

"Who is Content and Lives?" is a thematic group exhibition, whose starting point is Yudit Levin's *Pieta* (1982). Levin's *Pieta* is a work based on deficiency, on lack, on absence. The work is comprised of fragments of painted plywood, some of which are found objects, arranged on the wall in an unsuccessive manner, with holes and intervals in-between. The work incorporates the viewer as an active participant that completes the fragments in his/her imagination, turning them into a picture of Pieta (as indicated in the title of the work), into the image of Christ lying on Mary's lap after the crucifixion. Unlike Michelangelo's *Pieta* (1498-1499), Levin's *Pieta* is anti-iconic, and resists direct depiction. It is more parts than whole, more details than fullness. It tells us something about the limits of representation, or rather, the limits of visibility. It tells us that the absolute is perceivable only through the manifestation of its absence.

The exhibition second starting point is Nurit David's work *Who is Content and Lives?* (1984). Providing the exhibition with its title, David's work combines figurative signs, abstract, generative patterns and a text read like a stream of consciousness speech. All of which is inscribed with chinagraph pencil and marker pen on plywood. Given in the form of a question, the Title *Who is Content and Lives?* recalls the biblical verse from the Book of Exodus: 'for there shall no man see me, and lives' (King James Translation). The verse connects to Levin's *Pieta*. Both Levin and David speak about the tension between immanence and transcendence. As Levin's *Pieta*, the verse which David's work echoes is a declaration about the imperceptibility of the transcendent.

David's *Who is Content and Lives?* recalls also Marcel Duchamp's famous epitaph: 'Besides it's always the others who die'. Assisted by the associations and implications of its two starting points, the exhibition "Who is Content and Lives?" stems from the thought that death can only be dealt with from the point of view of life, and that entirety can only be expressed by incomplete details. In David Reeb's broken glass painting (1990), the broken pieces defeat the idea of a defined whole.

The current exhibition marks the beginning of the third year of Givon Art Forum in Neve Tzedek. The selection of works suggests an historical narrative of modern and contemporary art that belongs to a cultural endeavor that Givon refers to as 'The Independent Israeli Modernism': a set of sensibilities and approaches whose uniqueness can characterize the specificity of the Israeli art scene in the last fifty years, in relation and contrast to the official western Modernism. The independent Israeli Modernism captures both Universalism (rather than abstract

Internationalism), as well as local particularity, at the same time.

The exhibition "Who is Content and Lives?" Includes works by: Avigdor Arikha, Maya Attoun, Ido Bar-El, Pinchas Cohen Gan, Yitzhak Danziger, Nurit David, Moshe Gershuni, Tsibi Geva, Erez Israeli, Aharon Kahana, Moshe Kupferman, Raffi Lavie, Yudith Levin, Efrat Natan, Lea Nickel, Gabriel Klasmer, David Reeb, Yehezkel Streichman, Pesach Slabosky, Micha Ullman.