

Explosion

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Cover Image: Yitzhak Livneh, Fragments 2009, oil on canvas 165x165

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Explosion

Art Contemporain Israélien

Curator: Keren Bar-Gil

Exhibiting Artists:

Asnat Austerlitz Yair Barak Yifat Bezalel Efrat Galnoor Uri Gershuni
Netta Lieber Sheffer Yitzhak Livneh Gabriela Schutz Lee Yanor

 F R E E S T U D I O S

3 rue gourgas, 1205 genève
vernissage jeudi 14 mai 2009, 18h00 – 21h00

15 mai au 12 juin 2009 10h00 – 17h00



Efrat Galnoor, Ein Harod, oil on canvas 30x200

Introduction



In Israel, as in the rest of the world, the last decade in art witnessed the strong rise of young contemporary artists. Contemporary Israeli art crosses many boundaries, and has very naturally attracted the attention of world-renowned art institutions. Israeli artists have gained worldwide exposure through their highly regarded achievements. They are standing out at international exhibitions, and featuring in major museums, high profile galleries and auction houses. Our selection of works from nine reputable artists is a reflexion on the artistic emergence from the last decade. It is indeed an Explosion, as is the number of Israeli artists enjoying international success. In this profusion of talents nurtured by the excellent art schools, we have chosen pieces that in our mind burst with this explosive energy. Israel is too often assimilated with the conflict that defines it. However, our ambition was to take a look beyond those initial obvious images into the artistic and creative explosion going on today in Israel. Here, “Explosion” refers to a blast of colors, lines and notions; an outburst in movement, energy and desire.

The exhibiting artists are a rising new force, several of whom boast outstanding accomplishments. Lee Yanor, had a major solo show at the Modern Museum of Taipei, and her famous 'Coffee with Pina' video piece is extensively shown in Europe and the Far East. Yifat Bezalel's work is now part of the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Yair Barak has got into the prestigious MFA program of Bard College in New York.

Israeli artists create a universal and vibrant language in various mediums. They are constantly dealing with issues of borders, identity and relevance. Individually and collectively they create art that reflects their roots while simultaneously evoking universal concerns and portraying narratives of contemporary life. The body of works exhibited here creates a blend that stimulates the eye and challenges the mind.

While providing you with a taste of the art scene flourishing in Israel, the aim of this project is to expose talented Israeli artists to the hub of the Geneva art scene, with its art-loving crowd. We hope you enjoy the exhibition.

Mirav Katri and Keren Bar-Gil

Uri Gershuni, Untitled, C-Print, 90x120

Asnat Austerlitz

Born 1969, lives and works in Tel Aviv, Israel



In her work Austerlitz explores the fragility of human existence, ideas of time, space, memory and absence. In the Athletes series she captures images from TV, taken from the Olympic Games and sport competitions. Here, sport serves as a metaphor for life. Notions of violence, survival, obsession and death are all raised in these visually captivating images.



Austerlitz graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Her work appears in the collections of the Tel Aviv Museum, Slade School of Art and the Israeli Embassy in Jordan.

Selected exhibitions: **2008** *Absence*, 39 Gallery, Tel Aviv **2006** *Let There Be light*, Sotheby's, London **2005** *Art from Great Britain Now*, Wetterling Gallery, Stockholm **2005** *EAST International*, Norfolk, England



