fact in any exploration of the Mideast. What emerges is a demonstration of art's capability to transcend politics and mine universal dreams, desires, and aspirations.

This exhibition is dedicated to the memories of Rosalie and Morty Cohen, two vibrant patrons of the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland who shared a passion for contemporary art.

— JILL SNYDER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INTRODUCTION

IN RONA YEFMAN AND TANJA SCHLANDER'S VIDEO INSTALLATION,

Pippi Longstocking 2006 — The Strongest Girl in the World! at Abu Dis (2008), a young woman attempts to pull apart the wall separating Israel from the Palestinian territories. She seemingly wrestles with outrageous odds, all the while encouraged by Palestinian passersby. The situation is preposterous, and while it may seem unreal it speaks to one reality among those from a younger generation of Israelis—those more open to political change and transformation.

This is an exciting moment in Israel's cultural history, marked by growth, change, and transformation. An increasing number of Israeli artists have gained international prominence in the contemporary art world, and Tel Aviv is emerging as a vibrant center on the global art stage. This exhibition samples the pulse of this phenomenon by presenting the work of nine emerging and established Israeli artists, most of who live in or are from Tel Aviv. While no means a survey nor a comprehensive analysis of this development, this exhibition represents some of the artistic strength and creative energy that Israeli artists identified with Tel Aviv are generating today.

For the group of artists in *Hugging and Wrestling*, photography and video provide compelling tools to examine multiple realities in Israel today; to see beyond surface, beyond the straightforward appearance of what is visible. All of the artists exploit the potential of what has been termed "lens-based art" to analyze, understand or re-envision what Israel is today.

What emerges through their perspectives is a vivid portrait of Israel. The images are beautiful and powerful, some deeply personal, others more philosophical, some political. With distinct points of view, the artists portray a land rich in history and the convergence of multiple cultures, beliefs, and ways of life. But while the artists embrace Israel, they wrestle with a range of issues. They grapple with the past, acknowledging the legacy of their country's history while dealing with the challenges of the present. They embrace ideals but question or re-evaluate the premises on which such ideals once stood. They wrestle with political discord, religious divisions, and social inequities while searching for personal and collective identity in a vibrant, evolving, contemporary culture. And they struggle with the vulnerabilities of a country with contested territories where conflict is imminent and ever present.

As such, *Hugging and Wrestling* provides a glimpse into the rich multifaceted dimensions of a country defined as much by the energy, faith, and commitment of its peoples as by conflict and by the enormous challenges it faces as a nation. Invigorating, at times troubling, and often poignant, the art in this exhibition portrays a country in the process of re-assessing itself through the work of some of Israel's most talented contemporary artists.

— MARGO ANN CRUTCHFIELD
SENIOR CURATOR



Rina Castelnovo, *Gush Katif*, 2005
Chromogenic Color Print
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

THE ART & THE ARTISTS



Yael Bartana

Yael Bartana's video art explores social mores and rituals in Israel and their impact on identity. "The source of my work," states Bartana, "is video shot in Israel, and its subject matter documents intersections between military events, national identity and personal identity. Living abroad has given me the opportunity to take a step back and look at things from a different perspective. Today, more than anything, I am focusing on Israel in order to ask: What is this place where I grew up?"¹

In her quest to examine Israel's national and cultural identity, Bartana adopts the role of observer or ethnographer, documenting footage of collective rituals and events. In a process of deconstructing and re-constructing imagery, Bartana transforms her footage, manipulating sound, movement, and imagery "to suggest a different narrative than that generated by the media and the state."² In the three-minute DVD, *Profile* (2000), for example, Bartana portrays in a series of dramatic and intense close-ups, the experience of target practice that young Israeli females undergo in the army. What Bartana investigates in this and in subsequent works, is how individuals behave within a collective, and how they can exist within a belief system without compromising their own individuality.

In *Trembling Time* (2001), one of Bartana's most renowned video works, Bartana portrays the Israeli ritual of Yom Hazikaron—Soldier's Memorial day—a day of remembrance for those who have died fighting for Israel since 1948. Filmed in Tel Aviv, *Trembling Time* represents the moment when a siren is sounded throughout Israel, and all activity comes to a halt for a moment of silence. Bartana filmed the work from an overpass, depicting cars driving along a highway as they slow to a stop, and occupants step out of their cars, stand in solemn silence, then slowly drive away. In *Trembling Time*, Bartana stretches this moment to seven minutes and renders it in slow motion. Figures emerge from their cars then fade away in an evocative, fluid and almost translucent sequence of images. "What I was most interested in was the actual moment in which everything stops. There is a large system behind this moment of stopping. That's why there is also a feeling of stretching time. And that slowly, slowly, slowly everything comes to a halt. It's very monumental in a way."³

For Bartana, however, *Trembling Time* presents more than a collective consciousness of national pain and reverence for those who have sacrificed their lives for their country. For the artist, the work also explores the complex intersection between military commemorations and events, national identity and the power they may have over personal identity. "On an immediate level my work is political in subject matter and theme. It questions the intention of the state to control people's sense of self, purpose, and patriotism."⁴ What Bartana wrestles with here is how to maintain one's individuality and identity given the collective power of Israel's cultural and political traditions.

¹ Yael Bartana quoted in "Self Portrait," Temma Celeste, no. 91, May / June 2002, 77.

² Yael Bartana speaking in an interview posted on the Artis website: www.artisrael.org

³ Excerpted from the catalogue, Yael Bartana: Short Memory (Tel Aviv: The Center for Contemporary Art 2008), n.p.

⁴ Yael Bartana quoted in "Self Portrait," Temma Celeste, no. 91, May / June 2002, 77.



