

An aerial photograph of a forest floor. The ground is covered in a mix of green moss, brown soil, and scattered leaves. A prominent circular tree stump is visible in the center-left, and a rectangular tree trunk lies horizontally in the lower-left quadrant. The overall scene is a dense, textured natural environment.

# AFAR

LIHI TURJEMAN

## A World Created by Maps | On the Dialogue between Penny Hes Yassour's and Lihi Turjeman's Exhibitions Shir Meller-Yamaguchi

In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Piteousness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars.

Jorge Luis Borges, "On Exactitude in Science"<sup>1</sup>

Penny Hes Yassour and Lihi Turjeman feature two concurrent exhibitions, indicating their ongoing interest in the dialectics between artmaking and mapping, between the real space and the way in which it is perceived and represented.

Originating in drawing, cartography attests to the basic human need for spatial orientation, confidence and a sense of control, representation and familiarity with the immediate and distant surroundings. In the map, the three-dimensional space is signified and defined, and its surface is downscaled on a sheet of paper, so that it feels as though one may hold the entire world in his hand.

Discussing the notion of place, Zali Gurevitch wrote about contemporary culture which is informed, on the one hand, by the awareness of multiple worlds, and on the other – by a sense of homelessness. The shortening distances also impact the subjective sense of a closed or open, restricting or enabling, space. Gurevitch goes on to define two concepts pertaining to man's perception of place: place and non-place. "A place is not only some relative state in a space or in Space, on Earth or on a map; it is a way of knowing; a distinction between being-in-place and being out-of-place, in a non-place, getting lost. Distance, like closeness, is not only geographic, but also personal."<sup>2</sup>

In the postmodern era of walls falling, borders opening, and space being perceived as a dynamic system of interconnections and mutual influences,

it becomes clearer that a map is not an objective instrument, but represents one option among many to interpret that space. Sometimes, the map may even eliminate or censor information. This may be one of the reasons for the engagement of contemporary artists with the image of the map as a highly charged, ambiguous representation of scale, closeness and distance, control over space and borders. Dr. Yael Guilat's essay, "Scenic Maps," whose abridged version is included in this catalogue, addresses the fascinating conflation of mapping and landscape painting in Israeli art, proposing a broader conceptual and historical context for its critical discussion.

### Between Art and 1:1 Mapping

A map requires a certain distance from the landscape – a bird's eye view, scale. The network of coordinates dividing the space arbitrarily into longitude and latitude makes it possible to "copy" the surface downsized. Borges's short story "On Exactitude in Science" recounts the chronicles of a 1:1 map which covers the Empire it was meant to signify. When the map becomes the land itself, it becomes useless. Or is that really so?

In her work **Deep Skin** exhibited at the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art in 2007, Penny Hes Yassour cast in a flexible substance the surface of the temporary enclosure erected for a theater in Kibbutz Tel Yosef, whose construction was not finished. The suspended work appeared like multilayered skin tissue that preserves the scars and wounds of the unrealized dream. Compressing the "wall" into a thin, soft material covered with folds, protrusions and scratches, documents the pain of its collapse as an ongoing process.

In the deserted Brenner School in Tel Aviv, marked for demolition, where Lihi Turjeman lived and worked for four years, the crumbling walls became her field of research and action. She covered them with canvases sized accordingly, and peeled off layers of plaster. The random web of stains generated by wall parts that stuck to the canvas, supplemented by drawing in charcoal and graphite, calls to mind maps of an unknown land. These pieces of canvas, which remained after the building's demolition and were exhibited in 2012 at Rothschild 69 Gallery, Tel Aviv, represent both its vestiges and the traces of the artistic act carried out inside it.



Lihi Turjeman | **The Map** | 2013 | mixed media on canvas | 210x290

ליהי תורג'מן | **המפה** | 2013 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 210x290

The affinity between the acts performed by both Hes Yassour and Turjeman is the desire to preserve, to represent an inkling of the life of a building, demolished or unrealized, and to lend it a depiction beyond time and place, thereby recognizing and acknowledging that which was deserted and left at the margins. Their works, on a 1:1 scale, reintroduce loci to the map left out of the collective map of consciousness. Hes Yassour defines herself as a cartographer-artist. The concept of a "mental map" has served her as a field of research from the outset of her artistic career, linking her two areas of study: geography and art. Coined and explored by Kevin Lynch, this concept emphasizes the subjective manner in which each person grasps and maps his surroundings.<sup>3</sup>

Jean-François Chevrier wrote about her work in 1993: "Yassour explores a fictive dimension. [...] The fiction attains the value of a limit situation, where the constructed map has ceased being a simple model and yet has not become the real thing."<sup>4</sup>

The landscape drawings presented by Hes Yassour in 2008 in her exhibition "No\*So\*No\*Rous" at the Kibbutz Art Gallery, Tel Aviv (curator: Yaniv Shapira)

were based on architectural structures which dissolve into the landscape. The drawings, which continued a series of "spatial drafts" were described by Shapira as a new cartography. "The reciprocal relations between drawing and sculpture serve her in her ongoing study of the relationship between body, space, language, landscape and architecture."<sup>5</sup>

These drawings formed the basis for the creation of the double surfaced nets cast in a liquid plastic substance developed by Hes Yassour. Combining organic forms and unintelligible script, the nets are suspended on a fine web of threads reminiscent of a map grid. They allude to the military camouflage nets commonly seen in the local landscape, yet they are typified by a sense of fluidity, integrating natural and urban forms to produce an infinite drawing in space. The transitions between the net-networks are exposed and concealed intermittently, and the viewer is invited to tour the multi-dimensional land-map.

