



Shahar Marcus: Self Print

Opening: Thursday,
06.04.17, 20:00

Closing: Sunday, 15.10.17

curator: Shaked Shamir

More info: [04-9127090](tel:04-9127090)

Shahar Marcus is a performance artist focusing on video and performance works. In this exhibition he presents video works made in recent years, alongside prints based on frames taken from those works. In the course of this process, the moving image becomes a static one. The ability to reproduce images is fundamental to prints, as it is to the art of printmaking. But through slight changes between the prints, such as a light addition of color, a removal of certain elements, or a change of hue, the artist invites the viewer to draw closer and locate the unique qualities of each print.

Marcus chose to work in the printmaking technique in order to transfer his video works to a different medium so as to charge them with additional layers of meaning. The video work *Leap of Faith*, for example, was inspired by the iconic leap of artist Yves Klein. In its version as a print work, it draws inspiration from the combination of bicycle and musical notes appearing in Marcel Duchamp's drawing *To Have the Apprentice in the Sun*. In this work, a cyclist is depicted pedaling up a hill against the background of an empty page of notes, his motion uphill reminiscent of a rising musical scale. In two of Marcus's prints, the image of a cyclist appears superimposed on the notes of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2, which accompanied Marcus's video work *Homecoming Artist*. In this way the print diverges from the video work's original contexts, revealing new meanings.

Similarly, the print *The Sower*, which suspends one image from the video *Seeds*, reveals a reference to Jean-François Millet's famous painting bearing the same title. This reference is not obvious in the video work, but becomes clearer in the print, in which Marcus's own figure

replaces Millet's sower. The act of sowing is, in essence, full of hope and expectation – qualities that are further emphasized by the arid desert seen in the print.

In his video works Marcus uses his own body as his main instrument and as the scene of events. From its first days, video art has exhibited a close connection between the medium and the artist's body. Rosalind Krauss has written of the video as a moving image of self-regard, with a narcissistic dimension. She argues that the widespread use of the performer-artist's body as the central instrument in video works, marks the entire genre as narcissistic. These characteristics appear in Marcus's work, continuing a long tradition of performance and video art.

In the video works presented in the show, the artist scatters gold flakes into space, as if shedding his charm on humanity; he impersonates, in voice and body, former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir; and turns his own figure into a monumental sculpture encircled by children performing what seems like a maypole dance. Maypole dances are characteristic of spring celebrations in European folk traditions, carrying symbolic meanings of movement around the world's axis. Marcus's works thus move between self-importance and self-humor. He switches identities but remains the lead actor, thereby expressing the subject's narcissistic aspiration to create himself anew.

Marcus uses video and printmaking to reproduce his own figure countless times. With a mixture of gravity and humor, his oeuvre addresses contemporary culture, which consecrates amplified self-representation and the race for endless self-realization.