



Erez Israeli

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Nov. 1, 2003 - Feb. 14, 2004



Untitled, Video / installation, 2003

Every year I stand. Afterwards I tell myself that perhaps next year I'll finally be able to feel the pain. I have become physically accustomed to standing at attention, sharing a nation's pain, a vague distant hurt; pain that swallows the identity of those hurting, wrapping itself in shiny shrouds. The extras in Erez Israeli's video installation have become accustomed too. They construct a base-less Star-of-David pyramid, producing a truncated symbol. They sweat for the sake of creating a heroic moment, for the sake of art (not for the country's sake, and certainly not for their own). The iron discipline tests their muscles, making sure that they exert themselves, as they should. They too stand, following the orders. Without asking questions or understanding, they strain to create a cliché, taking a Star-of-David and transforming it into a futile event. There is no reward, nor any fatalities. I face them, seeking the awe of the moment, the moment of death, the transition from innocence to heroism; probing how the young boys unite to form a sculpture, a symbol, practically fighting for it.

The video, A Fucking American Movie, exposes the Hollywood production mechanism that spawns heroic-belligerent moments of death. It repeats these moments ad absurdum, magnifying and deconstructing them at one and the same time. A reconstruction of pain is made-up on the backs of actors-cum-soldiers-cum-victims of a game not always congruent with their beliefs. Children who attempt to touch upon manhood and preserve an ideal in an era of value disintegration. A garland composed of seven wreaths embalmed in concrete is suspended from the wall, spreading out like a stretched, airy trail, unable to breathe or move. A quest for the moment, a split second of an elusive time (so short and so meaningful) that had been was frozen and cast just before withering. I want to touch the flowers before they turn into pathos and wonder for whom in the statistics were they intended.

I am trying to escape to a private place, but the works thrust the failure in my face; they lead me to the moment of climax that they describe concretely and figuratively (body becomes matter, death becomes aesthetics), but I cannot experience the drama. I will never be able to touch upon the moment of transition between life and death. The works endeavor to trace the collective symbols and representations by employing the very same mechanism that produces glorification and dramatization, only to deconstruct the drama and shed it off, thus documenting the inability to feel. While trying to praise and stretch the climactic moment, the moment of military death, they become their own monument, freezing the withering of flowers. Well aware of the fact that scent is ever so intimate, they cast it in concrete forthwith, to make sure not even a smidgen of a sweet-smelling red rose sneaks out. They want to extort emotion, identification, trying to lure and entrap me. I would have liked to be swept away, to be innocent, to feel, but eventually I comfortably find myself in a familiar place, a place imbued with cynical ridicule of the subject and the preoccupation, which Erez exposes before me. A Fucking American Movie and the tissue remains self-conscious and aware of its function; dry and neatly folded. Can one make do with beauty, be impressed by young bodies attempting to hold themselves up, for the sake of the moment, for the sake of glory, for a little fragrance, a piece of leaf that we can rub, feel. Perhaps next year...

Irit Tamari – Paz Tal

[Less Reading...](#)

Aditioal Exhibitions



Tsibi Geva
Where Im Coming From | Portrait Time I
Curator: Aya Lurie



Hannah Levi
My Face | Portrait Time I
Curator: Rutv Chinsky Amitay



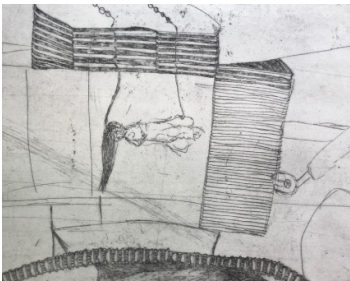
Vered Aharonovitch
The Cuckoo Clock | Portrait Time I
Curator: Aya Lurie



Allison Zuckerman
To Create from a Cloud | Portrait Time I
Curator: Tami Katz-Freiman



Natalia Zourabova
Devochki | Portrait Time I
Curator: Aya Lurie



Maria Saleh Mahameed
Ana Hoon
Curator: Aya Lurie



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