The perception of painting as a space-map-world likewise continued to accompany Lihi Turjeman later in her career, in the exhibitions "Kushi-Atlas" (2013) and "Tikkun Olam" (2014). Large-scale canvases were featured



פני הס יסעור | **I am Writing You Tomorrow** | 2011 | מיצב, טכניקה מעורבת | מידות משתנות  
 הביאנלה של אסיה לאמנות, המוזיאון הלאומי לאמנויות היפות, טאיוואן  
 Penny Hes Yassour | **I am Writing You Tomorrow** | 2011 | mixed media installation  
 variable dimensions | Asian Art Biennial, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan

on the walls and floor in the latter, eliminating the distinction between a real and an imagined world, as the viewer wandered through the painterly installation. The grid dividing the canvases into squares functioned as map coordinates (longitude and latitude), as a delimiting system which stands for an arbitrary objective order within the free painterly space. In her text about "Kushi-Atlas," Shira Stav wrote about the viewer's experience in the exhibition: "Where to position oneself as a viewer? Very close, to notice the details, the texture? Or farther away, to see the whole, to be impressed by the strength and pretension of the scale? To move, constantly, near and far, in and out? Every choice is bound to miss something. Every additional moment of observation will reveal yet another detail, another deviant thread, another invasion of color. Each step back will expose another span of the world. The necessary partiality of every position in relation to the painting is integral to the experience of the world Turjeman creates for herself and for us."<sup>6</sup>

### Mapping of Countries Yet to Come

In the current exhibition at Wilfrid Israel Museum, Hes Yassour presents an installation with several parts. In the first, **I am Writing You Tomorrow** (exhibited in a different version at the Asian Art Biennial, Taiwan, in 2011),

the net silhouettes are screened on a partition made of translucent fabric, creating thereon a landscape somewhat reminiscent of Chinese ink drawings. The illusion of a refined landscape which abruptly transforms into a thicket in the space behind the partition indicates the illusion in which we are trapped in our reading of the space as revealed from a single point of view at a given moment.

Hes Yassour's series **Cartographies** (2013–15) was inspired by ancient Chinese cartography which is devoid of scale. The map guides the traveler, depicting paths, bridges, and passages. According to the artist, "My maps are ensembles of experiences, traces of activities, his-stories, images and unreadable texts, where the distinctions between the psyche, the social and the environment collapse, so as to create spatial and temporal assemblages, via serial formations, which are constantly in the process of creation."<sup>7</sup>

These cartographies were created in layers, much like the creation of maps; each layer has its unique character, rhythm, coloration, text, and texture. The movement of the hand on the canvas left marks and an imprint, as if Hes Yassour had embarked on a journey within the map itself while sketching it. These maps contain the ambiguity of concurrent concealment and revelation, and a sense of infinite occurrence. The title of the exhibition, "Mapping of Countries Yet to Come," was derived from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: "Writing has nothing to do with signifying. It has to do with surveying, mapping, even realms that are yet to come."<sup>8</sup>

The cartographies' mode of presentation in the current exhibition, on a device designed to hang maps, keeps their mystery as an invitation to take a journey in those lands.

### Afar

The point of departure for Lihi Turjeman's exhibition at Wilfrid Israel Museum is a large-scale drawing, observation of a familiar Israeli landscape unfolding before our eyes – the "Promised Land." The names of the mountains are missing from the sketch intended to mark them on the observation plaque. Thus, like Moses on Mt. Nebo, the viewer cannot "know" them. They remain afar, beyond reach and touch, an unknown realm.

The border as a concept and an image is one of the axes along which the exhibition took shape. A series of small graphite drawings based on photographs of borders served Turjeman to explore concrete borders in Israel up close: barbed-wire fences, trenches, the Separation Wall.

One of the major functions of the map has always been as a means of territorial control and definition: military occupations, annexation of territories, political borders. The arbitrariness of the border lines on the map, regardless of the terrain in reality, has introduced an intricacy into border disputes. Turjeman's drawings emphasize the absurdity underlying the border as a human pretension to separate territories and areas of control, while in the terrain itself the areas are not separated, even if we call them by different names.

These drawings continue with large-scale paintings divided into a fixed grid, much like coordinates. Most of them are rendered on a near-abstract background, but some hint at a familiar reality: a barbed wire fence crosses the canvas, Israel's northern border from a bird's-eye view. The surfaces of the paintings bear stains and scratches. It is not only an arbitrary representation of borders and divided regions, but also a manifestation of the psychic traces of existence in the shadow of an ongoing dispute over land and place.

Two large-scale works from 2014, from which phosphoric green emanates, propose to get lost in endless imagined realms under a continuous process of expansion and formation. Both Hes Yassour and Turjeman begin working in a similar manner, with an intuitive physical act; a type of "action painting" on the surface, work with the body and movement of liquid substances underlain by an interplay of arbitrariness and control. While moving, continents take form, rivers flow into oceans, the hand moves within the space. Worlds dissolve. Some are contained, whole, within themselves; others converge into space, erupting through the coordinates. For both artists, the real space offers a field of action in which the viewer moves amid excerpts of maps and landscapes intermittently; maps which, in themselves, transform into a landscape, and do not obey the conventional rules of demarcation, or landscapes which spread from the place to which they belonged, to become a metaphor.

Hes Yassour's installation proposes changing modes of reading of the real space. The transitions between screens, net-networks, cartographies, and screened landscapes underscore the subjectivity, temporality, and relativity of each representation. Turjeman's paintings shift between perspectives which draw near and away intermittently, between concrete and abstract landscape, between the local borders and a distant overview in which they dissolve and disappear.

Maps shape and change consciousness, creating our world view. Penny Hes Yassour and Lihi Turjeman remind us that it is consciousness that maps the space, creating the world anew for us at every given moment.