Yael Bartana, *Trembling Time*, 2001

WORK IN THE EXHIBITION

Trembling Time, 2001

One channel video and sound installation

Color and Sound by

Tao G. Vrhovec Sambolek

Duration: 6:20 minutes

Courtesy of the artist, Annet Gelink Gallery,
Amsterdam and Sommer Contemporary Art,
Tel Aviv

© Yael Bartana

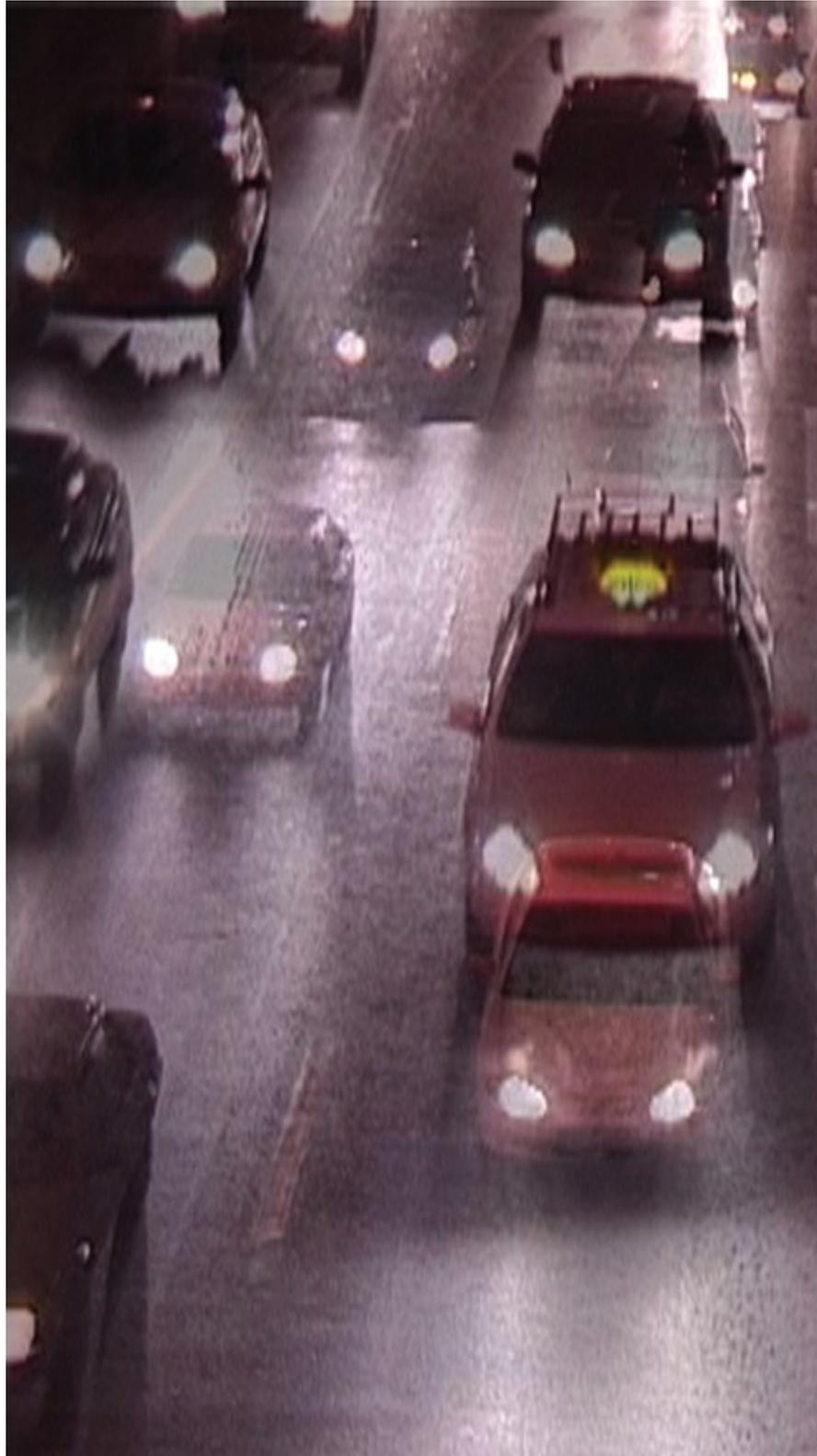




Yael Bartana

Born in Afula, Israel, 1970
Lives in Tel Aviv and Amsterdam

Yael Bartana received her BFA from the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, her MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York, and studied in Amsterdam at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten. Bartana has exhibited her work in North and South America, Europe and Asia, including solo exhibitions at The Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv (2008), P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (2008), The Power Plant, Toronto (2007), Kunsverein, Hamburg (2006), Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam (2005), and Modern Art Oxford (2004). Her work has also been exhibited in group exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2007), the 27th São Paulo Biennial (2006), the 9th International Istanbul Biennial (2005), De Appel Amsterdam (2005), Tate Modern (London, 2004), the 3rd Liverpool Biennial (2004), MIT List Visual Arts Center Cambridge (2004), and Manifesta 4 Frankfurt (2002). In addition, Bartana's films and video have been shown at numerous festivals across the globe, including the *Rotterdam International Film Festival* in 2008, 2007, 2004, and 2002.





RINA CASTELNUOVO

“As a photographer for *The New York Times*, Rina Castelnovo has witnessed two decades of discord in Israel and has endeavored to document the human cost of political strife in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In confronting the tensions in the region, she has developed a style that probes the personal reality behind the political façade. Castelnovo’s intention is to be as unobtrusive as possible. Her compassion is evident in the private moments she photographs, in which she captures the soul of her subjects in places ranging from army bases to Israeli settlements.”¹

These words eloquently describe the work of Rina Castelnovo whose photographs are some of the most powerful images of Israel today. For most of the past 25 years Castelnovo has lived in Israel and has documented the ongoing conflict in the region. Through the lens of her camera, the impact of war and the consequences of the continuing struggle over territory on human lives, is almost made palpable. With sensitivity and compassion, she renders scenes such as the harrowing imperative of protecting one’s children on the front lines (*Gush Katif*, 2003), or the devastation wrought by rocket fire on families (*Sderot, Israel*, 2008). Within the maelstrom of conflict, her images focus on personal moments, capturing the tragedy of conflict without losing sight of what is most human—love, friendship, fear, loss, pain, and remorse.

Alumim, Gaza Border (2005) portrays a striking scene near the Alumim Kibbutz on the Gaza border, an area in daily range of rocket and mortar fire. In many ways this compelling photograph makes a universal statement about life in Israel today—where love and conflict all too often co-exist. Though potentially distressing, it also conveys a spirit of hope. Despite years of unending conflict, love and life goes on. In the face of adversity, *Alumim, Gaza Border* speaks to strength, perseverance, and faith.

Perhaps the most salient of her works in the exhibition is Castelnovo’s *Gaza Border* (2009). It depicts an Israeli soldier praying on top of a large tank, wearing the traditional tallit shawl around his shoulders and the tefillin, or leather straps and prayer boxes, around his arm and head. As an explosion smolders on the horizon, violence appears to have ended for the moment. Despite ongoing destruction in the distance, the day has allowed for one brief instant of spiritual reflection. As he prays, the last rays of the sun shine directly on him, imbuing the scene with a sense that time has stopped. It’s a moment of devotion, but perhaps too, of reckoning. Is he praying to thank God? Is he praying for victory? Or is he praying out of remorse? Castelnovo’s photographs seem to be composed from the inside out, as if the revealed sentiments are the driving force behind her masterful representation of color, light, and scene. In this way, the messages are powerful, yet deeply contained.

