

An Isolated Footing

**Bar Altaras, Avichai Avraham, Nati Hoki & Tom Ariel,
Safa Kadah, Noa Orlicky, Mor Riemer, Ronen Zein**

Curator: **Rula Khoury**

Associate Curator: **Razan Shami**

The exhibition **An Isolated Footing** presents a time-lapse of reality—sequences of life that capture slow-moving changes unfolding over time. It features artworks that question the existence of solid foundations, offering ways of redefining the meaning of putting down roots through the relationship between body and home, foundations and borders.

What becomes of a building whose foundations are shaken? What happens when there is no "us" left to carry the load? What happens when our fields grow empty of fresh plants? And what if our foundations are already shallow? The works on display address intergenerational relationships, drawing our attention to questions such as: Do we stand alone or are we supported? Are we protected? Are we searching for redemption?

Somewhere on the edge of an abyss, or maybe at a starting point, where things are on the verge of being revealed, we find living monuments that were abandoned, pushed aside, and forgotten. They had lost their function long ago. Nature and rust have grown into them, becoming an integral part of their form, and turning them into abandoned nature. Their image and matter might signify something beyond language, place, and time, but they insist on remaining a part of human existence. At the core of this exhibition is the time that had transformed these monuments: the time of history, which lies within the world's surface and substance.

The works in this exhibition remain isolated like broken monuments, looking for logic in all of this. The energy of action moves in circles—through the hands to the mind, through the mind to the body, from body to house, then outside, and back again. Highlighting the experience of carrying an emotional, historical, or concrete burden, the exhibition suggests this load can be detached even if it hasn't been lifted. We can observe it just as it is, naked and rooted in isolation.

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► **Avichai Avraham**

Born 1990 in Ariel, lives and works in Haifa.
Graduated from Hamidrasha–Beit Berl
College in 2020.

Termination, oil on canvas, 2020, 90X150 cm

I insert myself into the action of painting, claiming ownership over stains, signs, and symbols that are moving around, taking different shapes, and asking to be deciphered on their own: at the center of a centerline, on an edge of an abyss, or at a starting point of things that are about to be revealed.

At the heart of the painting is a sense of horror associated with the beginning and the end. The idea of time, of a cycle of life, is inherent to reality as it manifests in human beings. Lying on the shore of the land, fractures of memories are trying to reassemble into a human being. The human being, far from any godly spirit, rises from the dust and ashes, but he might still lack the means to cope with most of human life's anxieties and embarrassments. Hanging on to hope is simultaneous with the experience of pain and suffering, and they all go hand in hand with longing, faith, and desolation.

Flickering, oil on canvas, 2020, 120X200 cm

I close my eyes and open them, and close.
The gaze flickers, the eyes dart around, like a dog in
the backyard.

Lying on the beach, on the shores of memory, once
again.

Covered by a blanket of longing.

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► **Bar Altaras**

Born 1989 in Kibbutz Amir, lives and works in
Jerusalem and Tel Aviv-Jaffa.
Graduated from Musrara School of Art in 2020.

Bar Altaras & Alex Ept, **Carrying the Weight**, photography series, 2018, 40X40 cm and 40X60 cm
The Voice of Letting Through, video-performance, 2021, 11:31 min, in collaboration with Ysca Shkolnik, performed by Bar Altaras and Ella Altaras, filmed by Aviv Nahshon and Daniel Abergel

In my work, I focus on bodily encounters, aspiring to weave together body and object and bind one medium to another. **Carrying the Weight** is a series of works I produced in collaboration with photographer Alex Apt, featuring a body carrying a rock. It is an attempt to isolate the load we all carry—the burden of history, gender, and emotion—without having to dispose of it. Instead, I suggest we observe it, embrace it, and place it back on our bodies. Carrying the heavy rock, I reconnect to my childhood and my roots—to the field next to my mother's house; the furrows tell a story about sowing and future growth, my naked body stepping on the soil as if it were a tree that grew on this land and fed from the same roots.

The Voice of Letting Through is a video-performance I produced together with artist Ysca Shkolnik. It focuses on two "speaker women," half-women half-sound systems, moving around in a space covered by microphones connected to the speakers through electric currents and feedback frequencies. Every movement is audible, and every sound is visible. The heavy speaker becomes interrelated with the body, transforming into one of its organs. The dance influences and motivates the music, and vice versa. You can hardly tell them apart.

In traditional Balinese trance rituals, the participants dance while poking a long dagger into their chests. In this work, the speaker serves as the dagger, becoming one with the body as it falls into a subconscious, transformative state. While exciting a devotion to the process, the dangerous object also helps to maintain a grasp on reality.