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- 1 Jorge Luis Borges, "On Exactitude in Science," in *Jorge Luis Borges: Collected Fictions*, trans. Andrew Hurley (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 325.
  - 2 Zali Gurevitch, *Al Hamakom* (About Place: Israeli Anthropology) (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1992), pp. 158-159 [Hebrew].
  - 3 See: Kevin A. Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1960).
  - 4 Jean-François Chevrier, "Mental Fabrication," in cat. *Mental Maps* (Ein Harod, Israel: Mishkan Museum of Art, 1993).
  - 5 Yaniv Shapira, "Disintegrated Landscape," in cat. *No\*So\*No\*Rous*, trans. Talia Halkin (Tel Aviv: Kibbutz Art Gallery, 2008), n.p.
  - 6 Shira Stav, "Leaving Traces: Thoughts on the Kushi-Atlas" (Julie M. Gallery, Tel Aviv: 2013), <http://lihi-turjeman.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Leaving-Traces.pdf>.
  - 7 Penny Hes Yassour in the exhibition brochure *I am Writing You Tomorrow* (Pasadena, California: USC Pacific Asia Museum, 2014), n.p.
  - 8 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "Introduction: Rhizome," in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 2003), pp. 4–5.

## A Conversation with Lihi Turjeman Shir Meller-Yamaguchi | August 2016

**Shir:** What was the point of departure for the works in the current exhibition?

**Lihi:** When I returned to Israel last summer, after a sojourn in Paris, I was interested in cognitive/political/geographical images of transition. One of these, which recurs in different forms in both of the exhibitions I am presenting at the moment, features the vantage point from Mount Nebo onto the Land of Israel. The Mt. Nebo scene contains a yearning; it touches on impossibility, borders, closeness and distance. Moses stands on the summit, views the land into which he is forbidden entry. It is a hard moment, which is somewhat absurd. The title of the exhibition, "Afar," was derived from a poem by Rachel (Bluwstein Sela), in which Mt. Nebo becomes everyone's mountain, "In every hope the sadness of Nebo." In every hope and yearning there is this pain for something that may not come to be. "To each person his Nebo over a wide land" – each person and his/her unattainable. Rachel writes about "two shores of one stream," "facing each other," but they are doomed to remain eternally far apart.<sup>1</sup> There's a collective tragedy here of which I am a part. The title of the poem, *MiNeged* (literally: standing opposite, from afar), alludes to the Biblical verse "Yet thou shalt see the land before thee (Heb. *mineged*); but thou shalt not go thither unto the land" (Deut. 32, 52; KJV).

**Shir:** In his book *Al Hamakom* (About Place: Israeli Anthropology), Zali Gurevitch writes about the Promised Land which, by its very essence, can never materialize.<sup>2</sup> The utopian place that cannot be worldly. He talks about place and non-place, the realm between the defined and that which is in perpetual motion, constantly shifting. This is the kind of movement I discern in your works: on one hand, the need to be in an open place, and on the other, the desire to set boundaries and borders for that place.

**Lihi:** It is built-in. There is a link between us and the universe, between us and the space, without anyone defining nationality, territory, city, or home for us. We are connected, first and foremost, to the human aspect. The other need is to stand on firm ground. We constantly look around and see where we are. What led me to engage concretely with the place was that the borders became a real barrier between me and what I wanted; in such circumstances, there is no chance to escape. I tried to elaborate this into a visual comment about the situation; to touch upon the border on the level of delineation, the line. While I did study

and re-acquaint myself with reality, the reason that the exhibition contains elements almost entirely free of identifying signs is that I was not interested in representing a specific chapter in the history of the place, but rather wanted to relate to an existential matter which gradually expands, and to create something that would go beyond realism. I envision rhizomatic painting installations devoid of a single focal point, an open system based on multiple meanings, a simultaneity of different meanings and different contextual planes.

**Shir:** In the Brenner St. venue ("Spaceship," 2013) you operated on the line between you and the wall separating you from the world. The work constantly transpired on the border; it was virtually a delineation of the border area. While working, the obstructing wall became open, because you discovered entire worlds in it; it became, in itself, the world, so that while working you crossed the border, so to speak.

**Lihi:** In the "Brenner" period I staged the exhibition "White Mule." It consisted of three monumental works, like a drawn print of the topography of the building walls. The title of Uzi Tsur's review of the show in *Haaretz* has been with me since: "To reproduce the soul of a place as a dybbuk." For me, it is a very accurate description of a process. I sought the spirit of the place through its boundaries, through the surface of the walls. I did not feel that the place was a border between me and the world; quite the opposite – it was my opening to the world. At the same time, my self-imposed mission was accompanied by a physical and mental burden, but it was my choice, because I discovered many things about the painting and the world alike. I wanted to realize the peephole onto the world revealed to me.

**Shir:** We talked about the border, and you said that the wall was an opening. That brings me back to your drawing of a barbed wire fence through which the moon can be seen. The moon is there; no border can restrict it. The border looks so human and meaningless. This is also true of the work in which the northern border is depicted from overview, appearing like a golden thread placed there haphazardly.

**Lihi:** The golden element in the painting is a line from the map of Israel, the northern border. Its presence there is probably the least random element in the entire show. For me, it is like a scar that I wanted to emphasize rather than blur. In reality there is topography, soil, nature; in the map we mark and sketch the route to produce a line.

I worked on this series of paintings in stages. The beginning was alchemy working out of urgency to reach the "right" or "suitable" ground. It is a phase of intuition, possibly even partial blindness, because the painting "faces" downwards, it faces the floor, so I don't really know or see the result until I pause, the canvas dries, and I can turn the work over, observe and continue. The next phase already consists of "targeted" actions, marking and signing.

**Shir:** After you turned the canvas and saw the painting for the first time, did you really see the northern border there?

**Lihi:** No. It was a conscious move, acting against the organic nature of the surface, 100% control. When you use instruments such as a ruler or compasses, you get a straight line or a perfect circle. This was how I imported the sketched line from the map, which, in this case, is a-priori a rhetorical means in itself; a line which is an exercise of power; a line which is not mine at all, but rather foreign. Painting is a matter of sensitive balance. Sometimes, as in this case, I strive to violate the equilibrium.