¹ Susan Tumarkin Goodman, “A Matter of Place,” in *Dateline Israel: New Photography and Video* (New Haven and London: Jewish Museum, New York, 2007), 33.



WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Gaza Border, 2009

Chromogenic Color Print
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Sderot, Israel, 2008

Chromogenic Color Print.
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Alumim, Gaza Border, 2005

Chromogenic Color Print
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Gush Katif, 2005

Chromogenic Color Print
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

All works © Rina Castelnuovo



RINA CASTELNUOVO

Born in 1956, Tel Aviv.
Lives in Beit Zayit,
outside Jerusalem

The artist Rina Castelnovo is one of the most prominent international photojournalists living and working in Israel today. Castelnovo documented the revolution in Romania in 1989, the crisis of Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War, the two Lebanon wars (1986, 2006) and the two Intifadas (1987-1993, 2000). The daughter of Polish Holocaust survivors, she was raised in Israel, then educated at the University of Fine Arts in Rome. After returning to Israel, she documented the first Lebanon War for the Associated Press, followed by the first Intifada in the Gaza Strip. Her work has been featured in many cover images for *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *People Magazine*, and since 1993 she has been the principal Israel photographer for the *New York Times*. Castelnovo's photography won the prestigious Overseas Press Club Award in 1982 and in 2006. Her photographs have been exhibited at the Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York (2007, 2005) as well as in the exhibition *Dateline Israel: Recent Photography and Video* at The Jewish Museum in New York in 2007.





NATAN DVIR

Natan Dvir's large-format color photographs explore the human impact of social and political issues in direct and emotionally moving terms. Among his current projects is a series of photographs about Arab-Israelis, and an ongoing project, *Shelter* (begun in 2007), that deals with refugees and internally displaced peoples around the globe. His current focus is on Sudan, where thousands of refugees have fled to Israel; and Colombia, where three million people have been uprooted by conflict.

Represented in this exhibition are selections from two series of photographs that examine issues in Israel—the *Conflict* series (2003-2006) and the *Belief* series (2004–2008). In the *Belief* series, Dvir explores the profound impact that religion and faith have in Israel among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Instigated by a fascination with the intensity of Ultra-Orthodox Jewish celebrations, Dvir began attending the ceremonies of various religious faiths to explore this multi-faceted world. The three photographs on view in this exhibition portray religious rites or events in the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths, as part of the artists' ongoing investigation of the key role that religion plays in the cultural and political fabric of Israel. "I am fascinated," States Dvir, "and sometimes frightened by the extreme situations people reach either pursuing or defending their beliefs. On the other hand I am moved by the ways people drive strength out of their beliefs, having a sense of belonging and security. The various ways of looking and understanding the world lead to different concepts of right and wrong—can different beliefs coexist or are they destined to cause conflict?"¹

The effect of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its consequences on human lives is the subject of the *Conflict* series. These striking, beautifully composed photographs resonate with unspoken narratives that convey the enormous human cost that the struggle over territory in the Holy Land has on everyday life. *Walking Home* (2004) portrays a casual street scene in East Jerusalem, poignant for its depiction of the omnipresence of the Israeli military in Palestinians' lives. In *Out in the Field* (2005) a Palestinian woman faces Israeli soldiers, planted on the horizon as if ready to prevent her access to her crops. The image captures the essence of what has torn this land over the ages—the contest over territory, borders, and free passage. The tragedy underlying these photographs is how such conflict affects everyday people on all sides, and that ultimately in conflict, there is no victory. Everyone suffers.

¹ Natan Dvir in his artist statement in email correspondence with the author, Spring 2009.



WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Baptism, 2007

Chromogenic Color Print
36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Purim, 2006

Chromogenic Color Print
36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Out in the Field, 2005

Chromogenic Color Print
36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Ramadan, 2004

Chromogenic Color Print
50 x 36 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Walking Home, 2004

Chromogenic Color Print
36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

All works © Natan Dvir



NATAN DVIR

Born in Nahariya, Israel, 1972
Lives in New York

Natan Dvir is an emerging artist who received an MBA in Business from Tel Aviv University (1998, magna cum laude), and a BA in Computer Science and Economics (1993) from Tel Aviv University, but chose to become a photographer. Dvir's work was recently featured in a one-person exhibition at the Houston Center for Photography (2009), as well as a number of group exhibitions including those at the Kultur Bahnhof Eller, Düsseldorf (2009), the Tel Aviv Museum (2009, 2006), Museo de Antioquia, Medellín, Columbia (2008), *Festival de l'Image Environnementale* in Paris, France (2008), and Christie's, London (2007). He is the recipient of several awards such as the Houston Center of Photography Fellowship (2009), Britain's Jewish Artist of the Year Award (2007) and the Israeli Picture of the Year Award (2005 & 2007). Dvir's photographs are in several museum collections including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Tel Aviv Museum, as well as private collections. Dvir works freelance as an editorial, documentary, and commercial photographer. He is represented by Polaris Images and has contributed work for many international publications such as *Newsweek*, *Glamour*, *The British Journal of Photography*, *fotoMAGAZIN*, *Journal de Dimanche*, *Stern*, *Le Monde*, *Focus*, *Die Zeit*, *Build*, *Weltwoche*, and *Corriera Della Sera*. Dvir is currently pursuing his Masters degree in Fine Arts at New York University.





BARRY FRYDLENDER

"If you really want to know something you have to take time and look around.
If you want to know something really, you have to know it from many points of view."
—Barry Frydlander¹

Barry Frydlander's photographic panoramas are complex, deeply layered images of everyday realities in Israel. His images are made from hundreds of photographs taken of the same scene at different times and from different angles and perspectives. Taken within minutes, weeks, or even months of one another, the images are seamlessly constructed with the computer into digital composites that appear to be a single exposure. Many of Frydlander's works have multiple lines of perspective and repetitions of individual figures that crop up several times across the picture frame. With this, Frydlander effects an unusual temporal and spatial view of his subjects and hints at the passage of time. As one critic aptly comments about the artist's work: "It's not one instant, it's many instants put together."² The resulting photographs are cinematic and complex in their conflation of multiple time frames in their hyper-real focus on detail.

