

November 3rd, 2017

Bad Intentions

Group Exhibition

17.11.17 – 23.12.17

Eitan Ben Moshe | Wiebke Rost | Georgia Kuhn | Tamy Ben-Tor & Miki Carmi
Merav Kamel & Halil Balabin | Mika Rottenberg | Osama Zatar
Anat Ben David | Neta Dror | Eli Petel | Keren Cytter

Curated by Avi Pitchon and Alona Harpaz



Art is not mimetic. Art is not 'about' stuff. Art has no role. Art does not 'ask questions'. People might do those things, sometimes even people who are artists. But not their art, even if they think it does, even if that was their intention.

Were one to be dramatic, they would decree art the pre-Tower-of-Babel mother tongue (thus terming it 'autonomous' misses its essence as all-encompassing source), and politics not even one letter within it. They would point out an iceberg that, in contemporary discourse, had thus been forced to balance on its tip. A dangerous balance indeed. But for now, let's pretend that all we're saying is that art

and politics are simply two different languages, a distinction too often forgotten in the aforementioned discourse.

Ironically, or tragically, two prime movers in art – activists and dealers/collectors – share an identical view of art, often overlooked as the two powers are often convinced they're in opposition: yet both see art as commodity/function. Activists see it, at best, as pedagogic aid, propagandist decoration; dealers and collectors as a thing bought and sold. The latter have an advantage over the former, as it is more likely for dealers/collectors to love and understand art, while it is more likely for activists to hate art, see it as superfluous, decadent manifestation of privilege. The result is that the least discussed issue in artistic discourse is what it is that art does, and how does it speak.

"Bad Intentions" seeks to modestly contribute a tiny voice to hopefully echo into a massive abyss. The title is a reference to the good intentions of 'artivism', and where they lead to: the disappearance of both art and activism. The exhibition does so by staging an absurd tear between art and artist, in the hope that a gaze into the tear might enable a distinction between art and politics. The artist selected for this group exhibition are Jewish-Israeli, Palestinian-Israeli, Jewish, Palestinian and German. However, no artwork in this exhibition forms an explicit mirroring of any social or political tensions formed within the above ethnic/national triangle. The artwork does not 'speak for itself'; it simply speaks by itself. "Bad Intentions" intentionally ignores the background and circumstance of the artist, in order to destabilise anything that is expected of such a grouping of artists, because all of those expectations are not only tired cliches, they also silence the speech of art. "Bad Intentions" is thus an invitation for the viewer to empower themselves by placing the weight and responsibility of attention on them; by not providing crutches of meaning.

In this tiny space, art speaks, and everything else is reduced to background noise and chatter, or even completely silenced, perhaps in a somewhat vengeful manner. The viewer is therefore invited to listen to what, in a world turned upside-down, has been rendered absent. The absence of the originating, elegant thunder.

Text by Avi Pitchon

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Friday 17.11.17 at 19:00 – Exhibition Opening

Image: Neta Dror, *Kayla*, 2016



CIRCLE1 Gallery
Mittenwalder Straße 47
10961 Berlin

This exhibition is supported by the Szloma Albam Stiftung
www.szloma-albam-stiftung.de