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► **Noa Orlicky**

Born 1990 in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, lives and works in Ein Hod.

Graduated from Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in 2017.

In the Space between Matter and Spirit, Existence is Crafted, installation—paintings, drawings, and objects, 2021

For this exhibition, I created a site-specific installation extending over a narrow and long wall. It strives

upwards and glides into the gallery space, inviting the viewer to take part in analyzing the findings of my visual and material research. This work is a network or a tapestry of ideas and images manifested in different techniques: oil on canvas, organic fabric and yarns, clay, found organic material (ready-made), ink drawings, pencil and acrylic on paper, as well as piles of collages I made of natural images and patterns I found in old books. For me, this variety expresses the diversity of possibilities and aspects inherent in creation.

During this work's production and installation, I contemplated the concepts of "foundation", "isolation" and "holiness". Foundations signify is all that is essential, and rooted—that which connects us to the ground and allows us to observe the chaos, complexity, and uncertainty surrounding us. It is an anchor that brings together the worlds of ideas and matter. The second term, "isolation," indicates a detachment from external influences, intuitive learning, and authentic construction that emerges from within the self, and through the self—also within nature and creation.

"Holiness," however, lies in the way we relate to specific objects, places or events, and it varies according to our belief systems. The creative act, for example, extracts materials, images and ideas from their mundane context and places them in new contexts and structures.

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► **Nati Hoki & Tom Ariel**

Nati Hoki (b. 1993 in Haifa) and Tom Ariel (b. 1991 in Givat Oz), live and work in Tel Aviv-Jaffa.

Graduated from the Department of Multidisciplinary Art at Shenkar College in 2020.

"Hercules" Plane, photograph taken with a 4x5 film camera, 2020, 200X250 cm

Our work is motivated by a search for things that have been pushed aside. We shoot with large format film cameras—devices that have become obsolete and forgotten, much like the objects they capture. We have awe for obsolescence: it involves technical complexity and lengthens the process of taking a photograph, slowing down our work, but we find added value in it: having to spend a long time at the site brings us closer to the object, allowing us to form a new relationship with it and to find new ways of observing it. Time is the most important value in our work—the exposure duration, the time it takes to create the photograph, and the passage of time that decomposes the objects

and alters their form and purpose.

The work on display is part of a series of photographs featuring machines of different kinds-transportation devices we found abandoned and discarded. They have ceased to function long ago, and the signs of rust and growth of natural elements into them have become an integral part of their form. We shot the machines late at night, illuminating them in complete darkness using continuous physical motion throughout the exposure duration (between 15 and 40 minutes per frame). In other words, we were present inside the frame as it was being created. These actions create an image that separates the machines from the time and place in which they were found, transforming them into monuments full of life.

► **Ronen Zein**

Born 1990 in Shefa-'Amr, where he lives and works. Graduated from the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in 2018.

Drowning video diptych, 14 min; photograph, 2020-2021, 50X70 cm

The work **Drowning** was born out of a critical rethinking of my society of origin, as well as of the government and the political system, which have recently disappointed and angered every Druze family that was engaged in the long partnership between the two peoples. My father was devoted to the Israeli military system all his life, but in recent years he has been going through an internal emotional change, voicing feelings such as disappointment and anger. These are not only his personal feelings. They reflect the current state of mind of the Druze society at large.

The video diptych depicts a giving gesture that ends up leading to death, disappointment, drowning. One side of it features the holy springs at the tomb of Nabi Shu'ayb, a Druze sacred site near the village Hittin, west of the Sea of Galilee. The incessant flow of holy water in the springs serves here as a symbol of Druze society's perpetual giving. The other side of the diptych features a "Memorial Day Helmet," which my father kept in storage for years. The death of his uncle in service in 1993, he organized and supervised the memorial ceremonies for fallen Druze IDF soldiers in Shefa-'Amr for many years. In the video, the helmet, with a memorial candle above it, is placed in a glass vessel, which is gradually covered by water.

The work also includes an old photo from my father's

family album, in which he stands, handsome and proud, in army uniform, wearing a combat helmet. I applied a layer of light-sensitive material on the photograph and reprinted it in an early printing process in which the image is developed using direct sunlight exposure and water. The print has never been exposed to sunlight before I placed it in this room, where it is slowly exposed to artificial light, becoming darker and darker.

► **Safa Kadah**

B. 1982 in the village of Sandala in Marj-Ibn Amer, lives and works in the village of Manda.

Graduated from the MFA program of the Department of Creative Arts at the University of Haifa in 2021.

