

Tel Aviv 08-10

Gabriel Benaim

By Noa Ben Shalom

“The process of a city’s physical construction is embedded in its process of cultural structuring. Controlling this cultural structuring process of the space is perhaps deeper and more effective than any political government or party platform, because the hegemony, in contrast to all the visible configurations of government, is present in everything but also invisible to the eye-it hides behind the ‘common sense’ of both rulers and ruled, their accepted opinions, what they take for granted, what they find inconceivable, their stories- and ultimately it constructs what we call ‘the normal’.

Similarly to how Peepers’ Beach (Hof Metzitzim) came to be so named after the movie that was made about it, sometimes a city can change just from the fact that it’s looked at differently, that its story is told differently.”

Sharon Rotbard, from *White City, Black City*

Gabriel Benaim doesn’t have an agenda to change the city of Tel Aviv. The motivating force that drives him to go out to photograph and explore is essentially visual: “For me, the visual is primary, and I expect any work of art, especially my own, to stand on its own visually, without recourse to an intellectual or even conceptual scheme... The act of framing transposes a commonplace object into a work of art, if done successfully, and this transposition is for me the point of photographing. This, then, to come without preconceptions and leave with a new way of seeing something old, summarizes my approach to photography” G. Benaim

At the same time, his photographs narrate his process of getting to know the city, and propose-both in his choice of format (a large format 8x10 camera which makes possible careful observation on a large frame, while inviting one to work slowly) as well as by his use of black and white film, and certainly in his choice of locations- a different story about a city that enjoys a reputation as a tolerant, cosmopolitan and culturally rich metropolis.

Gabriel Benaim holds a BA/BS in Philosophy and Economics, and first moved to Israel six years ago from Panama. His work has been exhibited at, among others, the Griffin Museum of Photography (Winchester, MA), the Walter Keller Gallery (Zurich), and Gallery 339 (Philadelphia).

The exhibit is currently on view at HaMidrasha School of Art’s Photography Department Gallery:

Dates: 21-10-10 til 21-11-10

Hours: Sun-Thurs 8:30-20:00, Fri 10:00-12:30

Phone: 09-747-8730

Email: Photography@beitberl.ac.il

Contact:

Noa Ben-Shalom, Curator: Noa@noabenshalom.com

Gabriel Benaim: gbenaim@yahoo.com

Gallery's Website: http://www.beitberl.ac.il/academic/art/news/news_events/Pages/101021-gavriel.aspx

Photographer's Website: <http://www.gabrielbenaim.com>

HaMidrasha School of Art