Yair Barak

Born 1973, lives and works in Tel-Aviv

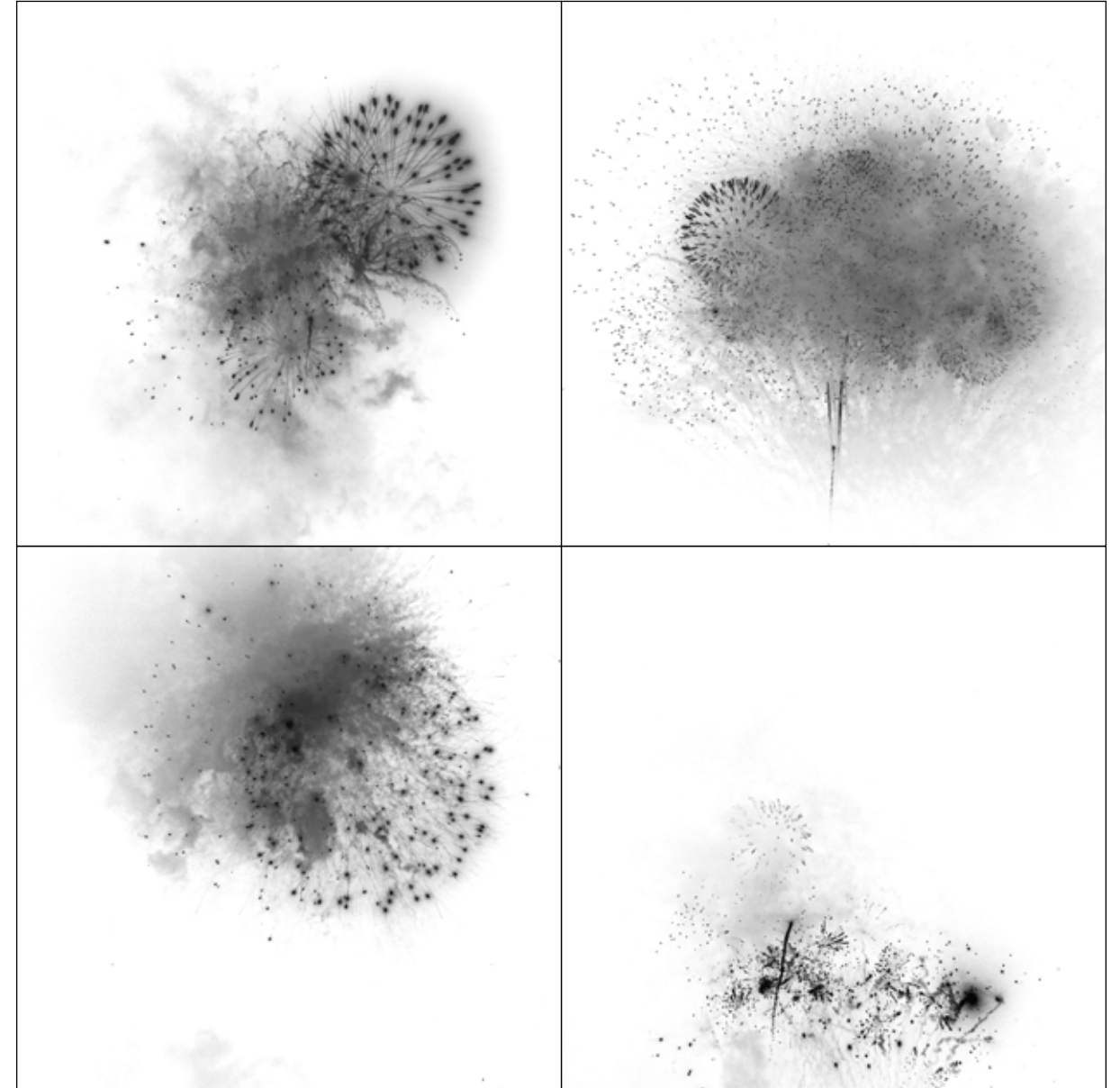


Barak's work deals with the ambivalence that photography suggests. The images that he works with are tempting as well as potentially threatening. Whether the series deals with landscape or cultural rituals, it is always in the space between the beauty and the trauma. In his series 'Explosive' Barak photographed fireworks in black and white and substituted the negative and positive, inverting the fireworks' function and stripping them of their radiance.



Barak is currently studying at the prestigious MFA program in Bard College NY. He established the Photography Department in Minshar School of Art, Tel Aviv. His works appear in all major museums in Israel and important private collections worldwide such as the Steinhart Collection, NY.

