Art on Campus

Curator: Yivsam Azgad
Art, much like the art of science, sprouts from an inner seed, within the awareness of the artist or scientist. Each must then undergo a rigorous process of refinement, isolation and experimentation. Each of these worlds is based on a central tenet of precision and consistency. Thus, these two spheres, which, on first glance appear to be so distant from one another, spring from the same aspiration – to better understand the world.

At the Weizmann Institute of Science, art is seen to be a complementary activity, so that scientists and artists can, together, observe the world from a higher vantage point in a more critical and precise way. In other words, the synergy that occurs when science and art are brought together – when the two world views meet – can lead to more significant achievements in the enduring quest to understand the world and our place in it.
Shony Rivnay | Travel Diary

As the act of documenting and sharing personal experiences on social networks with anyone who may be interested becomes ever more prevalent, it might be difficult to recall how, in the not too distant past, we used to send our loved ones colorful postcards from the places we visited. And going back even further, ancient painters shared their experiences with their descendants through cave paintings. The difference between these modes of documentation, in particular in the pace and continuity of communication, as well as the effort required on the part of those seeking to share their experiences, is a case in point of Marshall McLuhan’s assertion that “the medium is the message.”

Shony Rivnay tries to report and share his travel notes with us. But his is an inner journey, amid thoughts and feelings. We do not know where and when this journey took place. We do not receive continuous reporting, but flashes of vague instances along the journey or series of events. It could be said that Rivnay is not making an effort to convey a detailed message. In fact, he is trying to reduce, summarize or distill his reporting to the bare minimum that would still convey the information. It is an aspiration reminiscent of the tendency of any physical system to reach the lowest energy level at which it can exist. A kind of “serenity” that one could often only hope for.

Thus, on the one hand, Rivnay wishes to share his feelings and thoughts with us: He sends us postcards from the stops he chooses along the journey. On the other hand, the minimalism he embraces does not allow for any explanations. What remains – that is, what actually finds its way into our inbox – is a riddle of sorts which, while doubtfully solvable, may be allowed to motivate viewers to embark on internal explorations of their own, with hidden paths and unknown conclusions.
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Guy Aon | Out of Context

A photo installation recently added to the “Eye Contact” exhibit in the Physics Faculty building, The photographer, Guy Aon, has an MA from the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design. In these photos, he demonstrates how it is possible to create images that have no visible means of support. Photos are printed in a laser printer on water-soluble paper, so that the surface of the water becomes the material on which the image remains, with no solid material underlying that image.

In work that is still in the development stage, Aon is using an ultraviolet printer to print images on films of polymer floating on water. In this technique, 99% of the polymer is comprised of visual information (pixels, color), and only one percent is supporting material. The resulting films can be laid onto a human body, among other things (or onto face masks). In this way, the photographed images of the body are “taken out of context,” and they suggest a dialogue on the sometimes-shaky relationship between an object and its image.

The technical and chemical processes were developed with assistance from the lab group of Prof. Shlomo Magdassi of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
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This self-portrait was first shown in an exhibit entitled “Men Gazing at Water,” in the Tel Aviv Artists’ Studios. Based on various earlier sources, the images in the exhibit testify to a material world that is disappearing, taking with it significant fragments of time. The men are photographed with their backs or sides to the camera, their unseen gaze posing a mystery to the viewer that is asking to be solved. The sources of the water in these images hint at pilgrimage sites that may occasion discovery or revelation.

This stained glass work is a self-portrait of the artist, but Zilberman has based it on a drawing by Ephraim Moses Lilien, often called the “first Zionist artist.” Lilien, an illustrator and painter, had created iconic images of Jewish life, done in the Art Nouveau style, for a book of poems, “Songs from the Ghetto,” by his friend Morris Rosenfeld.

The figure of the wandering Jew in Lilien’s work is transformed here into a modern image: Shay Zilberman, turned to the side to gaze over the ocean in the distance. It is the change from the intent of the original that causes us to question our identity, place and sense of belonging, connecting the figure of the wandering Jew to the reality of an Israeli in the second decade of the 21st century.

