

Air itself touches

This title, which is also the name of the exhibition, is not merely a quote; it recites a line from one of Duvdevani's poems. As a title, the (same) words, hold (an)other sense, other function, (an)other place. The title duplicates. The title replicates - yet other. And in more than one sense, it replicates, and in more than one sense, it duplicates - there already appears to be something of repetition and duplication in the motion it implies: 'air itself touches' (air itself touches air ...). When 'air itself touches', does it, and what does it touch? Does it touch the (same) air? Is it capable or able to touch? Does the air by itself touch, or does the air touch itself? Nothing is certain nor determined in this game of duplication and meaning that the utterance 'air itself touches' summons to mind with its wondrous idiomatic density. Nothing is certain nor determined in the ghostly, alien, and strange event it refers to.

Ghostly because it appears to occur between gusts of air, between the spirit and itself, in that same incomprehensible space between spirit and spirit (Geist \ ghost). Ghostly because it is an event in which, so to speak, "nothing" "occurs". Nothing touches nothing. Transparent touch transparent - yet, an event, and perhaps even the very figure of the Event; of the event as impossible and of the impossible as an event.

How should one approach such an event? The event as such? How should one think it, describe it, near it, touch it itself? Is it possible to touch it itself? It shines in its solitude. As if to escape all grip. Reaching and refusing to reach at the same time. Touching-not-touching. Touches (itself) without touching. Without knowing. Without reaching.

To think and describe it, one must therefore bend language (safa) to a strange and paradoxical logic. One must generate a linguinal event that responds to how *it* bends the language, the tongue, to touch itself. A touch of language by language.

A touch of a language (in itself) touching (an)other. Touch of lips (safa\sfataym). And this is not merely a linguistic bend (in the conventional sense) but also a visual one: something of its logic is sealed as a secret in the artworks. Marked as a stamp, an imprint or a stain on the surface of the canvas or paper. Marked with the ghostly, detached and floating, airy objects and figurines, semi-transparent in part. And the secret is not hidden beneath the surface but is the secret of the surface itself. And the transparency is deceptive since nothing appears to be hiding behind it. On the contrary, it appears to defy us. Opaque. Withdrawn to itself. It does not give. It is not given.

Something of these ghostly-airy qualities of the images is related, among other things, to very specific laying mode of colour; to various "engravings" in colour and print; to the mentioned repetitiveness; to a limited, monotonous and somewhat morbidly clean range of shades; to the non-innocent use of "background", of the blue-azure-sunset-pinking palette in Hovav's paintings; to the function of the "surface plate" and the traces of the printing mesh in Sitbon's print work; to the same "layer-ness" (self-touching) of "white on white" and "blue on blue" and "transparent on transparent"; to disruptions Duvdevani creates in the reading conditions of his poems in the gallery space.

Something of the occurrence's strange logic, of 'air itself touches', seem to correspondingly determine the collaborative work style of Duvdevani, Hovav, Sitbon, and the writer of these lines about the exhibition, which takes place out

of, and within a continuous dialogue and reciprocal intervention of the artists in each other's works. That each and every one of them leaves his ghostly, secret imprint on the body of the others artwork, the same body which, in his way, this text seeks to touch.

A discreet touch of one by (an)other.

Of language by language and of tongue by tongue.

Perhaps another name for love.

A touch of air itself touches.

Yotam Dvir,

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