**Shir:** It's interesting. You add to the painting something foreign. How do you feel about this?

**Lihi:** I have doubts, but I still do it when I have to. It is like walking on some conceptual seam and making a decision. Had you looked at Rachel's notebook, you would have seen a little question mark or erasure next to your favorite word in the poem.

**Shir:** The northern border piece is the only one in a series of five works created at the same time where a specific place may be identified. All the others are more abstract, and each represents a different distance and a different scale. In the barbed wire fence work you actually reach the border, but it is hard to tell from which side, and the border blocks, with a very fine line. Then, in the hurricane piece, you reached the heights of another planet overlooking Earth. Hurricane is a natural phenomenon that violates the existing order irrespective of man-made borders, upturning everything that comes its way. I feel that your paintings contain a constant oscillation between changing points of view; you draw near and away, touch and observe. The other two works are more abstract, although they contain a map grid. In one of them you sketched two circles reminiscent of binoculars.

**Lihi:** It may look like a binocular zoom, but for me there was a pure painterly moment there, visionary, that led me to mark the place where light turns to darkness, and the circle sets them apart without wanting to show anything. Placing the circle there is like marking the area, distinguishing the marked area from its "unmarked" surroundings, and separating light from darkness.

**Shir:** "And the evening and the morning were the first day" (Genesis 1, 5; KJV). The separation of light from darkness is also a type of border which relates to the boundaries of our vision. Most of the works in the exhibition are monochromatic. Two works are exceptional in their dimensions, as well as the phosphoric green. Can you describe the process that led to their creation?

**Lihi:** It is important to note that these two works were created in 2014, two years apart from all the other works in the show. I created them on the floor, using the same practice of flow and organic expansion of materials into the canvas, followed by conscious actions. The green pigment was the final act applied to the painting; a type of "signature," in the broad sense. For instance, a connection was created between biology (slow release) and cartography. The fibers of the canvas resembled seeds. "Everything" on the right side of the painting stems from an eye-web of coordinates, whereas on the left, an infinite expansion in all directions emerges out of a sphere, like "The Aleph" in Jorge Luis Borges's short story, which is a point in space that contains all other points; a point through which you can peek while climbing the stairs, and see all the places in the universe simultaneously, uninterrupted and with maximum clarity. In a sense, I desire to find such a point, too.

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1 Tali Asher, "The Growing Silence of the Poetess Rachel," in Ruth Kark, Margalit Shilo, Galit Hasan-Rokem (eds.), *Jewish Women in Pre-State Israel: Life History, Politics, and Culture*, trans. unspecified (Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis UP, 2008), p. 249.

2 Zali Gurevitch and Gideon Aran, *Al Hamakom* (About Place: Israeli Anthropology) (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1992) [Hebrew].

## Scenic Maps Yael Guilat<sup>1</sup>

Images of maps have been a prevalent motif throughout the history of art, from the 6th-century Madaba Map in Jordan, through Navajo sand maps in North America, to the work of 16th and 17th century artists such as Johannes Vermeer, Hans Holbein, and many others. Since the 1960s, however, manifestations of map images in art have multiplied and diversified. Scenic (or landscape) maps, which are the focus of this essay, have come to signify an intermediate space between cartographic and painterly representation. A configuration that emerged simultaneously in various places worldwide, and was also discernible in Israeli art, it is a hybrid genre between a map and a landscape painting, between mapping and presenting the experience of landscape and the scenic panorama. This category, whose roots lie in both art history and cartography, illustrates the conflict between national identities and split cultures which refuse to adapt to the imagined realms of political maps, and may even indicate "opposition and displacement," "conflict and sorrow."<sup>2</sup> Scenic maps are underlain by a principle of distortion, which undermines the system of signs, introducing mapping as a representation of the conquest of space in recent decades, in both Israeli and Palestinian art (including artists living in Israel, in the Palestinian Authority, and in the Palestinian Diaspora). Scenic maps became a widespread phenomenon; a field in which theory, criticism, and art intersect.

While exhibitions pertaining to landscape – whether centered on painting, photography, or other media – are consistently staged in Israel, in the beginning of the 21st century local art critics identified a certain decline of this genre. Dana Gillerman, for one, wondered whether this was the end of the landscape painting genre in Israeli art, "as opposed to its flourishing in Palestinian art." In search of landscape paintings which would continue the Eretz-Israeli painting tradition, critics undervalued the intermediate genre of scenic maps which transpires in-between landscape and territory.<sup>3</sup> From the 1970s on, questions of identity and territory were rendered in sophisticated manners which crossed semantic systems, using images of maps and border signs in works in diverse media: painting, performance, installation, photography, video, textile, collage, and recently also digital art and dance.

The first museum-scale show to introduce the cartographic-artistic encounter between the aesthetic and the political was "Borders" (The

Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1980; curator: Stephanie Rachum) which marked a turning point regarding landscape and territory issues among Israeli artists. The exhibition addressed the conceptual engagement of young artists with questions of language and society, while confronting the experience of life in a society rife with identities and a country without borders, which is nevertheless threatened by a sense of siege. A decade later, the exhibition "Routes of Wandering: Nomadism, Voyages and Transitions in Contemporary Israeli Art" (The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1991; curator: Sarit Shapira) redefined the relationship between Jews and territory based on philosophical models originating in writings by Edmond Jabès, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. It offered re-mapping of famous works, such as Itzhak Danziger's **Nimrod** (1939), alongside new works indicating wandering and migration as a possible critical option against the territorialization of Jewish consciousness by modern Zionism, and its embodiment, among others, in traditional Eretz-Israeli landscape representations. In 2002 – the same year in which Gillerman's review was published – Gideon Ofrat inaugurated a new exhibition space in Tel Aviv as chief curator. The inaugural show of Time for Art – Israeli Art Center, "The Return to Zion: Beyond the Place Principle," juxtaposed works which would later be deemed scenic maps with grand landscape paintings, such as Elie Shamir's oil on canvas **Jezreel Valley** (2002). Not only did the landscape not disappear, it was re-defined, and one of the most intriguing among these new definitions was the category of scenic maps.

