

YOSSI MILO GALLERY



For Immediate Release:

Assaf Shaham
Division of the Vision
January 15 – February 21, 2015
Artist's Reception: Thursday, January 15, 5:00 – 8:00 pm

Yossi Milo Gallery is pleased to present *Division of the Vision*, an exhibition of sculpture, video and photo-based work by Israeli artist Assaf Shaham. The exhibition will open on Thursday, January 15 and will be on view through Saturday, February 21, 2015 with an opening reception for the artist on Thursday, January 15 from 5:00 – 8:00 pm. This is Shaham's first solo exhibition in the United States.

Assaf Shaham draws attention to the divide between perception and reality in still and moving images. Recognizing that obeying prescribed roles of artist, camera and subject, limits the possibility of representing reality, his work attempts to break down and reconfigure these roles.

In the series *Writer/Storytellers*, *Figure* and *Medium*, Shaham uses found photographs to highlight the limitations of representation. For *Writer/Storytellers*, the artist dismantled a copy of *People of the 20th Century*, August Sander's monumental book of portraits categorizing German citizens by profession or social class. Shaham negates Sander's claim to accurately portray a subject by cutting into the book's pages, eliminating facial features or entire forms and leaving only outlines of the figures intact. For *Figure*, Shaham selected images from a 1930s study documenting the impact of Western foods on dental health. While the subjects appear to be smiling for the camera, they are actually baring their teeth for inspection. For *Medium* Shaham replaces one of the standard scenic images on a box of Ilford black-and-white photo paper with a famous still from Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow Up*, a film that explores the relationship between the photographer and subject, and questions the capacity of an image to reveal the truth.



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The installation piece *The Vision of Division* recalls the Tel Aviv Museum's storage of select artworks in a rocket-proof vault during an 8-day military operation in 2012. Rather than disclose which works were and were not safely stored, the Museum closed off access to entire galleries and posted signs about the removal of "masterpieces from the permanent collection" on the locked doors. Shaham collected the signs and displays them behind opaque glass as stand-ins for the absent objects and as symbols of the complex and incomplete story hidden behind the text.

Shaham challenges the role of the artist by relinquishing control of the creative process to machines. Shaham states that:

"My investigations center, for the most part, on simple, mass-produced, easily available appliances such as calculators, cameras, watches...My assumption is that every appliance, material and mechanism predicts its user – so that the user is...already included in the instruction manual...By introducing disruptions into [this] manual, I suggest a way of rethinking its potential..."

The light-only "scanograms" from Shaham's series *Full Reflection*, are made by two reciprocating office scanners. One scanner projects light and the other captures its effects. Shaham experiments with the settings of the scanners and their orientation to one another to create abstract and colorful images resembling paintings by Mondrian or Rothko with the experimental spirit of Dada.

Assaf Shaham's photographs have been exhibited at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art; The Museum of Photography, Tel-Hai; Shpilman Institute for Photography, Tel Aviv; and the Bloomfield Science Museum, Jerusalem, among others. Shaham received the Constantiner Photography Award from the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2012) and the Shpilman Institute for Photography Scholarship for Excellence (2011). Born in Jerusalem in 1983, Shaham currently lives and works in Tel Aviv, Israel and Lisbon, Portugal.

For more information, please contact Alissa Schoenfeld at 212.414.0370 or alissa@yossimilo.com, or visit the gallery's website at www.yossimilo.com