

Ventilator

Exhibition: **Omer Halperin**

Eardrum | עור הדומק

Reception: Thursday, July 12th, 8pm | Dates: July 12th – July 21st | at Former Horace Richter Gallery, 24 Mazal Arie St. Old Jaffa, IL
Sun – Thu 12:00 – 17:00, Fri – Sat 11:00 – 14:00 or by appointment

Ventilator Gallery is very pleased to announce the opening, on Thursday, July 12th, of *Eardrum*, Omer Halperin's debut solo exhibition.

Eardrum takes place in a former Arab house that was bought in the early seventies by Horace Richter (1919-2006), an art dealer and philanthropist. At that time, Richter had immigrated from California to Old Jaffa, an area that was rapidly gentrifying. Richter was one of many art practitioners who forced the area's urban transformation into what they aspired would become "a Western oasis in the Middle-Eastern desert". However, Richter also made a prodigious contribution to the development of Israeli art, by exhibiting Israeli artists such as Yocheved Weinfeld, Benni Efrat, Pinchas Cohen Gan and Nahum Tevet alongside American artists like Jim Dine, Robert Rauschenberg and others.

Omer Halperin uses the existing cave-like architecture of Richter's former art gallery, heavy with both its artistic legacy and colonial history to create a space that reflects on the concept of *being qua being* – namely, the Aristotelian study of the substance that persists and remains even within an erased body or space. Halperin establishes interactions between these remains: the secluded figures shown in her drawings, the gallery's interiors and its outer narrative.

The spiritual portraits and situations deliriously depicted in Halperin's charcoal drawings pull the viewer in, like a door ajar through which one may imagine her characters coming back to life. Whether they openly stare at each other or surreptitiously observe one another, Halperin's ghost-like figures are first and foremost being caught in moments of contemplation. It is as if they oscillate between an inward and an outward urge: they firmly hold on to their secrets yet simultaneously crave to disclose them. Those exhibitionistic characters are choreographed in luminous spaces full of fear and mystery, both compositionally and architecturally. They share similarities with the horror genre, which inherently deals with decay. Like in a local adaptation of the disintegrating ambiance characteristic of "film noir", Halperin's figures seem slightly disturbed, almost lunatic, as they are depicted wearing fashionable clothes in dark interiors, striking manic poses while unleashing gloomy facial expressions.

Omer Halperin's material process of adding and removing, filling and concealing, extends the poetic dimension of her work: floating substances are about to crystallize into beings while beings are on the verge of vanishing. Halperin operates precisely in this threshold of "being in remaining"; where remains are beings, yet beings are almost never remains.

Omer Halperin (1984, Raanana, IL) lives and works in Jaffa. She received her MFA (2017) and BFA (2013) degrees from Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, IL. Her drawings were shown at Third Floor On The Left, Tel Aviv, IL (2017); Miriam Nissenholtz Gallery, Tel Aviv, IL (2017); Arad Contemporary Art Center, Arad, IL (2017); among others. Omer Halperin is a recipient of The Rothschild Caesarea Foundation Grant and The Rabinovich Foundation Grant.