### Landscape and Map: Conflicting Representations

Landscape paintings and maps have had separate cultural histories, during which they were regarded as two different types of spatial representation, although both articulated a process of territorial spatialization, determining the scope of control, power, and authority over a given space.<sup>4</sup> The spatialization of territory derives from the construction of the physical landscape and establishing its character, whereby it re-materializes as a symbolic locus. While the territorialization of space means asserting autonomy over territories and involves political agreements, spatialization operates equally in the symbolic as in the real domain. Hence, landscape paintings are one aspect of a long process in the interrelations between man, society, and nature. According to W.J.T. Mitchell, in addition to being an artistic genre, "landscape is a medium

of exchange between the human and the natural, the self and the other."<sup>5</sup> According to Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul:

"Communication theory and common sense alike persuade us that a map is a scientific abstraction of reality. A map merely represents something which already exists objectively. In the history of the geo-body, this relationship was reversed. A map anticipated a spatial reality, not vice versa. In other words, a map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purported to represent. (...) It became a lethal instrument to concretize the projected desire on the earth's surface."<sup>6</sup>

Cartography, like any other text, is selective, and its interpretation is exegetic. Like other cultural texts, the map is a means to convey ideological messages. Despite the high scientific status of maps in the hierarchy of representations, they are selective representations of the world just like landscape paintings, and are even more effective than the latter in concealing the ideological and propagandist strata embedded in them. With the emergence of the Great Empires and nation states, landscapes and maps served as a means to create a new identity between people and places, as articulated in Saul Tchernichovsky's well-known verse "Man is nothing but the image (literally, mold or form) of his native landscape." And since the landscape of the homeland is a form or matrix in itself, the map and the landscape are both a signifier and a signified.

In the tradition of European painting, the relationship between man and landscape is founded on the existence of a single observer and an object observed from a single vantage point. In this context, there are two visual conceptions, whose origins differ: that of painting and that of mapping. The landscape is observed from a single point and translated into a perspectival system which presupposes the existence of a single observer who stands at the right distance to recreate the spatial illusion. Painting is tantamount to a window onto reality, and linear, scientific perspective, as formulated by Leon Battista Alberti in On Painting (1435), constitutes a rational image of the world which acknowledges the categories of object and subject and regulates their interrelations. It is not a pluralistic world view that acknowledges several concurrent viewpoints and observers. The observer remains outside the picture, so to speak,

and the picture is constructed in relation to him, thus including him in it. Landscape and observer thus assume one another's existence. Furthermore, while the landscape requires an onlooker who observes from a fixed point, the map calls for active reading – namely, an active subject who puts it into effect via reciprocal transitions between the conceptual and the physical, between vision and motion. This affinity is linked to the fact that the acts of measuring and territorial demarcation, translated into graphic signs and scales via the act of mapping, originated in "physical" measurements: foot, cubit (forearm in Hebrew). According to Galia Bar Or, "Mapping, which begins with measurement, is therefore a projection of the body onto space."<sup>7</sup> Historian Boaz Neumann, in his book Land and Desire in Early Zionism, maintains that Deleuze and Guattari (mentioned above with regard to the concept of deterritorialization) "make little distinction between 'territory' and 'body'. Territory always has bodily form, and a body is always territorial; territory might better be called a 'geo-body'.<sup>8</sup> Hence, the mapping and cartographic representation of a territory are perceived by contemporary artists as signifying a relationship, rather than as an image per se; a relationship between body and territory in the phenomenological and political senses.

The 1980s saw the emergence of a new theoretical discourse about landscape. Its architectural planning, design, and representation were at the core of cultural studies which regarded landscape as a crucial intersection of the real and the imagined. Following Mitchell, Wood, Cosgrove,<sup>9</sup> and others, who argue that landscape images are an ideological device and a historical configuration, the landscape is laid bare, and its exposure reveals the power systems that shaped it. The landscape is regarded as an active partner in an interplay of mutual-shaping involving man, his being, and his consciousness. Rather than another reflection of a naïve, primeval nature, it is an intricate work underlain by camouflage and concealment. The painterly process and the process of landscape mapping thus reflect two different epistemological systems, whose divergence indicates the ways in which we become acquainted with the world, while also pointing at their complementing-contrasting nature. "The geography of the land is, in the last resort, the geography of the mind,"<sup>10</sup> or, as argued by philosopher Edward S. Casey, "The lived body is what affords a 'feel' for a given landscape."<sup>11</sup>

## Representation of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Landscapes and Maps

In the local history of landscape representation as territory, concurrent with the development of the landscape motif in national-Zionist art, landscape in Palestinian art has also played a key role in the construction of national identity.<sup>12</sup> Scenic maps evolved as an expression of the conflict between two epistemes, and at the same time – as an embodiment of the territorial conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

The Zionist movement considered itself as a movement of a return to the place – a place at once geographical and transcendental: "God is the place of the world, but the world is not His place" (Genesis Rabbah 68:9). A place which is present-absent must be represented and signified. The Eretz-Israeli vistas, which were common images in the renewing Hebrew poetry, were the habitat for the New Hebrews, but the tension between the physical reality and the landscape observed through the lens of ideology never ceased; it was only enhanced by Zionist education, which was a powerful lever in the construction of a new Israeli identity. Abraham Jacob Brawer, the author of geography text books in the 1920s and 1930s, regarded knowledge of the Bible and Mishna as a supreme value in geography, a keystone for the bond between the people's past and its present in the Land of Israel. In his books he linked the map, hike, and aerial photographs to form a pedagogical instrument. The field trip, hike, and journey had been placed at the core of Zionist existence from its onset.<sup>13</sup> Touring the land and learning its geography honed the gaze at the landscape, and the maps which mediated it became a national icon, much like the one on the façade of the *pushke* – the Blue KKL-JNF (Jewish National Fund) Box which "was more than just a fundraising device. From the beginning, it was an important educational vehicle spreading the Zionist word and forging the bond between the Jewish People and their ancient homeland."<sup>14</sup>

Thus, it is not surprising that visual art created in pre-state Israel surrenders processes of re-territorialization of body and landscape alike. These processes evolved simultaneously with the demand for a local Eretz-Israeli painting, in keeping with the newly-shaped figure of the New Jew (or the New Hebrew).

