

TEMPO RUBATO

ORAN HOFFMANN

EVENT HORIZON

November 20 - December 27 2014

Oran Hoffmann's first solo exhibition follows a recent show at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art in which his photographs were shown together with works by Josef Albers, a leading artist and theorist from the Bauhaus-Dessau school. Hoffmann's engagement with early 20th century European modernist movements is felt here too. In the current exhibition, Hoffmann presents a body of works that tends to the mechanism of sight. The exhibition is comprised of two groups of photographs, *Inflection Point* and *Arbitrary Formation*, and a single sculpture, *Apophenia as Metaphor*. The works function as the foundations of models, as the model of a model that appears in each individual work and in their sum as a whole.

Inflection Point includes works from two series, *Fabula* (Story) and *Syuzhet* (Plot). These linked terms come from Russian formalist literature theories that also attended to the Aristotelian issue of the relation between form and meaning. The tension between the story (as a linear succession of events) and the plot (the manner in which the story is told) evokes a similar paradox that lies at the core of the concept of the model itself - a construct that functions as a framework for *a priori* postulations. Therefore, there is a certain degree of incompatibility between the model and the object it serves. The malfunction of the model undermines the confidence of the gaze, and severs immediate links tying meaning and appearance. Instead, it offers holes and gaps as ways through which meaning develops.

In both groups of works a mirror functions as the main representational device. Part of a model - made from sticks and balls in various colors - is reflected in the mirror. In *Fabula*, the mirror is positioned at an angle and set in a white background, whereas in *Syuzhet*, the mirror is set on colored backgrounds. Placing the mirror at an angle in relation to both the photographed background and the gallery wall emphasizes the representational aspect of the photographs, and the fact that the entire configuration - from the reflection in the mirror to the shade of its background color - is just one viewpoint out of an infinite range of possible perspectives. This impression is strengthened by different strategies Hoffmann employs to cancel the effect of the optical illusion, such as the stroke of light reflected on the edge of each mirror, and the inconsistency between the models in the photographs and the model displayed in the gallery. These strengthen the awareness to an inherent deficiency or distortion in the way in which things are seen.

The group of photographs in *Arbitrary Formation* functions as a focused gaze at a single facet of the model, one that investigates the possibility of the existence of a place where things and bodies have an objective or autonomous meaning. It reflects a desire to salvage some kind of order from the darkness and chaos. Hoffmann's arrangements - blurred balls whose colors seep into one another - form constellations that float on a dark grey background. Here beauty has a vital role as a conveyor of meaning, as a sensation that validates that which is no more than a random dispersion of objects in an infinite space.

Sivan Raveh, November 2014