Frydlander began photographing when he was 15 years old, and subsequently embarked on a career as a documentary photographer and filmmaker. While working as a photojournalist during the first Palestinian Intifada (1987-1993),³ he became disillusioned with what he saw as the "press' complicity in fabricating or manufacturing news events."⁴ He consequently abandoned photography for six years, but returned to it, and since 2000 has worked exclusively with digital images.

Frydlander's remarkable photographs portray everyday life in Israel across the ethnic, economic, religious, and political lines in an investigation of what Israel is and who Israelis are. On view in this exhibition are scenes that range from young people hanging out on a corner in Tel Aviv (*Friday*, 2002), a rock concert on the beach (*Bombamela*, 2000), an aftermath of a bombing at a popular café (*Café Bialik, After*, 2002), to a scene of Palestinians observing the evacuation of Israeli settlements (*Waiting, 28 years (End of Occupation?) Series#1*, 2005). The images are dense with information and invite sustained viewing. *Friday* (2002), an urban scene that pictures the vitality of contemporary Israeli society, is composed of a multitude of images taken over three successive Friday afternoons. On another side of the spectrum is *Waiting, 38 years (End of Occupation? Series #1)*, 2005, a stunning photograph that portrays Palestinian men and boys observing the forced evacuation in 2005 of the Jewish Shirate Hayam settlement from the Gaza Strip. This panorama is calm and visually elegant; but it addresses one of the fundamental and inflammatory issues in Israel today—that of disputed territories. Frydlander comments on what happened when he took the initial images of the scene:

This was taken a few hours before, very early in the morning. It was kind of a paradox, because these are Palestinians and Bedouins waiting for the Israeli army to come but not in the normal way they're waiting for the army to come. This time they are waiting for them to come and clear the settlement. They were very suspicious; they really didn't believe the settlement would be evacuated because for many years they were promised it. You can see that they are examining me also. The only one who is looking in the right direction is the child. The soldiers are coming from there. Everyone else is looking at me and looking at the settlement...⁵

Works such as these take the pulse of life in Israel today. It is such nuanced complexities, and the open-ended commentaries that these photographs offer that make Frydlander's art so compelling.

¹ Barry Frydlander quoted in an interview with Blake Eskin, Netbook Magazine, June 27, 2007.

² Vince Aletti, "An Israeli Photographer and His Panoramic Time Machines," Village Voice, September 15-21, 94.

³ The First Intifada (1987-1993) was a Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in the Palestinian Territories

⁴ Leslie Camhi, "Art: Fragments of Israel, Assembled Into a Whole," The New York Times, May 13, 2007.

⁵ Barry Frydlander quoted in Blake Eskin, Netbook Magazine, June 27, 2007.



WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Waiting, 38 Years ("End of Occupation?" Series #1), 2005

Chromogenic Color Print

32.625 x 131 inches

Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Café Bialik, After, 2002

Chromogenic Color Print

39.25 x 73.25 inches

Private Collection

Friday, 2002

Chromogenic Color Print

21 x 69 inches

Private Collection

Bombamela, 2000

Chromogenic Color Print

34 x 110.5 inches

Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Café Bialik, 2000

Chromogenic Color Print

11.8 x 82.5 inches

Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

All works © Barry Frydlender







BARRY FRYDLENDER

Born in Tel Aviv, 1967
Lives in Tel Aviv

The son of refugees from Poland, Barry Frydlander served in the Israeli army as a photographer, before studying film and television at Tel Aviv University. After his studies he began a career as a documentary photographer and filmmaker. During this time, he also made portraits of Tel Aviv café society while shooting album covers and portraits of touring musicians (Nirvana, Guns N' Roses, Madonna) for a teenage magazine. In the early 1990s Frydlander began digitizing his negatives, and since 2000 has switched exclusively to electronic image making. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Jewish Museum, Paris (2008), and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2007). He was the first Israeli artist to be given a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2007). Frydlander's photographs have been shown extensively in group exhibitions in Israel, Europe, and the United States, including The Jewish Museum, New York (2007), Passage de Retz, Paris (2003), Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, Germany (2002), Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain, Sete, France (1997), and the 1994 International Biennale of São Paulo, Brazil among others. Barry Frydlander's work is in the collections of such major museums as the National Collection of Contemporary Art (CNAC) Paris, The Jewish Museum, New York, and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, as well private collections. In 2001 he received the Leon Constantiner Award for Photography at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art.





TOP Barry Frydlander, *Café Bialik*, 2000

BOTTOM Barry Frydlander, *Café Bialik, After*, 2002

ORI GERSHT

Ori Gersht is renowned for his evocative photographic and video works that engage notions of history, memory, and place. His mesmerizing photographs are usually produced in series and are often based on journeys to sites of personal or symbolic significance. The series of photographs, *AfterWars* (1998), depicts buildings in Sarajevo taken after the Bosnian war. *White Noise* (1999-2000), a series of semi-abstract landscape photographs, was taken from a train speeding from Krakow to Auschwitz. The series *AfterGlow* (2002) portrays a journey into the night in the Judean Desert, a land with over four thousand years of history that is subject to continuing conflict.

Landscape as metaphor, as a charged site embodying memories of the past, is a principal subject in Gersht's art. His works often portray idyllic scenes that are poetic, while simultaneously fraught with complex, underlying contradictions. His art also addresses the perception of time, and the process of remembering and forgetting. How history is erased, and the relationship of the past to the realities of the present, is a key area of exploration in Gersht's work.

The three large photographs in this exhibition are from Gersht's *Ghost Olive* series (2003-2004). They depict the ancient olive trees—some more than 500 years old—in Palestinian villages throughout Israel's Galilee region. An important symbol for Israel, the olive tree is not only a symbol of the country, but a symbol of sustenance, endurance, and strength. But in these photographs, Gersht intentionally overexposes the images in the midday sun, so that they have a painterly, almost dreamlike quality, as if the image were fading in and out of existence. Here, Gersht transforms this ancient and weathered symbol of strength into an image of fragile beauty, and in doing so, presents a metaphor of the land as a sacred but vulnerable site.

Gersht's video, *The Forest* (2006), portrays a majestic forest scene, at first tranquil and seductive, with canopies of leaves gently swaying as sunlight filters through the tree boughs. All is quiet except for the sound of chirping birds. Suddenly, the stillness is shattered by the deafening roar of a tree crashing down. A shower of leaves fall, the silence returns. Then another tree falls, and another in a cycle that repeats itself, as if to suggest that Eden, at any moment, can be subject to deadly, unexpected catastrophes.

