

Nahum Tevet
'Islands and Objects'

15 January - 25 February 2018

Opening: Sunday 14 January 2018, 3 pm

Opening speech at 3.30 pm, by historian and philosopher of art Thierry de Duve, followed by a conversation with the artist.

Press release

Kristof De Clercq gallery is proud to present 'Islands and Objects', the first solo exhibition in Belgium by Nahum Tevet, a central figure in Israel's contemporary art scene for more than four decades.

The exhibition will feature *Islands*, an important work from 2012. The work is almost completely transparent, unlike most other large installations by Tevet. And yet it offers a complex experience. We, the viewers, are invited to 'scan' the work, to wonder around, to 'read' what is in front of us, to take our time. We do not find a preferred point of view. We do not arrive at an obvious conclusion. We see benches, tables, boats and book-like structures. They simply stand or lay, on the ground. We might think of monochrome paintings, placed on the floor, which divide the installation ground into independent but synchronized 'stages' (islands?), for vertical elements to rise. Where are we? Are we in a house? Outside? Is there water flooding the space? Why seems a boat upside-down? We see reflections, repetitions and mirror images. The more we try to read what is in front of us, to figure out this 'place' and its 'logic', the less sense it seems to make. We get lost in this transparent structure, feeling less secure of our own place in space.

Next to the big installation the exhibition features quite a few smaller wall works selected from the last 10 years. They look like handcrafted machines, ambiguous toys, puzzle-like architectural models of nothing grander than themselves. The playful and intriguing nesting, doubling and mirroring of colourful objects (tables, boats, books, ...) eludes any univocal classification.

Nahum Tevet's poetics is based upon the connections between painting, sculpture and architecture. The 'building blocks' that comprise Tevet's formal vocabulary, for both his small wall works and the large, sprawling sculptural installations are never 'ready mades'. They are simple, almost archetypal forms: the chair, the table, the box, the boat, the book, etc. As viewers, confronted with a nested configuration of these 'building blocks' in different colors and measures, some right-side up, others resting on their side, some upside-down, we are required to constantly recalibrate and puzzle out an elusive 'correct' point of view. What exactly are we looking at? From where? What is up and what is down? What is foreground or background? What is large and what is small? Near or far? As viewers, we are seduced by the kaleidoscopic, multiplying, mirroring, doubling of familiar forms in intriguing compositions, of which the structure, crucially, never completely emerges.

Nahum Tevet

Nahum Tevet (b. 1946, lives and works in Tel Aviv) launched his career in the early 1970s with work that was rather resolute, even within the context of Post-Minimalism. Robert Rauschenberg acquired several of Tevet's works on glass in 1974. Recently, under the impulse of the renowned historian and philosopher of art Thierry De Duve, these works on glass have been shown in Hunter College (NY), Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, Poland, and Museum Villa Stuck in München.

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GALLERY

From the 1970s onwards, Tevet's artistic project examines and deconstructs the fundamental concepts of "painting" and its' role within specific spaces, while critically referring to minimalism and conceptual art. These ideas developed to vast, multi-limbed and intricate installations involving the viewer in a rich visual and conceptual experience. By the mid 1990s the scale of Tevet's work began to grow dramatically, culminating in what may be the artist's masterpiece, *Seven Walks*, a sprawling installation that Tevet worked on from 1997 to 2004 which is now on view at Museum Villa Stuck, Munich.

Tevet has been the subject of major survey exhibitions at both the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and the Tel Aviv Museum. His work has been part of exhibitions worldwide since 1975, such as numerous solo and group exhibitions in Europe and the United States, at venues including Documenta 8 (1987), the Sao Paulo Biennale (1994), the Biennale of Lyon (1997), the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna (1997), the Carnegie International (1999), the Venice Biennale (2003), the Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma (2008) and the Kunstmuseum Bochum (2015).

His work is included in many important museum collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; Museum of Modern Art, Ludwig Foundation, MUMOK, Vienna, Austria; Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, Krefeld, Germany; FRAC Bretagne, France; The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; and Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, and more.

Kristof De Clercq gallery

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Opening hours:

Fri - Sat - Sun, 2 - 6 pm,
and every day by appointment.

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