Selected exhibitions: **2009** *Tel Aviv Time*, Tel Aviv Museum, Israel **2008** *Water*, the Israel Museum, Jerusalem **2007** *Midnight Frost*, Ha'Kibbutz Gallery, Tel Aviv **2005** *Earth Works*, Haifa Museum, Israel.



Yifat Bezalel

Born 1975, lives and works in Tel Aviv, Israel



In the Alices series Bezalel uses the character of Alice in wonderland. She disconnects Alice from the original narrative and emplaces her in multiple-character, meticulously built up scenes. Bezalel blurs the line between consciousness and unconsciousness and reflects about the den, through which Alice falls, a passage, a gateway, limbo, nowhere, where nothing is happening.



Bezalel's works appear in major collections worldwide, among them: the V&A Museum, London, the Kaye Collection, London, the Tel Aviv Museum and the Wirth Collection, Zurich.

Selected exhibitions: **2009** *Paperwork*, Israel Museum, Jerusalem **2008** *Ulysses*, Inga Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel **2005** *Middle East North West*, Israeli Embassy, London.



Efrat Galnoor

Born 1970, lives and works in Kfar Yona, Israel

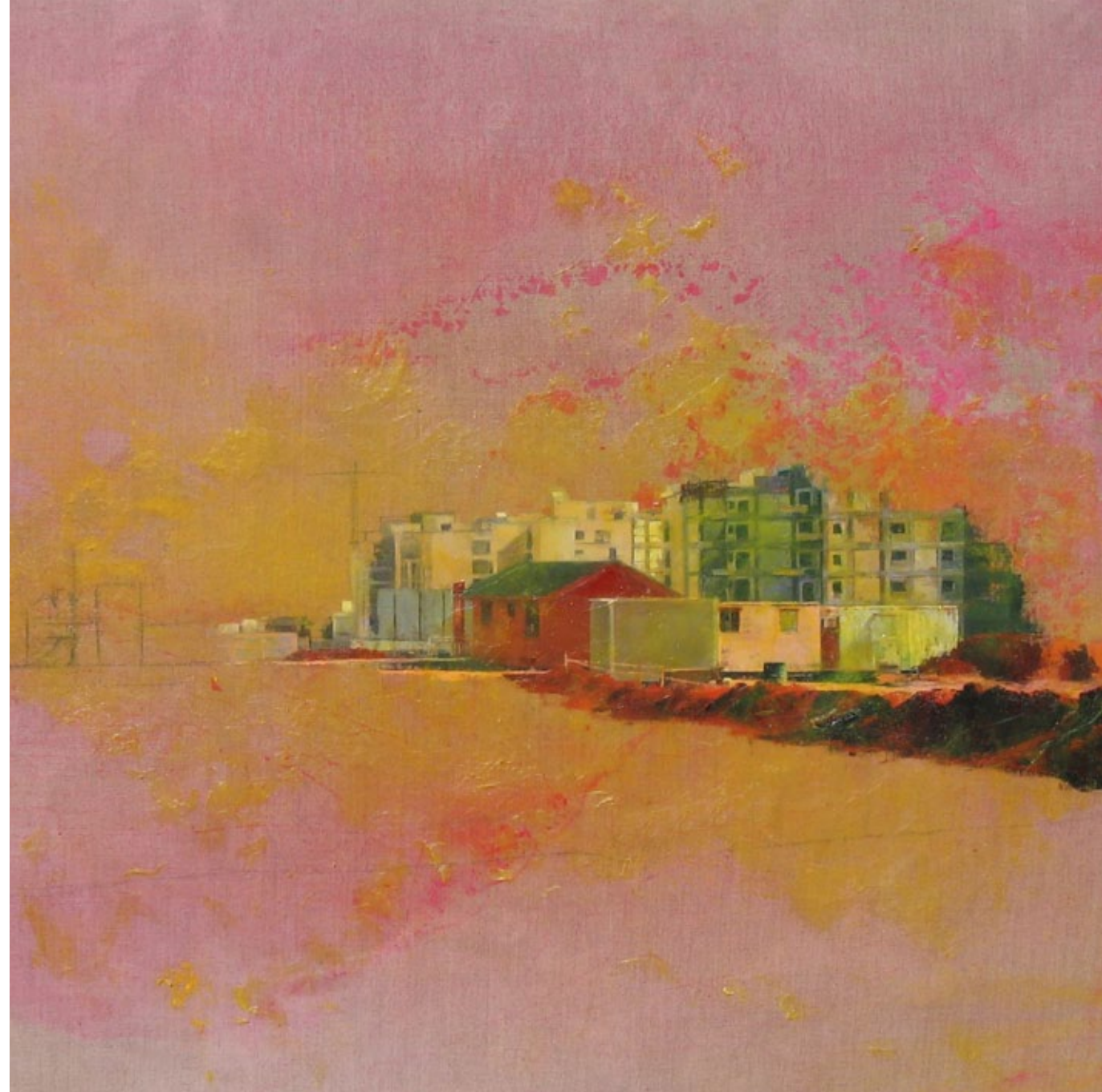


Galnoor's work exists within an expanding field of contemporary figurative painting that relates to traditional landscape painting. Galnoor brings home, to familiar settings, that could be anywhere, a sense of urgency. Givaat Haviva is a monumental painting, a series of landscape fragments that create a panorama. It is a metaphor for the artist who goes out to paint a view of whatever is there. Galnoor makes this landscape appear bleeding and exploding: a blinding flash of light, abstract shards that disrupt and interrupt the continuum of reality.



Galnoor holds an MFA from Haifa University. She won the University of Haifa Merit Prize in 2006.

Selected exhibitions: **2009** *Snakes and Ladders*, Rosenfeld Gallery, Tel Aviv **2007** *Mountain Language*, Haifa Museum of Art, Israel **2006** *Apropos les Demoiselles*, Petach Tikva Museum of Art, Israel **2005** *Dialogue with the Classic*, Herzlia Museum, Israel.



Uri Gershuni

Born 1970, lives and works in Tel Aviv, Israel