Gersht created this film in the remote regions of Galicia in southwest Ukraine, in the forests that bore witness to appalling atrocities during World War II. It was here that his father-in-law witnessed the extermination of family members and inhabitants of entire villages. In this work, Gersht poetically engages the notion of place and memory, juxtaposing intense beauty with the evocation of an excruciating and horrific past.



WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

The Forest, 2006
DVD projection
Duration: 6 minutes
Variable dimensions
Pizzuti Collection

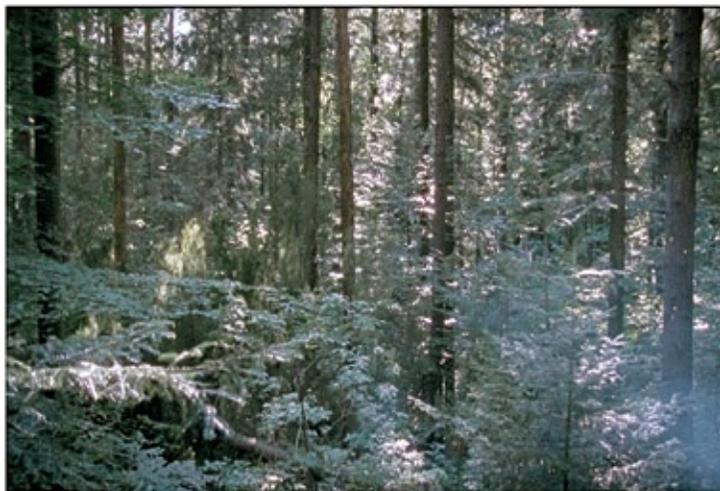
Ghost, Olive #2, 2003
C-print mounted on aluminum
49 x 58.5 inches
Courtesy of Jill Furman Willis
and Richard Willis

Ghost, Olive #4, 2003
C-print mounted on aluminum
48 x 58.5 inches
Cleveland Clinic Foundation

Ghost, Olive #5, 2003
C-print mounted on aluminum
49 x 60.5 inches
The Progressive Corporation

All works © Ori Gersht





ORI GERSHT

Born in Tel Aviv, 1967
Lives and works in London

Ori Gersht is one of the most prominent, internationally recognized Israeli artists. After completing his military service in Israel, he moved to London where he received a BA in Photography, Film, and Video from the University of Westminster in 1992, and an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art in 1995. His work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions in major museums such as The Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2008), The Jewish Museum, New York (2008, 2007), Tate Britain, (2008), the Victoria and Albert Museum (2006), and the Haifa Museum (2006), among others. He has also presented his work in video festivals such as *Loop '07 – Barcelona—The Video Art* festival in Barcelona, Spain. Gersht's work is in many prestigious public collections including the Guggenheim Museum in New York City, the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco, and the Tate in London. His work has most recently been featured in a solo exhibition entitled "Black Box: Ori Gersht" at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. (2009).



DANA LEVY

"I believe that our collective dreams can serve as a guide to problem solving. In this work, I filmed Israeli and Palestinians describing their dreams, focusing on teenagers, children, prisoners, and poets, as these groups have an essential and symbolic need to dream."

—Dana Levy¹

An emerging artist, Dana Levy studied at Camberwell College of Arts in London, England, and received her master's degree in Electronic Imaging at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design in Dundee, Scotland. She works primarily in photography and video although her creative endeavors are versatile, spanning performance and installation as well. Levy participates regularly in numerous international film festivals and artists residencies in Israel, Europe, and the United States.

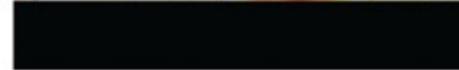
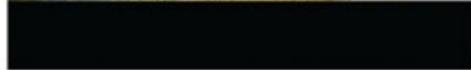
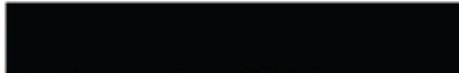
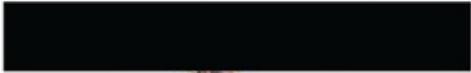
The Dreamers (2004), one of the most poignant works of art in this exhibition, is a 19-minute video in which individuals from many walks of life, both Israelis and Palestinians, speak about their dreams, hopes, and inner anxieties. Projected along the length of the gallery wall in a horizontal band, a stream of images portraying young women and men, poets, prisoners, elders, and children moves steadily and seamlessly from left to right. As they speak against a softened audio track of ambient sounds wafting in the distance, their images come in and out of focus as sunlight and haze intermittently blanch the screen. Though constantly moving, the tempo and rhythm of the work is almost languid.

Countering this dreamy, elusive effect is what they have to say:

A prisoner dreams about joyfully returning to his family. A child dreams about being a doctor. A man speaks whimsically about being a king, knowing that this dream does not exist. A young woman speaks about nightmares of being killed that linger in daylight. A man revels in the thought of being a star athlete. A poet dreams of a house, somewhere in the future, full of people, saying that at present, he does not really know where he lives. A man tells us that his dream is simply to go home. After 35 years. To Hebron and Jerusalem. Just for a visit, but he cannot on account of being denied a visa.

In this sequence of poetic and beautifully rendered images and words, Levy conveys how acute the disruption and instability can be in everyday life in Israel. At the same time, Levy posits that it is in dreaming, by delving into oneself and reaching for a future, that another reality can be envisioned.

¹ Dana Levy, excerpt from 2008 artist statement in email correspondence with the author.



WORK IN THE EXHIBITION

The Dreamers, 2004

Digital Video

Duration: 19 minutes

Courtesy of the artist

© Dana Levy





DANA LEVY

Born in Tel Aviv, 1973
Lives in Tel Aviv

Dana Levy received an MA in Electronic Imaging at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee, Scotland; and a BA in Visual Art at Camberwell College of Art, London. Last year she received the Israeli Ministry of Culture and Sports Young Artist Award (2008). Her works in video and photography have been shown in Israel, Europe, and the United States, in solo exhibitions including those at the Tavi Dresdner Gallery, Tel Aviv (2008), and the Haifa Museum of Art (2004). Levy has an upcoming one-person exhibition this fall at Habres + Partner Gallery in Vienna. Her work has been featured in group exhibitions at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam (2008) and the Israeli Museum of Art in Jerusalem (2008). Levy has participated in a number of residencies and workshops in Finland and Austria, and in 2001 participated in the Atlantic Center for the Arts filmmaking residency in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. Levy's work has been screened in international film festivals including *Media Forum, Moscow Film Festival, Moscow*, (2008), *Videoland*, Arneuland Gallery, Berlin (2006), *Mediterranean Film Festival of Montpellier*, Montpellier, France (2006), *Impakt Film Festival* Utrecht, Holland (2006), *ARCIPELAGO International Film Festival*, Rome (2006), *Backup_* festival: *New Media in Film*, Weimar, Germany (2005), and the *6ème Manifestation Internationale Video et Art Electronique*, Montreal (2002), among others. In 2006, Levy received the No Budget Jury Award 2000 EU Hamburg short film festival.





