

Note in the Margin

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HO walks on a thin wire. Red (the clothing, the moment). An underground prisoner sings a traveling song one moment before his hanging, an echo of yesterday's underground prisoners, today's political prisoners (we are all political prisoners). The installation is placed in the exercise yard of the Museum of Underground Prisoners ("March", 'Heara 4', Jerusalem 2002). The artist walks alone, in the yard, and disrupts the declination of nouns ("my cradle, your cradle, his cradle, her cradle, our land, your land, their land..."). Time stretches to the edge of the gallows of time. On his back he wears a bag, sticking out from which is a pile of eggs arranged to look like a house. This is a private ritual, naked, before the crowd that has gathered around him. From time to time it seems as if everything is falling, time runs out – an egg falls from the prisoner's back on to the stone floor of the yard. The yard is grateful. "And the secret is not to let the eggs break," someone says, quoting something someone else once told him. And he was wrong. Winter. Cold. A perfect day for carrying out the future sentence of the Israeli artist in the courtyards of the Ministry of Defense. HO's sentence is not carried out in public.

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The artist takes sleeping pills and chooses to escape from the reality of Israeli art at the power station ("Insomnia", Tel Aviv 2003). Art, in its meager dress for the tasteless event, the artist in a symbolic, fragile and unforgettable act of sleeping – perhaps forgotten for him the way a dream is forgotten. He warns us about what is going on inside. Action that is minimalistic, internal, silent. Cycles of sleep and death in 21st century Israel.

Another type of walking was his walking blind in the Seidoff Courtyard ("Naked Eye", 'Heara 2', Jerusalem 2002). Here the artist portrays a figure from a Baroque carving. He walks with his eyes covered, with the aid of two canes. The pain of the blind man and the construction of a place in a temporary state of blindness, an act of identifying boundaries, of losing one's way. That same day there was a bombing in the Mahane Yehuda market, 100 meters away. A dead-end situation, constantly returning, time stretching out, walking in the dark.

And we shared with him his sleep in the power station, we walked with him along the thin wire at the Underground Prisoners' Museum, and we understood the danger that understood him and us. Invitations to reflect on the minimal, the basic: walking, death, the body, time, words. And the video documentation of these works is, perhaps, an expression of another loneliness, an archive of memory, an alternative text, a note on the heart of the matter.

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