In his series titled 'John Wayne', Gershuni uses balloons, which are associated with children, and sculpts them into abstract floating forms. Gershuni continuously examines his place as a photographer within the traditional arts – painting and sculpting. Be it shoes, balloons or flower pots, these objects are used in creating contemporary scenes of still life in which lies a tension between serenity and explosiveness.



In 2000 Gershuni won the prize for Excellency from the Israeli Ministry of Culture. He is now completing his MFA studies at the Betzalel Academy, Jerusalem.

Selected exhibitions: **2008** *Eventually We'll Die*, Herzlia Museum, Israel **2008** *The Homes of Others*, Israel Museum, Jerusalem **2007**, *Boys Craft*, Haifa Museum, Israel **2005** *(After) the Death of the Subject*, Petach Tikva Museum, Israel **2005** *Reunion*, Braverman Gallery, Tel Aviv **2004** *Rose C'est la Vie*, Tel Aviv Museum, Israel.



Netta Lieber Sheffer

Born 1972, lives and works in Ayanot, Israel



In many of her paintings, Lieber Sheffer focuses on an event that occurred in the past, trying to take a passing moment - a memory - and make it tangible. The memories or stories are taken from family albums and are used as starting points for captivating scenes, merging truth and imagination. By painting these memories Lieber Sheffer is not only telling us a story, but is also possessing these memories to herself, giving past places and past moments a second life.



In 2008 Lieber Sheffer was awarded a scholarship for Excellency in her MFA studies in Haifa University.

Selected exhibitions: **2008** *Show, Room*, The Spaceship, Tel Aviv **2007** *The Houses at Home Live in Apartments*, Petach Tikva Museum of Art, Israel **2006** *Living Space*, Inga Gallery, Tel Aviv **2005** *Past Continue*, Office Gallery, Israel **2004** *Shelters*, Rosh Hanikra Gallery, Israel.



Yitzhak Livneh

Born 1952, lives and works in Tel Aviv



Livneh works on varying themes. His art oscillates – like the conflicted contemporary consciousness – between the high sublime and the low kitsch, between the authentic artistic image and its cheap imitations. His latest series of work extracts a certain moment which portrays the fragility of life. Livneh focuses on the tension that is felt where at any given moment an event can happen that will utterly change our lives.



