

INTRODUKTION

ACT OF CHANGE | פעולה של שינוי | EIN AKT DER VERÄNDERUNG

Dear artists,
Dear ladies and gentlemen,
Dear guests and readers!

Nothing surprises us as much as sudden change. Some love it and need it, others find it abominable. People suspect and know that the only reliable constant in life is change. If we want to compare existence with a river, we like to resort *Heraclitus'* theorem that says: "Whoever steps into the same river will be met by other and other waters flow to him" (Wikipedia). *Panta rhei* - everything flows on a moving surface. This symbol is truly not just a Nordic concept from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Existing in change is definitely worth a try. Throughout our lives, we will have to assert ourselves in the spaces between emergence and decay, and survive. Roughly outlined, the complex history of mankind could be either as a sequence of upheavals, catastrophes and crises, or, in contrast, as permanent innovation and unstoppable progress.

It is with great pleasure and with all my heart I thank you for inviting me to participate in an interdisciplinary exhibition with artists from Israel and Germany to present positions of contemporary art together with our own works here in MACHON HAMAYIM, the Weisman Municipal Gallery in Givatayim. I would like to express my thanks and speak to you on behalf of the seven artists from Germany, in the name of a probably spontaneous collaboration of established creators who are active in multimedia and internationally beyond the Bonn/Cologne region.

My special thanks go to *Michal Zakay* and *Doron Polak*, who did an excellent job of initiating and coordinating everything. Thank you Michal and Doron! On the genesis of our Israeli-German encounter with the presentation of works by twenty-three artists I would like to express a few unmediated thoughts. The selection of artists and works came about after several personal discussions in the record time of just three days. As soon as the works were submitted, it was clear to me that all the artists not only in solidarity but also emotionally connected to the living situation in Israel. The western reputable press release has contributed to this with plenty of facts. The government declaration on October 15, 2023, by Chancellor Olaf Scholz was also decisive strongly condemned Hamas' attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023, and assured that Germany stands on Israel's side. That was another reason for me the assumption that it is not so much wordy metaphors but events and works of art are time-memories. Works of art undoubtedly have the power to express one's own point of view change, as well as imply a change of perspective.

The reality of the imagery in creative works differs only slightly from the often ambiguous and complex reality. The partial object is in reality lively. The real person is not just a doll controlled by others or the driving force of excess life. I can guarantee you that today and I believe that you too, dear ladies and men, see it for yourself in the pictures, photographs and woodcut prints on and read it in a wide range of topics such as people, family status, nature, dance and means of communication. Admittedly, the fragile thing in it there always remains the condensation, the

poetry of everyday life, which needs protection and courageous people, who, when questioned about truth, the meaning of life and aesthetics, immediately find themselves confident and prove credible.

The exhibition project ACT OF CHANGE פעולה של שינוי is the most appropriate formula for the times and a response to current events. This can happen in normal, everyday life. This may be the case today due to mobile phones, apps, AI and new digital technologies. Forms of work and learning constantly influence our lives and prompt us to take quick action. To force us to be "up to date". "It's about questions that are rooted in historical conditions as well as those that are unchangeable". (*George Steiner, Lessons of the Masters*) In German the title is EIN AKT DER VERÄNDERUNG. Alone this exhibition title suggests something wondrously hopeful, something that freed us from our fundamental fears, from a heavy burden and strangeness, whereupon we concretely work together and can communicate openly about it today. So there is a lot to be said for to connect both levels of interpretation that Steiner recognized and to use them as a large necessity to understand partly paradoxical narrative. As an optimization of the previous I would like to add a symbolic content to the situation by giving it a living one plant a friendship tree in the ground. An act that allows the new self-planted greenery to grow and significantly changes the view of the urban infrastructure in favor of livable and lovable landscape. And there is no alternative compared to one progress-optimistic perspective, because only in symbols, in cult objects and signs, our memories and traditions with their cultural testimonies are continually unfolding and be pushed further, into the depths of real presence and collective memory.

Thus, each of us has taken upon ourselves the responsibility to act and in doing so it is our personal role and competence assumed. Creating art is a service of friendship. We have created subjects of admiration, devotion and consolation. Critical questions should not be missing especially not where creative people, no matter what culture they belong to, have something to say about their *Vita activa* (*Hannah Arendt*) who is dedicated to the manifestations of human existence. An expanded one Symbol of change, which in the long term is of great importance for the mutual encounter between artists. What is important is already being planned and will be part of an exhibition and artist exchange take place in Bonn. I would like to extend a warm invitation to the Israeli artists.

We humans leave traces of all kinds. Our traces, I am sure of that offer guidance to many other people. In the viewer's perception these traces remain accessible to artists and their works; they are concise, indelible, unique and clearly visible, like the DNA of the body's cells. So I have understood your here in Israel developed initiative. I heard her voice like a call from a distance. And I have interpreted this reputation as the only chance I have to visit your wonderful, promised land and to encounter this tree of friendship myself, indeed, to give it water from my own hand.

Thank you for your attention!

Stefan Zajonz / Curator

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