Over the last 15 years, Adi Nes has examined the plight of marginalized individuals through provocative, beautifully-composed photographic tableaux that challenge widely held beliefs and perceptions about life in Israel today. In addition to addressing social issues, Nes explores identity, both in terms of what it means to be Israeli as well as the role of masculinity in contemporary Israeli society.

His latest series of portrait photographs includes *Boys* (2000), *Soldiers* (1994-2000), *Prisoners* (2003), and *Biblical Stories* (2003-2006), from which three portraits are included in this exhibition. In these striking portraits, Nes casts the homeless as Biblical heroes, staged in the blighted, urban underbelly of Tel Aviv. In creating these works, Nes draws on his Judaic faith along with the history of art, ranging from classical religious paintings to more recent precedents such as the photographs of Diane Arbus or Jeff Wall. In doing so, Nes catapults historic Judaic narratives into the present, bringing them to life in poignant, disconcerting parables that are acutely relevant today.¹ For instance, the settings, poses, theatricality, and lighting of the Baroque master Caravaggio (1571–1610) are sources for a number of Nes' works. Nes, however, updates such scenes formally and conceptually, carefully composing his staged narratives to make a poignant statement about contemporary Israeli society.

The *Biblical Stories* series is not only a pointed commentary on social conditions in Israel today, but it also explores identity. As Nes states, "Israel is going through an identity crisis, with young people who have less of an understanding of Jewish history and traditions, questioning why they should live in Israel. It is because of the Bible," he continues, "that Israelis chose to live in the Holy Land."² For this reason, Nes chose to use stories from the Bible as a lens through which to examine Israeli society.

Each photograph in the *Biblical Stories* series utilizes a specific passage from the Bible. *Untitled (Abraham and Isaac)*, 2006, for example is based on the Old Testament story of the Sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 12.1). Abraham, the first patriarch of the Jewish people and founder of Judaism, was ordered by God to "leave your country, your birthplace, even your father's house, and go to the land which I will show you." Abraham followed God's command and left for Canaan (the Land of Israel), and in subsequent years, he was further tested by God. To judge his faith, God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac, an act from which God spared him at the last minute.

In Nes' contemporary version of this Biblical tale, the artist casts Abraham and Isaac as a homeless man and boy. A disheveled and penniless Abraham wheels a downtrodden Isaac asleep in a shopping cart full of scavenged trash and cans. As points of departure, the portrait takes Caravaggio's *The Sacrifice of Isaac* (1601-02) and Duane Hanson's sculpture, *Supermarket Shopper* (1969), which portrays a woman pushing a cart overflowing with food, a work of art generally interpreted as an indictment of American excess and consumerism.³ In Nes' portrait, the pose is similar. However, Nes critiques the social conditions in Israel today, emphasizing the irony of poverty in a place long revered throughout history as "the promised land."

With this portrait, Nes also asks questions about faith, if not in God, then in a society that fails the poor. The subject of sacrifice—by and of those cast off from market economies—is a complex socio-political issue also embedded in the work. Sacrifice in Israel applies not only to those on the fringes of society, but resonates well beyond. In a country constantly threatened by conflict where every parent's children serve in the army, Nes' image of Abraham facing the possibility of making the ultimate sacrifice—that of one's child—is an excruciating reminder of an irrefutable fact of life in everyday Israel.

¹ Esther Hecths. "Photos of Truth and Distortion." *Hadassah Magazine* 89, no 4 (Dec 2007): 3.

² Nes quoted Adi Nes: Photographing Israeli Identity: Magnes Museum video documentation of opening lecture. http://fora.tv/2008/06/15/Adi_Nes_Phographing_Israeli_Identity

³ Susan Chevlowe, "Adi Nes' Biblical Stories" in *Adi Nes*. (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 2007), 118.



WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Untitled (Abraham and Isaac), 2006
C-print. 56 x 56 inches
Collection of Jeffrey Davis
and Kevin Jennings
Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York
and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

Untitled (David and Jonathan), 2006
C-print. 59 x 73 inches
Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York
and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

Untitled (Joseph), 2004
C-print. 39.3 x 39.3 inches
Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York
and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

All works © Adi Nes





ADI NES

Born in Kiryat Gat, Israel in 1966
Lives in Tel Aviv

Adi Nes was born to Jewish parents of Kurdish and Iranian descent and raised in the development town of Kiryat Gat, Israel. He studied photography graduating from Jerusalem's Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in 1992. Now Nes is based in Tel Aviv, and has participated in numerous group and one-person exhibitions in Tel Aviv, New York, Toronto, London, Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, Vienna, Chicago, and San Francisco. Among his solo exhibitions are those at the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH (2008), the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2007, 2003, 2001), the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco (2004), Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego and the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago (2002). Among his numerous group exhibitions are those at the Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, CA (2008-2009), Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto, Canada (2008-2009), P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York (2006), and The Jewish Museum, New York (1998). Nes was the recipient of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art's Nathan Gottesdiener Foundation Israeli Art Prize in 2001. His series of photographs *Prisoners* (2003), which was first published in *Vogue* magazine and exhibited at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, was the recipient of the Leon Constantiner Award for Photography in 2003.



MICHAL ROVNER

One of the most acclaimed contemporary Israeli artists, Michal Rovner is internationally renowned for her prolific work in video, film, photography, sculpture, and installation, as well as works on canvas and paper.

Rovner's photographic and video images present haunting, silhouetted figures, abstracted and reduced to elemental forms. Characteristic of her work are bird-like or human shapes that coalesce in dense flight patterns or group formations, and then scatter—individually or clustered—across the picture plane.

Rovner's recent work ranges from monumental sculpture installations made of hand-hewn stone blocks to video installations in which images are projected onto architectural spaces. In one series, Rovner projects video images onto weathered stone fragments that evoke ancient texts or sacred scripts. Some projections are presented as LCD panels; others on walls or floors. Common to all are Rovner's faceless, anonymous figures that wander, converge, and then dissipate within abstract landscapes.

