



Nir Hod, Mother, Installation, 10 paintings, oil on canvas: 9 paintings 151.8 cm. x 108.6 cm.;
One painting of 280 x 200cm., Kasmin Gallery, NYC.

Lecture

The Past, the Present and the Future: Third-Generation Holocaust Representations

Anat Gilboa (Tel Aviv)

Wednesday, January 11, 2023 | 13.30 Uhr
SR 39.01 | Attemsgasse 8, 8010 Graz

The Past, the Present and the Future: Third-Generation Holocaust Representations

The talk examines the legacy of the Holocaust as seen in Israeli art. There has been a growing tendency, in which the horrors of the past are revisited by the third generation of Holocaust survivors. Rather than using history as a means to perpetuate pain, young Israeli artists illustrate the un-imageable, trying to better understand it. An example is a series of ten paintings, labelled *Mother* by Nir Hod, an Israeli-born Jewish artist, based in New York City. The series is derived from the 1943 photograph *Boy from Warsaw Ghetto*. In the historical photo a group of Jewish inmates has been caught by Nazi soldiers. At the center of the group stands a little boy, whose raised arms and frightened expression are in stark contrast to the armed men with their pointed guns. The original snapshot was almost certainly taken by Franz Konrad, an Austrian-born Nazi officer, confirming the extermination of the Warsaw Ghetto. By isolating the woman from the original group, the Israeli artist, shifted the attention to, by then, an overlooked side-figure. Adding various colors and a bright soft aura to, otherwise a small, longstanding monochrome snapshot, Hod transformed a non-distinct female captive into a modern woman, walking in determination towards a target, unknown to the viewer. The artist chose to name his series 'Mother,' combining aspects of modernity such as individuality and gender equality with a traditional Jewish value of procreation and motherhood. There has been a growing tendency in Israeli art to reexamine the legacy of the Holocaust to better understand Jewish values, in hope that universality, transnationality and equality will coexist with long-established Jewish ethics as a new norm.

Anat Gilboa is an Israel Institute International course lecturer. She is an art historian specializing in early- modern European art, Jewish and Israeli visual culture, and film. Her research, academic courses, and talks reflect a focus on a cross-disciplinary analysis of visual culture, history, gender politics, religion, and literature. Dr. Gilboa has published an exhibition catalogue entitled *My Heart is in the East, and I am in the Farthest West* (University of Nebraska, 2014), a monograph entitled *Images of the Feminine in Rembrandt's Work* (Eburon Academic Publishers, distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 2003), as well as book chapters and articles in American and European journals. Currently she is finalizing a manuscript on the perception of the Holocaust in contemporary Israeli art.