Despite the stylistic differences between the Jewish artists who operated in the country in the first decades of the 20th century, one may say that the works of such artists as Ze'ev Raban, Reuven Rubín, Nahum Gutman, and others reflect a landscape ideal, structuring it as wishful thinking rather than as a reflection of reality. Even the lyrical, vibrant landscape paintings by the New Horizons artists did not evade the place;<sup>15</sup> they reinvented it as a modern locus in their aspiration for abstraction. The panoramic gaze or the one mediated through window and bars often likened the compositional grid to the act of marking and mapping. At the same time, the artists' blindness to landmarks, such as the vestiges of Arab villages, attests to their instrumental, ideology-driven vision, even when they genuinely declared that art must be autonomous and universal.

With the flourishing of conceptual art in the 1970s, maps became more prevalent, as evident in Deganit Berest's series **Maps of Eretz-Israel with a Rhombus** (1976). During the 1980s, "painted" maps also appeared in the work of artists such as David Reeb (**Self-Portrait with Green Line**, 1980), Michael Sgan Cohen (**Map**, 1980), and Atsmon Ganor (**Untitled**, 2002), who frequently engaged in maps and preceded the "genre" of scenic maps.

The most extensive project in this respect, however, was Michael Druks's **Druksland** (1974), a body of work including his self-portrait in the form of a map, with the inscription "Occupied Territory" on his head – the ultimate political manifestation of man's consciousness as the image of his homeland. According to Galia Bar Or, who studied his oeuvre, "Druks's subversive action in the mapping works is similar in principle to his action in the spheres of video and measurement."<sup>16</sup> In **Druksland**, man himself is the subject and agent of the space, and the space is perceived as body and as landscape.

Generally speaking, in Palestinian art the landscape is explicitly presented via the romantic-national or modernistic expression regarding people-nation-art interrelations, and by means of postmodern strategies. On the one hand, the landscape embodies a claim for spatial ownership prior to its political realization, and on the other – a mental map of memory and yearning. It is within this complex situation that artist and architect Hanna Farah Kufr Bir'im operates.

An extensive exhibition of his work, "Re:Form," was staged in Zochrot Gallery, Tel Aviv in 2010, and over the years he has initiated various artistic projects in the area of Kufr Bir'im, the village from which his family and all other residents were expelled in 1949, with the promise of return. His works present landscape and map, both in need of restoration and healing. Photographs presenting the landscape of the place and traces of the village, etchings, as well as architectural and topographic models comprise a body of work that offers diverse representations of reconstruction and rehabilitation of memory. The works function on the artistic-conceptual level, while proposing possible steps toward an actual return, forming both a landscape rendition and a cognitive map.

According to Juval Portugali, cognitive maps are tied with internal representation of the external environment in terms of the individual, the collective, and the history of that collective, indicating the interplay between external and internal representation. Just as "a man's conduct in a space derives not only from the objective structure of that space (as symbolized in an ordinary cartographic map), but is largely dictated by the image of the space as sketched in his consciousness, namely – from his cognitive map,"<sup>17</sup> so its artistic representation is affected by it. The same internal image of the space is a type of imagined landscape. Moreover, collective cognitive maps may include realms of memory or of passion. Hence, cognitive maps result from map-space relations, forming the ground on which the mapping practices of scenic maps are applied.

### Between Landscape and Map: Scenic Maps

Scenic maps expose three major practices, as defined by Irit Rogoff: re-mapping, un-mapping, and counter-mapping.<sup>18</sup> These seem to respond not only to historical, cultural, and artistic processes – which, in the Israeli context, are profoundly linked to Zionist settlement and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) – but also, as aforesaid, to mental maps, mythical depth structures, and their manifestations on the surface. A distinctive engagement with the territorial myth is seen in Gal Weinstein's works. Repeatedly constituting an imagined reality that oscillates between topography and landscape, he created scenic maps as floor installations that unfold at the viewer's feet, denying him entry; landscape which

deliberately fails in its panoramic function, while interfering with the spatial imagination. In **The Valley of Jezreel** (Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, 2002) and **Huleh Valley** (Helena Rubinstein Pavilion for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 2005), Weinstein employs the iconic-cultural image of the landscape itself, while creating an interplay between mapping and un-mapping. He removes the map from the landscape, which is thus revealed in all its seductive beauty, and at the same time – covers and flattens the landscape by means of the image of the map. His maps question right and wrong, whether "to step or not to step," distorting any aesthetic or scientific distance.

Scenic maps are a unique category within the broad field of convergences between landscape, body, and cartography. This hybrid genre, arising from the conflict between different types of representation – landscape vs. map – brings all these ingredients together, yet still embodies the conflict. A gradually expanding genre, recent years have seen remembering maps, covering maps, revealing maps, embroidered maps, soap maps, rug maps and floor maps alluding to the local landscape, featured in such exhibitions as the Fourth Biennale of Israeli Ceramics, "Territory and Identity: Between Ceramics and Architecture" (Eretz-Israel Museum, Tel Aviv, 2007; curator: David Knafo), and the 2009 exhibitions "Landscape" and "Urban Nature" at Petach Tikva Museum of Art (curator: Sigal Barkai). Map images have even taken the form of defiant jewelry, as in Einat Lider's stylized abstract brooches which represent Arab villages wiped out of existence. Her 2008 exhibition "Order Restored" (Periscope Gallery, Tel Aviv) featured six brooches.