Livneh was the head of the Art Department at Betzalel Academy, Jerusalem, and has been teaching there since 1983. He holds an MA from the Hunter College, NY and studied at the Berger Art Conservation Inc, NY.

Selected exhibitions: **2008**, *Astonishment*, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel **2007** *The Raft and the Meduza*, Krolikarona, Warsaw, Poland **2006** *Famme Fatal*, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel **2003** *Lamenti*, Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, Israel **2000** *Contemporary Israeli Art*, The Palace of the Pope, Sienna, Italy.

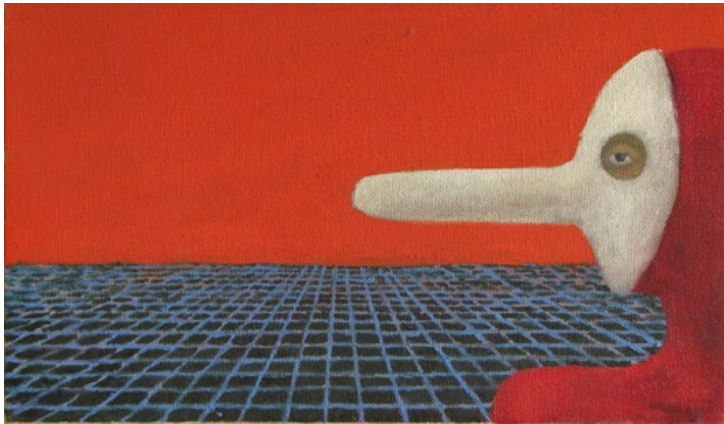


Gabriela Schutz

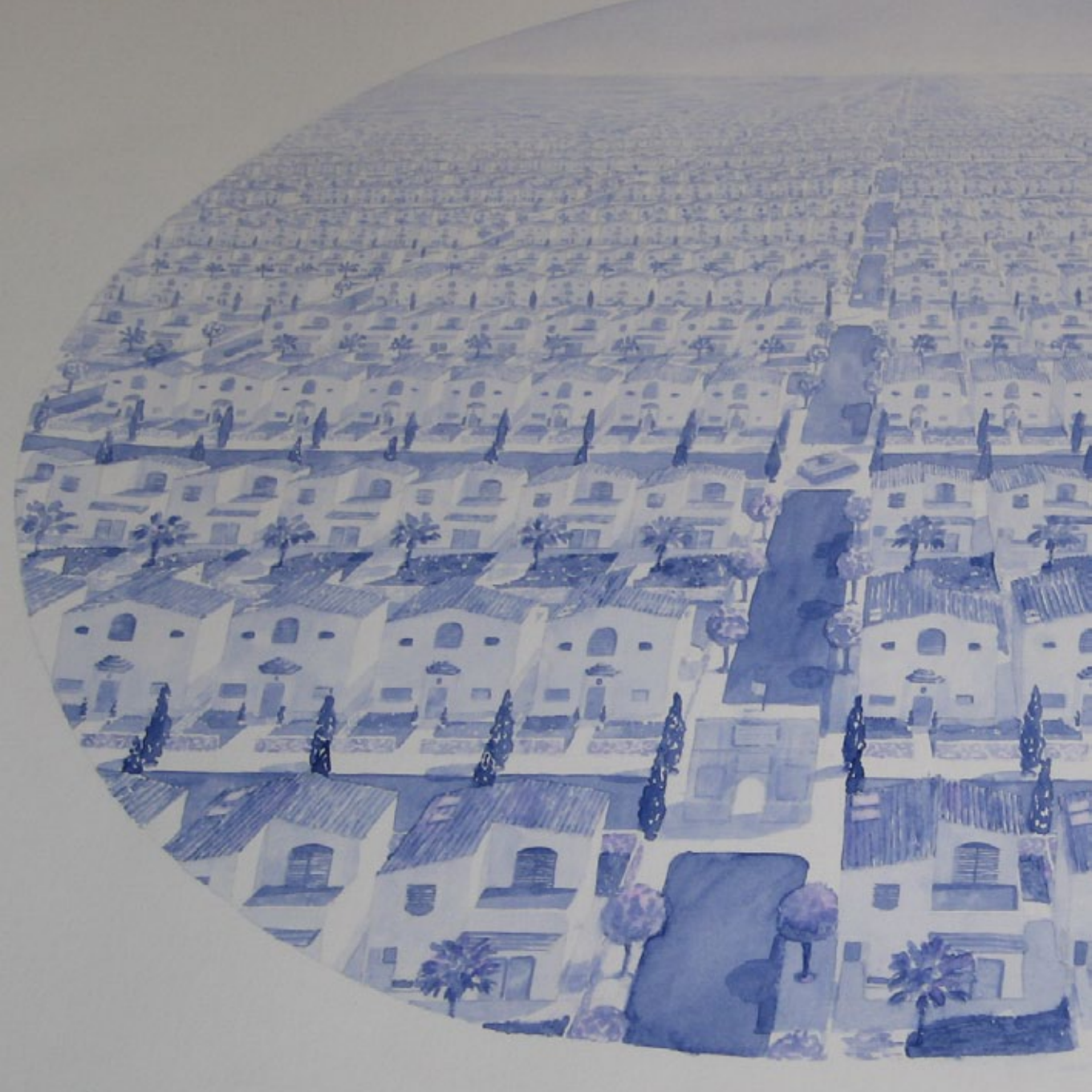
Born 1971, lives and works in London.



