

TEMPO RUBATO

Oren Pinhassi

The Contagious Bride

June 9 - July 14 2012

Notes on Oren Pinhassi's *The Contagious Bride*.

Trying to name the sole structure in this exhibition in architectural or cultural terms is a tedious task. With a large scale encompassing the human body, the arrangement of familiar materials resembles what many might recognize as a house, a shelter, a shrine, a pavilion, a model or a mausoleum.

But if the technical and aesthetic choices do not entirely exclude the possibility of any of the above, the work effortlessly resists any such categorization. On the contrary then, it might as well be everything at once. It wouldn't matter. The stylistic and functional references are abstracted to such an extent that the structure is neither archeological, nor prototypical; It is neither useful nor ornamental, neither Western nor Eastern.

That isn't to say it is devoid of human touch, but it is as if it exists disconnected from any specific culture or time. In and of its own, it is passive and unconcerned with existential matters. It is a vessel, irrelevant outside of an interaction with the human presence. It is a cave.

In contrast to the sturdy wood beams framing it, the roof is light and consists in two mirrored stretches of translucent net. So deprived of impermeable borders and of an inside and an outside, the structure lets in wind, light and people alike. As if successively inhabited by guests with different interests and concerns, it fosters incongruous material relationships.

On two cross sections elevated from the ground, its overall symmetry and apparent solidity are undermined by the occurrence of plaster applied onto neatly stacked sand bags. Here too the dichotomy between the looseness with which the plaster is spread and the orderliness of the bags hints to the presence of antagonistic forces; a phenomenon akin to overgrown moss in a cave bearing the remnants of human activity. Along its visible ridges, the expansive motion of the plaster seems to have stopped in time, much like the lazy rest of lava whose thermal energy has ceased to sustain its own movement.

Initially, Pinhassi's structure evokes bunches of stones gone sacred and glades turned sanctuaries. It recalls churches become mosques and train stations turned shopping malls. What seems of primary concern here is the symbolical and functional potentials of a space as activated and shaped by the minds of those inhabiting it.

Oren Pinhassi (b. 1985, lives and works in Tel Aviv) holds a B.F.A from Hamidrasha School of Art, Beit Berl, Israel, and is the 2011 recipient of the Shlomo Witzkin Prize for Excellence in the Art Field. He is an M.F.A candidate at Yale University School of Art, New Haven, Connecticut.