In creating her art, Rovner records then re-processes video images digitally, removing layers of identity and editing out recognizable traits so that her faceless figures transcend time and nationality. "I always start from reality, by recording or collecting real things, but after that I proceed with cancellations, subtractions, removing those things from their context, their identity, their original place so that they could be anybody, anywhere. This way I try to get to the essential."¹

The video installation *More* (2003) is one of three works represented in the exhibition. *More* was the first of three components in *Against Order? Against Disorder?*, Rovner's presentation at the 2003 Venice Biennale. This room-size video installation portrays masses of teeming figures. At first concentrated and huddled in the middle of the picture plane, a circle of anonymous figures gradually spirals out and unravels, then disperses in all directions. The sense of inevitable movement, slow at first, escalates in intensity before the sequence reverses, then repeats itself. In speaking about *More*, Rovner describes the trajectory of the piece as "a continuous, unbreakable, unending line of movement."²

In this, as in many of her works, Rovner uses human movement as gesture.³ Choreography, for Rovner, becomes an elemental form of mark making, to evoke, perhaps, the scope of history or human behavior. *More* conveys the sense of dynamic but chaotic masses of humanity. While Rovner intends her works to be ambiguous, there are undeniable historical and political undercurrents. As the artist comments, "the movement of peoples is a political and moral issue."⁴ There is no question that works like *More* suggest cohesion and chaos, migration and deportation.⁵ Such polarities also are embedded in the original Venice installation's title *Against Order? Against Disorder?* For Rovner, a key question in this work is a moral one. "At what point," she asks, "does order become something you don't want to be associated with? At what point do you discover this? And what do you do about it?"

Also on view are two works Rovner created in 2007, *Script* and *Mathematics*. Displayed inside LCD panels, abstracted and re-processed video images of what seem to be tiny human figures move continuously across paper. Both of these cryptic works evoke ancient texts, manuscripts, or markings that allude to depths of knowledge that constantly change or evolve over time. The images also resemble streams of data, chromosomes, or DNA particles. As in many of her works, Rovner uses the reduced human form as notation, as a fluid language.

While intentionally ambiguous, Rovner's art embodies universalities applicable across cultures and throughout history. The paramount role of knowledge, past and present, aggression and reconciliation, loss and survival, and man's vulnerability and insignificance are among the philosophic and existential issues that Rovner's elusive imagery explores.

¹ Rovner in a BBC interview with John Tusa. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/johntusainterview/rovner>

² Rovner in telephone conversation with Margo Crutchfield, Aug. 6, 2009.

³ Michael Rush, "Vindicated at Venice," www.artnet.com/Magazine/reviews/italy

⁴ Rovner in telephone conversation with Margo Crutchfield, Aug. 6, 2009.

⁵ Dominique Nabokov, "Michal Rovner," *Connaissance des Arts*, Feb. 2004, 177.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Mathematics, 2007

Framed LCD screen, paper,
computer and digital files
31 x 19 inches
Courtesy of the artist
and PaceWildenstein, New York

Script, 2007

Framed LCD screen, paper,
computer and digital files
31 x 19 inches
Courtesy of the artist
and PaceWildenstein, New York

More, 2003

Video installation
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist
and PaceWildenstein, New York

All works © Michal Rovner



MICHAL ROVNER

Born in Tel Aviv, 1957
Lives in Kefar Shemuel, Israel
and New York City

Michal Rovner studied cinema, television, and philosophy at Tel Aviv University before enrolling at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem in 1981 where she received a BFA in Photography and Art in 1985. She went on to establish Tel Aviv's Camera Obscura Art School specializing in photography, video, cinema and computer art. In 1997, Rovner received the Tel Aviv Museum Award. In addition to a great number of group exhibitions, Rovner's art has been the subject of over forty solo exhibitions at museums around the world. Her most recent one-person exhibition was presented this spring at DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art in Montreal, and she is the subject this fall of a solo exhibition and major catalogue in Spain at Ivorypress Art + Books, Madrid, Spain.

Rovner's work is in many of the most distinguished museum collections worldwide including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Art Institute of Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; The Jewish Museum, New York; Paris Audiovisuel (Collection de la Ville de Paris); Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris; Museo d'arte Contemporanea di Roma, Rome; The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; The Tel Aviv Museum; Polaroid Collection, Boston, MA; and the Bohem Foundation, among others.

RONA YEFMAN AND TANJA SCHLANDER

"I explore identity through photographing, videotaping and collaborating with individuals who have formed a radical notion of the self that engages the potential for change through their personas... The distance between what we are and what we want to be is something that fascinates me."¹

In her search to explore identity and the potential within the self to affect social and political realities surrounding her, Rona Yefman explores the fluid dimension between the real and the fictive. In creating her video art, photographs, and installations she invents characters—personas that she stages with costumes in fantasy situations. Yefman often mines the outrageous and the absurd in strategies that incorporate appropriation, masking, and clown tactics to uncover and comment on underlying realities.

In her video *2 Flags* (2004-6), Yefman explores what she terms "the schizophrenic identity of Tel Aviv and the ambivalence of Zionist myths" by creating outlandish characters and grotesque scenes that mirror the historical hostilities of the region. In *Pippi Longstocking 2006 — The Strongest Girl in the World! at Abu Dis* (2008), the video installation on view in this exhibition, Yefman transforms the heroine from a classic Swedish children's tale into a contemporary character. In Astrid Lindgren's bedtime story, Pippi Longstocking is a rebellious girl with supernatural strength and red pigtails. She is an anti-authoritarian personality, a "liberator of children" who constantly challenges the existing order of things.² Pippi Longstocking is also described as having encouraged generations of girls to have fun and believe in themselves.³

Played in Yefman's video installation by Danish performance and voice artist Tanja Schlander, *Pippi Longstocking* attempts to move the huge concrete wall that separates Israel from the West Bank. In the video, Yefman's *Pippi Longstocking*, "the strongest girl in the world," who does not believe in artificial borders, she takes on this insurmountable task, wrestling with outrageous odds, all the while encouraged by Palestinian passersby. The situation is preposterous, and while this scenario appears totally unreal, it does speak to serious realities in Israel today: division, contested territory, the artificiality of political boundaries. The work also speaks to the aspiration, among a younger generation of Israelis, to move beyond traditional political stances.

For Yefman, the Pippi Longstocking in her video installation represents the ultimate female hero who dreams for positive change and transformation, for peace and unity. In this respect, this work of art stands not only as a political statement, but as a catalyst. It encapsulates the power of art to strive for and affect change, and to stand for the hope of a better future.

¹ Rona Yefman Artist Statement, from email correspondence with the author, April 8, 2009.