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Shay Zilberman, Untitled  
(Elul Moon, after Lilien), 2018  
stained glass, 90x165 cm
꽃ו הגדולה שבע 같습니다 על הداعים עם האמנית, וה手上 רשיה של המים שבהם היא גרמה את הפריה. הפריה עצמה היא התהליך של "אוטיום", והברורים של זה. המים צורת חורש אלי, בהرسום לרדת וה顶层 של המים יפושה התבוננות שלgłębдесят אלוהים, והם "מותיר" את הפריה, והם "מותיר" את הפריה של הפיסיקלית ההבשלה שלשלא שאלות אלה בהרהוריה? לקחו אתتاح והמשיכו ואתלכר להتسمות של עNullOrEmpty די ובריאלי אורי פרופ' שביצעו במ קר מכבר לא עלה רואשל של זו לעמדה צפוי גילויהם למדע. והאמנויות. המדע את שיקדמו דשים ברעיונות להגות ושק פנאי די ובריאלי. המים צורת חורש אלי, בהרסום לרדת וה顶层 של המים יפושה התבוננות שלgłębдесят אלוהים, והם "מותיר" את הפריה, והם "מותיר" את הפריה של הפיסיקלית ההבשלה שלשלא שאלות אלה בהרהוריה? לקחו אתتاح והמשיכו ואתלכר להتسمות של עNullOrEmpty די ובריאלי אורי פרופ' שביצעו במ קר מכבר לא עלה רואשל של זו לעמדה צפוי גילויהם למדע. והאמנויות. המדע את שיקדמו דשים ברעיונות להגות ושק פנאי די ובריאלי. המים צורת חורש אלי, בהרסום לרדת וה顶层 של המים יפושה התבוננות שלgłębдесят אלוהים, והם "מותיר" את הפריה, והם "موتיר" את הפריה של הפיסיקלית ההבשלה שלשלא שאלות אלה בהרהוריה? לקחו אתتاح והמשיכו ואתלכר להتسمות של ע לגרי בריאלי. המים צורת חורש אלי, בהרסום לרדת וה顶层 של המים יפושה התבוננות שלapiKeyי הידע לתוך✔️ ובריאלי. המים צורת חורש אלי, בהרסום לרדת וה顶层 של המים יפושה התבוננות שלapiKeyי הידע לתוך✔️.
Eli Horesh | The Shape of Water

“Like most of my generation, I was brought up on the saying: ‘Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do.’ But I think that there is far too much work done in the world,” wrote the philosopher and mathematician, Bertrand Russel in his classic essay “In Praise of Idleness.” In this essay, published in 1935, Russell claimed, among other things, that it is idleness – rather than work – which produces human progress. Long work hours do not allow for the leisure in which one finds the impetus for formulating the new ideas that can advance science and art. This position is hardly mainstream, but it recently gained unexpected support from scientific enquiry: The group of Prof. Uri Alon of the Weizmann Institute of Science’s Molecular Cell Biology Department found that even bacteria tend to function at less than full capacity, using their idleness as a way to conserve their strength for the eventuality of a change in their conditions.

All of which meanders toward the work of Eli Horesh, whose creative process is partially based on what she calls “otium,” a Latin word used to describe idle or leisure time, in which a person withdraws from actively creating. Horesh, like Russell, like Alon’s bacteria, like a few introspective types hiding in our midst, believes that otium is a necessary part of the process of creation.

The images displayed in this exhibit were created when the artist was deep in thought – otium. The beginning of this process was a kind of fertilization: The artist injected a drop of ink or paint into a drop of water. This “fertilization” took place in a fraction of a second. At this point, the artist left the fertilized water drop on its own, and went off for several hours to enjoy a state of introspective otium. In the meantime, the color dispersed in the water, and the water, in turn, slowly dried up, leaving a “signature” on the paper. The artist could now observe the fixed images on the paper and exert her freedom of choice and aesthetics to choose the rarest or most interesting signatures, turning them into the actual works of art by scanning them and printing them enlarged, in high resolution.
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ארט בקמפוס
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