

Hilla Ben Ari
Naamah, A Tribute to Nahum Benari

Mishkan Museum of Art, Ein Harod

Opening: 28 March 2015; Closing: End of May 2015

Curator: Galia Bar Or

Naamah, a special project by Hilla Ben Ari for the Mishkan Museum of Art, Ein Harod, combines a number of choreographic scenes into a complex narrative opus, and constitutes a milestone in her oeuvre.

Naamah is based on the play *Tubal Cain* written by Nahum Benari, her grandfather's brother, who was an author and intellectual and one of the founders of Kibbutz Ein Harod and of the museum. The play is an interpretation of the biblical story of Tubal-Cain, the "father of metalsmiths", through which the author confronts issues of community, creative powers, hubris, sin, guilt and punishment. One of the characters in the play is Tubal-Cain's sister, Naamah, a mute gleaner. Hilla Ben Ari makes the character of Naamah a central key to her work's meaning, and seeks to read the play through a gender prism and to expand the critical perspectives implicit in it.

The scenes that she builds are composed of sequences of charged physical states – of groups and of individuals – that range between strength, weakness and collapse. These scenes were filmed in daytime and nighttime on the hill above the museum, on two basically functional stages. They are devoid of myth and of reference to any specific historical moment. Through them she conducts a dialogue with the structure of the stage from the early days of Ein Harod, with kibbutz ceremonies and also with the Greek theater. As in all her works, the relations between body and the skeleton of the construction carry in-depth meanings, and the trembling of the strained body echoes the component of personal time and space that is threatened by regimentation. The film that Ben Ari has created includes original sound work, and is screened in the center of a sculptural installation in the museum that creates a dialogue with the contents of the play.

Filming, editing, and cinematic consulting: Asaf Saban / Assistant Director: Yahel Dotan / Sound: Yoni Niv / Group Choreography: Shuli Enosh / Art: Salit Krac and Yahel Dotan / Lighting: Nachshon Kaplan / Musicians: Dan Weinstein, Ofer Bymel, Tom Soloveitzik, Yoni Niv.

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