

Ventilator

Exhibition: **Why Do Cockroaches Die on Their Backs?**

Co-organized with Eran Nave

Reception: Thursday, August 30, 8pm | at Shocken 6 St. Tel Aviv, IL

Ventilator Gallery is thrilled to announce the opening, on Thursday, the 30th of August, of *Why Do Cockroaches Die on Their Backs?*, the first exhibition of Ventilator's 2nd season.

Contentment is usually followed by assailing doubts which steadily make their way back to fundamental questions such as 'Should a painting be stretched on a frame?', 'What about its colors?', 'Is an object at all necessary?', 'What about the space for its display?'

Located in South Tel Aviv's industrial area, the *Shocken 6* studios have been running for more than a decade, led by their members and sustained by their community. Throughout the years, *Shocken 6* has hosted exhibitions, cultural and social events, performances, collaborative projects, that have significantly contributed to shaping the local art scene from within.

Why Do Cockroaches Die on Their Backs? reappraises the different approaches, themes, images, color palettes, styles, materials and formats commonly employed by local artists working with the medium of painting.

This survey gathers twenty-six paintings by twenty-six different artists, all produced over the last ten years. *Why Do Cockroaches Die on Their Backs?* aims to keep painting in vicinity to the place of its creation and the means of its production. If paintings are usually exhibited in standardized and sterile conditions, detached from the mindset and reality in which they emerged, here, they are presented closer to their true nature. In fact, the paintings' absence of natural lighting, their small scale and their inexpensive materiality are as many direct references to the place in which they are displayed; yet they can equally recall the small, intimate or improvised studios from which they were chosen. Whether painted on canvas, paper, clay, carpet, gypsum, Styrofoam or metal, those compositions typically portray an object, a figure, a mark or a scene. They are made rapidly but with proficiency. They accumulate layers of confrontation which might be dismissed at first glance. These paintings communicate through hints, insinuations, questions, gestures circumlocutions, and above all through their unique sensibility.

Why Do Cockroaches Die on Their Backs? is installed on *Shocken 6*'s external walls, along the gates of its neighboring garages and along the sides of its central parking lot, thus momentarily transfiguring the way one apprehends this commonplace. This group exhibition presented outdoor and at nighttime for one evening only, posits sensibility, time and space constrictions as its structuring principles: its duration is limited and the "white cube" format has been adapted to a coarse outdoor industrial setting, adopting a modality that is closer to forms of performative events. The visitor's senses are affected by both the paintings and the multitude of everyday occurrences surrounding the event - cars parking and leaving, crickets chirping, street cats running by, floating smells of urine and garbage, the glowing moonlight, etc. The paintings' spatial arrangement is abrupt: right upon entrance, a canvas, too small for its supporting wall and framed by an empty parking lot, gives the instant impression of an architectural anomaly. The paintings dissolve into the textures, objects and materials of their environment, and vice-versa: the background's aesthetical marks have seeped into the paintings: here, Eran Nave's painting of a swimming pool with snakes seems to have dripped onto its moldy sandstone wall; there, the painting of a nostalgic public telephone by Oded Yaakov naturally continues the sentence formed by the car tire, pipe and graffiti sharing the same wall. The unresolved ambiguity of this one-off urban exhibition hence allows for the production of many-layered confrontations between painting and the local architecture, performance and language.

Participating artists: Yossi Assouline, Yaron Attar, Avner Ben-Gal, Roni Doron, Sharon Fadida, Amir Givon, Ido Gordon, Omer Halperin, Uriel Hartov, Elad Larom, Tamir Lichtenberg, Shir Moran, Eran Nave, Netally Schlosser, Ester Schneider, Pearl Schneider, Yanai Segal, Asaf Setti, Lior Shachar, Ishai Shapira Kalter, Vered Shiloni, Ori Sindel, Keren Taggar, Oded Yaakov, Shahar Yahalom, Alexandra Zuckerman