Each represented a part of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa map, and was centered on an Arab village that no longer exists: Summeil, Sheikh Muwanis, Salama, Manshiya, Jamasin, and Abu Kabir. The map functioned as a mythical image, and the act of mapping extended over diverse media, deviating beyond the gaze (which constitutes a painterly landscape) to action, motion, and journey. Mental maps and scenic maps, maps of belonging and landscapes of identity were juxtaposed to expose their nature as constructs that strive to appropriate a territory. Questions of physical-bodily memory and intersecting histories are reinforced vis-à-vis an ongoing reality of territorial strife established as a space signified by a wall, roadblocks, restricted freedom of action, settlement uprooting, house demolitions, etc.

Based on the wordplay *land(e)scape*, and after scholar Paul Virilio,<sup>19</sup> one may argue that the landscape is a plane of flight, a temporal horizon indicating emergence from, an evolving space, or a spatial occurrence. Hence, the transitions between maps and landscapes have exceeded national visions and the conflict of representation, even the representation of The Conflict per se. As a hybrid form, scenic maps are an intermediate representation of the place, whose images are generated by deconstruction, unmapping, reconstruction, and counter-mapping practices, seductive on the one hand, contemplative and challenging on the other. Their existence is dependent on the cultural network and visual correspondences within local history. Not only man is the image of his homeland and native landscape; the landscape, too, is dialectically an image of man, his passions, and spatial conquests.

- 3 Dana Gillerman, "The End of Disappearing Landscape," *Haaretz: Gallery*, 26 Feb. 2002 (Hebrew); see also: Uzi Zur, "Funfair of Stimuli," *Haaretz: Culture and Literature*, 6 July 2002, p. 3 (Hebrew); Smadar Sheffi, "The Wrong Distance," *Haaretz: Gallery*, 24 May 2002 (Hebrew).
- 4 See: Rachel Kallus and Tali Hatuka, "Architecture and Built-Up Environment: An Agenda," in Kallus and Hatuka (eds.), *Architectural Culture: Place, Representation, Body* (Tel Aviv: Resling, 2005), pp. 9–25 (Hebrew).
- 5 W.J.T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in W.J.T. Mitchell (ed.), *Landscape and Power* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2002 (2nd ed.)), p. 5.
- 6 Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), pp. 130, 129.
- 7 Galia Bar Or, cat. *Michael Druks: Travels in Druksland*, trans. Richard Flantz (Museum of Art, Ein Harod, 2007), p. 296.
- 8 Boaz Neumann, *Land and Desire in Early Zionism*, trans. Haim Watzman (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis UP, 2011), p. 74.
- 9 See: Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape"; Denis Wood, *The Power of the Maps* (New York: Guilford Press, 1992); Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (eds.), *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the symbolic representation, design and use of past environments* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988).
- 10 Svetlana Alpers, "The Mapping Impulse in Dutch Painting," in *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 125.
- 11 Edward S. Casey, "Prologue," *Earth-Mapping: Artists Reshaping Landscape* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), p. xvii.
- 12 See: Gannit Ankori, "Behind the Wall," *Kav* 10 (July 1990), pp. 163–169, 170–175 (Hebrew); Gannit Ankori, *Palestinian Art* (London: Reaktion, 2006); Kamal Boullata, *Palestinian Art: 1850–2005* (London: Saqi, 2009).
- 13 See: Oded Avisar, *Programs in the Study of the Land of Israel, the Field Trips, and Tourism in Search of Roots, 1948–88 in National-Zionist Education* (PhD Dissertation) (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 2000) (Hebrew).
- 14 KKL-JNF website, <http://www.kkl.org.il/fr/about-kl-jnf/the-blue-box/>.
- 15 See: Gila Ballas, *New Horizons* (Tel Aviv: Papyrus/Reshafim, 1980) (Hebrew).
- 16 Bar Or, *Michael Druks: Travels in Druksland*, p. 295.
- 17 Juval Portugali, *Space, Time, and Society in Ancient Eretz-Israel* (Tel Aviv: The Open University, 1999) (Hebrew).
- 18 See: Irit Rogoff, *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 73.
- 19 See: Paul Virilio, *A Landscape of Events*, trans.: Julie Rose (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000).

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1 An abridged version of: Yael Guilat, "'Mapping-landscape': Imagery of Place and Territory in the Works of Israeli-Jew and Palestinian Artists in Israel in the Last Decades," *Dvarim – Interdisciplinary Magazine*, 3 (Oranim Academic College), pp. 70–81 (Hebrew).

2 Katharine Harmon, *The Map as Art: Contemporary Artists Explore Cartography* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009), p. 19.

## Lihi Turjeman | Biographical Notes

Born in 1985. Lives and works in Tel Aviv

- 2006-10 BFA (with honors), Department of Fine Art, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem
- 2008 Student Exchange Program, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris
- 2012-14 MFA, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Tel Aviv

### Solo Exhibitions & Special Projects

- 2011 "At the Sight of," Julie M. Gallery for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv
- 2012 "White Mule," Rothschild 69 Projects, Tel Aviv  
"Million Dollar Highway" (commissioned work), Fresh Paint 5, Contemporary Art Fair, Tel Aviv
- 2013 "Kushi-Atlas," Julie M. Gallery for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv  
"2101," project room, Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv  
"Spaceship," open studio, 17a Brenner St., Tel Aviv
- 2014 "Tikkun Olam," MFA Graduate Show, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Tel Aviv  
"Wall in the City," site-specific outdoor work on the southern wall of the Tel Aviv City Hall
- 2015 "Maktoub," Le Corridor, Cité Art Gallery, Cité internationale des arts, Paris  
"La promesse," vitrine exhibition, Minotaure Gallery, Paris
- 2016 "Center of Gravity," Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv Afar," The Wilfrid Israel Museum of Asian Art and Studies, Kibbutz Hazorea, Israel