² Astrid Lindgren, the author of this classic children's story, invented the character for her own daughter during World War II in order to present her with a positive heroine that would stand out in contrast with the surrounding forces of evil. <http://www.sweden.se/eng/>

³ Tina Meri, "Pippi Longstocking—Swedish rebel and feminist role model," <http://www.sweden.se/eng/>



WORK IN THE EXHIBITION

Rona Yefman and Tanja Schlander
*Pippi Longstocking 2006 —
The Strongest Girl in the World!
at Abu Dis, 2008*

Video Projection

Duration: 3:50 minutes

Variable dimensions

Courtesy of the artist and

Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

© Rona Yefman and Tanja Schlander



RONA YEFMAN

Born in Tel Aviv, 1972
Lives and works in Tel Aviv
and New York

Rona Yefman received a BFA in Photography & Video at the Bezalel Academy, Jerusalem (1999), studied in the Post-Graduate Program at Bezalel Academy of Art & Design, Tel-Aviv (2001-2003), and just recently graduated with a Master's in Fine Arts from Columbia University School of Arts in New York City (2009). Her work has been shown in several museum group exhibitions at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2009), *Inside Out, Contemporary Israeli Art*, Museum Marco, Vigo, Spain (2006), *Affirmative Action* (2003) at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and *Dryphoto: International Contemporary Photography* at the Prato in Italy (2004). In 2009, Sommer Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv presented her work in a solo exhibition at The Armory Show art fair in New York City. In 2007 Yefman was awarded "The New Creation Prize" by the Israeli Ministry of Education, Culture & Sport.

Rona Yefman and Tanja Schlander,
*Pippi Longstocking 2006 — the Strongest
Girl in the World! at Abu Dis, 2008*









WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Dimensions are in inches, height precedes width
All works © the artists

YAEL BARTANA

Trembling Time, 2001
One channel video and sound installation
Color and Sound by Tao G. Vrhovec Sambolek
Duration: 6:20 minutes
Courtesy of the artist, Annet Gelink Gallery,
Amsterdam and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

RINA CASTELNUOVO

Gaza Border, 2009
Chromogenic Color Print
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Sderot, Israel, 2008
Chromogenic Color Print.
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Alumim, Gaza Border, 2005
Chromogenic Color Print
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Gush Katif, 2005
Chromogenic Color Print
30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of
Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

NATAN DVIR

Baptism, 2007
Chromogenic Color Print
Image size 28 x 42 inches
Overall 36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Purim, 2006
Chromogenic Color Print
Image size 28 x 42 inches
Overall 36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Out in the Field, 2005
Chromogenic Color Print
Image size 28 x 42 inches
Overall 36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Ramadan, 2004
Chromogenic Color Print
Image size 42 x 28 inches
Overall 50 x 36 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Walking Home, 2004
Chromogenic Color Print
Image size 28 x 42 inches
Overall 36 x 50 inches
Courtesy of the artist

BARRY FRYDLENDER

Waiting, 38 Years ("End of Occupation?" Series #1), 2005
Chromogenic Color Print
32.625 x 131 inches
Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Café Bialik, After, 2002
Chromogenic Color Print
39.25 x 73.25 inches
Private Collection

Friday, 2002
Chromogenic Color Print
21 x 69 inches
Private Collection

Bombamela, 2000
Chromogenic Color Print
34 x 110.5 inches
Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

Café Bialik, 2000
Chromogenic Color Print
11.8 x 82.5 inches
Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York

ORI GERSHT

The Forest, 2006
DVD projection
Duration: 6 minutes
Variable dimensions
Pizzuti Collection

Ghost, Olive #2, 2003
C-print mounted on aluminum
49 x 58.5 inches
Courtesy of Jill Furman Willis
and Richard Willis

Ghost, Olive #4, 2003
C-print mounted on aluminum
48 x 58.5 inches
Cleveland Clinic Foundation

Ghost, Olive #5, 2003
C-print mounted on aluminum
49 x 60.5 inches
The Progressive Corporation

DANA LEVY

The Dreamers, 2004
Digital Video
Duration: 19 minutes
Courtesy of the artist

ADI NES

Untitled (Abraham and Isaac), 2006
C-print. 56 x 56 inches
Collection of Jeffrey Davis
and Kevin Jennings
Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York
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Video installation
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist
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RONA YEFMAN AND TANJA SCHLANDER

*Pippi Longstocking 2006 —
The Strongest Girl in the World!
at Abu Dis*, 2008
Video Projection
Duration: 3:50 minutes
Variable dimensions
Courtesy of the artist and
Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This exhibition developed out of a process of exploration—into a country, a culture, and the art of many wonderful artists. My thanks go to the many individuals who contributed to this process and facilitated the loan of artworks, including Deborah Bliss, Joanne Cohen, Alex Dodge, Jennifer Finkel, Glen McMillan, Megan Holly, Andrea Meislin, Yael Reinhartz, Jack Shainman, Elizabeth Sullivan, Sabrina Vanderputt, Scott Westover, and Floor Wullems. I thank Israel Weiner for his valuable assistance at the inception of this project, and am especially grateful to Susan Tumarkin Goodman, Curator at the Jewish Museum in New York, whose 2007 exhibition *Dateline Israel: New Photography and Video Art* provided a foundation and valuable resource from which to move forward in developing this exhibition here at MOCA Cleveland.

Our great appreciation goes to the artists and lenders to the exhibition for generously parting with their works: Jeffrey G. Davis and Kevin B. Jennings, The Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Mitchell and Lauren Presser, Dexter Paine, The Progressive Corporation, Ron and Ann Pizzuti, and Jill Furman Willis and Richard Willis.

For their continuing excellence in their work, I commend everyone on staff at MOCA Cleveland, in particular our Executive Director, Jill Snyder, for her intrepid leadership; Susan Murray, Director of External Affairs, for rigorous fundraising; and Jamie Hardis, Exhibition Director, for her invaluable contribution to this project. I especially thank our Designer, Tom Poole, for his outstanding work in designing the exhibition publication and all other printed and electronic materials for the exhibition. Our curatorial interns, Anne Meier and AJ Kushner participated in various aspects of organizing the exhibition; for this and for their contributions to the written materials for the exhibition, I am especially grateful.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the generosity of our sponsors. We thank them for their essential support.

And lastly, on behalf of MOCA Cleveland, we thank the artists for sharing their work and their vision with all of us.

— MARGO ANN CRUTCHFIELD
SENIOR CURATOR

MOCA

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CONTEMPORARY ART
CLEVELAND