

Yonatan Ullman - Legacy - extended text



Yonatan Ullman, Legacy (detail), 2011, Industry city, New York

Yonatan Ullman's installation **LEGACY** raises questions about identity, placement, sacrifice and lineage

In it, the ripped fragments of the artist's studio walls provide a fertile breeding ground to introduce Ullman's treatments of iconic works from art history -



Yonatan Ullman, Rudgum (detail from Legacy), 2011, mixed media, height: 220 cm

At the center of this installation a treated replica of Michelangelo's 'David' bust erect a-top an upside down Corinthian column.

Its incorrupt white surface peels away to reveal tender luscious red flesh underneath.



Yonatan Ullman, Mother? 2011, view of the Statue of Liberty through a telescope

In 2011 this installation was first exhibited in New York.

There it included a telescope, which introduced a metaphoric horizontal column to the installation.

Through it the image of the Statue of Liberty (seen through the gallery's window) was 'absorbed' into the installation.

Thus Lady Liberty was crossbred with the mythological biblical figure - David.



Yonatan Ullman, Legacy (installation view), 2015, ArtSpace TLV, Tel Aviv, Israel (photo: Barak Brinker)

In 2015 the installation was re-exhibited in Israel.

Here, Lady Liberty was replaced by a local icon -

Moshe Gershuni's text work from 1979 "Who Is Zionist and who is not".

Ullman re-created the stencils originally used by Gershuni,

but mis-quoted the sentence -

rather than quote the entire sentence,

Ullman 'be-headed' the first half of the sentence

and left only an open question: "Who Is not?".



Yonatan Ullman, Mother, Who Am I, Please, Leave, 2015, oil stick on paper, 40x60cm (each)

Several drawings accompanied the installation:

In the first Ullman used Gersuni's letter stencils to create new words:

"Mother"

"Who Am I"

"Please"

The last word can read as: "Offspring", "Get out, get out" or a mumble somewhat resembling the word: "DADA".



Yonatan Ullman, Moses and I, 2015, oil stick on photo transfer glue, 60x40 cm

The second is a treated photo-transfer.

In it Ullman's own head hovers nearby and slightly above that of Moshe Gershuni.

Each head has writing next to it - "Moshe" (Moses) and "Me" -

Thus, a biblical narrative that includes iconic figures such as Moses, David and Yonatan Is suggested.



Yonatan Ullman, Ovum, oil stick on whiteout, 60x40cm

The last group of drawings was drawn using an oil stick on dried whiteout.

These are abstract geometric forms -

A circle, which may resemble an ovum,

and a 'be-headed' star of David.



Yonatan Ullman, Legacy (installation view), 2022, Ein Shemer, Israel

In 2022 this installation was exhibited a third time -

this time as part of an annual festival titled 'Under the Light' that takes place in or around Ein Shemer (Israel).

The work was installed in a memorial to Elimelech Streckman, who gave his life trying to break the British Siege of Givat Haim.

The memorial features a wall relief created by renowned Israeli artist Natan Rapaport as well as a wall text commemorating the fallen hero.



Yonatan Ullman, Legacy (detail) 2022

Here, Ullman created stencils from the letters in the memorial plaque.

He reshuffled these to create six new words from the ready made letters:

“Va’Yehi”

“Thilat”

“Yom”

(meaning: “And There was” , “In The Beginning” , “Of The Day”).

lin lightboxes directly opposite to these:

“Ve’Olam”

“Chai”

“Bli”

(meaning: “And the world” , “Lived” , “Without”).

Michelangelo’s ‘Daivd’ bust looks over this memorial connecting biblical tales of heroism and sacrifice with modern day sacrifices still happening in Israel today.