At first glance, it looks as if Schutz's scenes are placed in a wealthy American suburb. It's only on closer observation that one can notice that something is not quite right in these serene neighbourhoods. The houses, streets, neighbourhoods or gardens have multiplied out of control with occasional mutations. Among them are bizarre looking creatures, engaged in various activities.



Selected exhibitions: 2008 *Show, Room*, The Spaceship, Tel Aviv 2007 *One Way*, Galerie Fur Zaheinwerte, Berlin 2005 *Transpositions*, Petach Tikva Museum, Israel 2004 *Boys V Girls*, Hangrove Art Space, Bristol 2004 *Jerwood Drawing Prize*, Jerwood Space, London.



Lee Yanor

Born 1963, lives and works in Jaffa, Israel



In her video installations and photographs, Yanor captures movement. She seeks to expose the very core of motion, the moment when her objects cease to be an aspect of the whole and become an independent flash of light, exploding with energy. Yanor works with dancers, mainly with the Pina Bausch dance group. She uses a unique technique in which the image is printed on a Voile (Chiffon) fabric and mounted on a metal frame. This creates an effect of movement and depth.



Yanor graduated from Paris VIII University. In 2002 she won the prestigious Leon Constantiner Award for Photography from the Tel Aviv Museum.

Selected exhibitions: **2008** *Memory Field*, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan **2007** *Moods and Modes*, Tel Aviv Museum, Israel **2004** *Forget Me Not*, the Heder Gallery, Tel Aviv **1999** *Nanti-Dulou*, C.C.F Bundung, Indonesia **1996** *Variations on Rites of Springs*, Venice Biennale of Architecture, Italy **1994** *Images de Danse*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.



Thank You

We would like to thank all those who helped in the making of this exhibition:

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The Israeli Embassy
in Bern

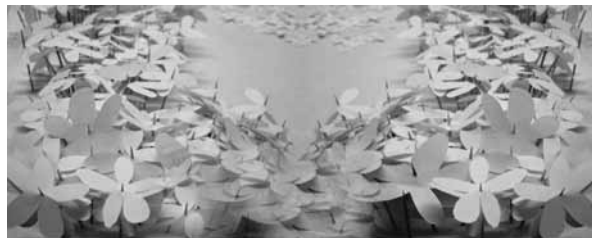
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Yifat Bezalet, Desolation 2009 (detail) paper installation