Molokheya, video, 2021, 5 min

The starting point for this work was a photograph from the early 1960s, in which a young man is standing on the roof of an ancient house in Sandala, looking towards the east side of the village. It is one of countless photographs belonging to my father, which tell the story of my immediate and extended family and, subsequently, the story of all the village residents. Today, I am standing in front of completely different colors and values—in a different now, facing a different landscape. As I imagine my presence inside these photographs, the present draws closer to the past. In between these two temporalities, a new memory of life is born. Searching in the past had changed the present self, while the photographs indicate a recollection and a continuity of the past in the present. Working with photographs is similar to working the land—observing the archive develop into stories and into a complete artwork is like attending to a plant from seed to fruit.

The video **Molokheya** is accompanied by an installation—one follows the other. The floor installation features the video work's products: rows of black spheres, which were made using a sewing machine I placed inside the family greenhouse. In the video, my father takes the measurements of my body with the same tools he uses to measure a plot of land. I used the same measurements to determine the size of the black spheres in the installation.

► **Mor Riemer**

Born 1984 in Kibbutz Oranim, lives and works in Haifa.

graduated from the Art Institute of Oranim College in 2020

Father Earth, video, 2020, 7:24 min,
photography: Yuval Bar On

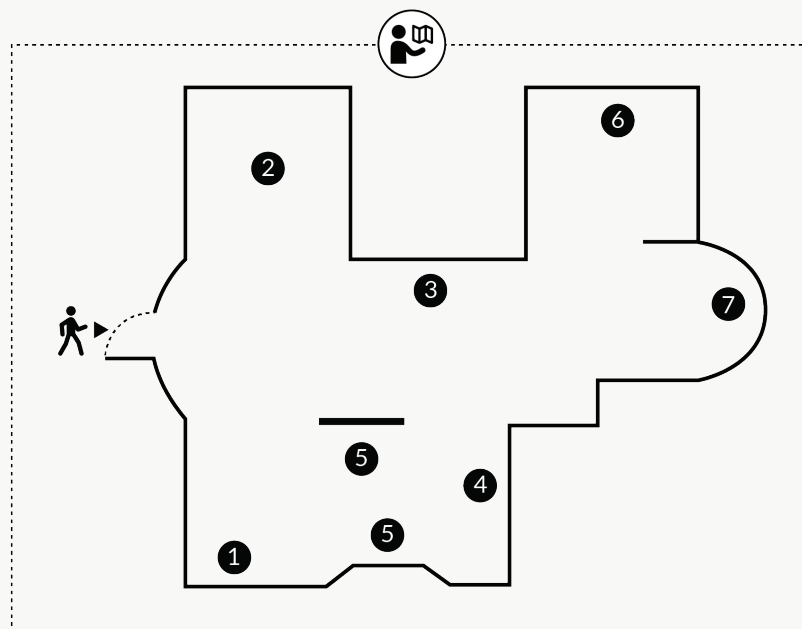
Foundations, series of etchings/engravings of
Aquatint, 2020, 60X50 cm each

Engraving is a technique that renders physical action inseparable from the final artistic product. Its practice involves both manual and emotional work and an interplay between being in and out of control. The processed image is sometimes lost in the process. In the works displayed here, the image of the house and that of the skeleton (the body's supportive structure) alter their form and meaning. They are supposed to stabilize and support (literally and metaphorically) but instead they manifest a certain duality between the possibility of a solid foundation and a state of

destruction and extinction.

While the aquatint features the skeleton as an open void in the landscape, the video **Father Earth** raises questions about the myth of the pioneer and the desire to lay building foundations into the soil of the land.

In this work, my father's injured body becomes a structure and a place. I filmed it in the Western Negev desert, my childhood landscape, which is characterized by vast plains and open sky. I find different ways of recreating this landscape in my work, turning it into a stage. **Father Earth** addresses intergenerational relationships, while questioning the perception of manual labor as a redemptive practice. Through the figure of my father, a person with a physical disability, I explore vulnerability and endurance, as well as my relationship with the Kibbutz as a place or home, and with the body as a tool.



- 1.Avichai Avraham ►2.Bar Altaras ►3.Noa Orlick ►4.Nati Hoki & Tom Ariel
►5.Ronen Zein ►6.Safa Kadah ►7.Mor Riemer



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מרכז אדמונד דה רוטשילד
Edmond de Rothschild Center
مركز ادموند دي روتشيلد

The Edmond de Rothschild Center works to promote and nurture artists and designers who are graduates of higher art and design studies in Israel during their initial years of activity.

The Center's activity is focuses on providing the artists with tools and on developing their professional skills in the early stages of their careers