

GOWEN CONTEMPORARY

GENEVA, Switzerland

Yifat Bezalel (Tel Aviv, 1975)

The Gate of Unknown

Gowen Contemporary is delighted to present the Israeli artist Yifat Bezalel (b. Tel Aviv, 1975), for her first art fair outside Israel, with a solo show entitled *The Gate of Unknown*, especially conceived for The Others. The project includes an installation, *Yerushalaim (Jerusalem)*, 2011, and several drawings on paper.

Children's book had a great influence in the work of Yifat Bezalel. The artist remembers being fascinated, as a child, by stories where heroines died, or fell into deep or magical sleep and, after a lengthy period of time, awoke or were resurrected. Growing older, she found herself drawn more and more, not so much into the lives of the heroines before or after their "sleep", but to the sleep or temporary death itself. That elusive period of time that you cannot grasp, similar to the moment of the passage from daylight to twilight, which the artist finds akin to Alice's falling into a hole leading to a parallel world.

Alice's fall, or her journey through the hole before "landing" in Wonderland is, according to the artist, the salient moment of Alice's experience. In Bezalel's works, obsessively populated by Alice, this moment is developed as a new place, independently from the literary sources, where Alice struggles and fights not to disappear.

"I have often asked myself what keeps attracting me to those places of death, limboes and 'other worlds' and my tentative answer would be that I grew up and still live in a place where death is always present" (Bezalel, 2011).

In *Yerushalaim (Jerusalem)*, 2011, through the theme of Alice searching for unknown lands, Y. Bezalel explores the question of the boundaries of space and time, of borders and the questions pertaining to the state of being enclosed. The artist realises her desire to break barriers, creating symbiotic relations of entry and exit, by disturbing the established order and making possible the paradox of being everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

The Gate of Unknown is a representation of the creative process and thinking of the artist. Her concern with real/unreal, physical and metaphysical space, fullness/emptiness, fragility and uncertainty are displayed in an inordinate space. The narrative of Bezalel's works, only at a first sight easily accessible, conceals a deep reflection touching political, religious and philosophical aspects, as well as formal and theoretical aspects of the artistic research.

Yifat Bezalel is presently on view in the group show *Alice in Wonderland*, Tate Liverpool, 4 November 2011 - 29 January 2012, travelling to the Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, 25 February - 3 June 2012 and Kunsthalle Hamburg, 20 June - 30 September 2012. Exhibition catalogue.

Yifat Bezalel was born in 1975 in Tel Aviv, Israel, and studied at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem. She currently lives and works in Tel-Aviv. Solo exhibitions include: Vida Museum, Borgholm, Svezia (upcoming 2012); 'You Are in Elysium and You're Already Dead', Artist's Studios, Tel-Aviv, curated by Vered Zafran Gani (2010); 'From this World to the World', commissioned work, Fresh Paint Art Fair, Tel-Aviv (2010); 'Ulysses-Alices', Inga Gallery, Tel-Aviv (2009); 'To Be Woven', Artist's House, Tel Aviv, curated by Orly Hoffman, (2008). Selected group exhibitions include: 'Alice in Wonderland', Tate Liverpool (upcoming 2011-12), travels to Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (upcoming 2012) and Kunsthalle Hamburg (upcoming 2012); the Israel Museum of Art, Jerusalem (2009); 'Explosion. Art Contemporain Israélien,' Geneva, curated by Keren Bar-Gil and Mirav Katri (2009); 'Two Sides: International Video Artists', Stockholm Culture House, Stockholm, curated by Sandra Weil (2008); Jerusalemartist House, 'Traces III. The Third Biennial for Drawing in Israel', curated by Dalia Manor (2007); Sotheby's London, curated by Freda Uziel (2007); CCA, Tel-Aviv, 'Videozone: 3rd International Video Biennial', curated by Sergio Adelstein (2006); 'Video Art Without Video,' Tal Ester Gallery, Tel-Aviv, curated by Eitan Baganim. The Museum of Art in Tel-Aviv and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London include work by Bezalel. The artist was the winner of the 'Special Projects in the Art Fund' prize in 2010, Rabinovich Foundation and the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality.

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