### Grants and Awards

- 2009 Joseph and Ada Bulapio Award for Outstanding Achievements in the Department of History and Theory, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem
- 2010 Lauren and Mitchell Presser Award for Excellence in Painting, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem  
Excellence Award, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem
- 2013 Excellence Award, MFA Program, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Tel Aviv
- 2015 Young Artist Award, the Israeli Ministry of Culture and Sports Artist-in-residence, Cité internationale des arts, Paris
- 2016-17 Artist-in-residence, Artport TLV, Tel Aviv



210x410 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 2014 | **Slow Release**  
**Slow Release** | 2014 | mixed media on canvas | 210x410  
מאוסף יסמין ועופר שנהב | collection of Yasmin & Ofer Shenhav



רישומים מתוך הסדרה **כנען** | 2016 | פחם וגרפיט על נייר | 21x28.5  
Drawings from the series **Canaan** | 2016 | charcoal and graphite on paper | 21x28.5



מתוך הסדרה **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 160x200  
From the series **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | mixed media on canvas | 160x200



מתוך הסדרה **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 160x200  
From the series **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | mixed media on canvas | 160x200



מתוך הסדרה **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 160x200  
From the series **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | mixed media on canvas | 160x200



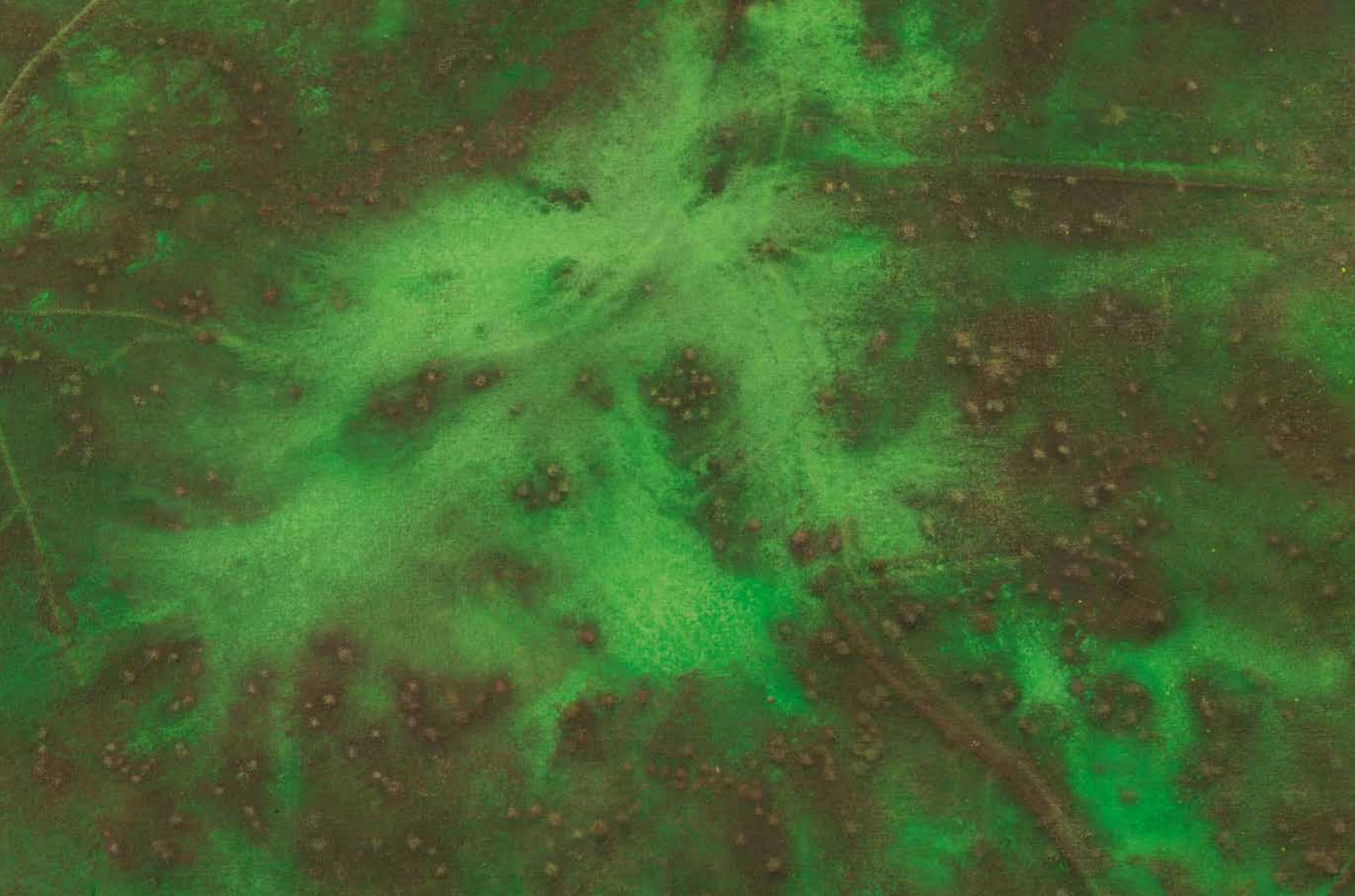
מתוך הסדרה **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 160x200  
From the series **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | mixed media on canvas | 160x200



84x113 | שמן ועלי זהב על בד | 2016 | **Welcome**  
**Welcome** | 2016 | oil and gold leaf on canvas | 84x113



מתוך הסדרה **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 160x200  
From the series **On the Fine Line** | 2016 | mixed media on canvas | 160x200



ללא כותרת | 2014 | טכניקה מעורבת על בד | 200x450  
Untitled | 2014 | mixed media on canvas | 200x450

**Lihi Turjeman | Afar**

**Penny Hes Yassour | Mapping of Countries Yet to Come**

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Collection of Yasmin & Ofer Shenhav | (detail; see p. 46)

Hebrew cover: Lihi Turjeman | **Slow Release** | 2014 | (detail; see pp. 16-17)

Measurements are given in centimeters, height x width

Museum website: [www.wilfrid.org.il](http://www.wilfrid.org.il)

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