“Silence”

This is a political protest exhibition on the subject of fish and palms, representative metaphors, symbols that I chose as representative of the right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. My work arises out of a process of asking questions about the world and the reality in which we live. I chose the silence of the fishes as the subject of my exhibition in an act of protest against the state of political silencing surrounding us.

We live in an unbearable time of false messages, in a racist, exclusive, violent, discriminatory society that tramples human rights and is inconsistent with Israel's pluralist, democratic principles. A society that silences and widens the socio-economic gap. One reform initiative replaces another. Peace negotiations are stalled for cynical gain, the chances for peace continue to decrease as long as Netanyahu is in power. The social protests burst forth. The people took to the streets demanding social justice and a decrease in the cost of living. The protests dissolved and what happened? We have returned to the very same point as before, and have even gone backwards. From a condition of crying out for social justice out we have passed on to silence.

These are the days when we must not give up on our freedom of expression, our freedom to write and create. We must not forget that “democracy is first and foremost an essence of value. An essence whose goal is to advance and to realize human rights in society.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

Have we really reached such a state in our nation that we fear to express our thoughts and feelings in public?

Furthermore, the exhibition establishes a dialogue with Dr. Anat Rimon Or, a lecturer in education, philosophy, sociology of culture, and cultural criticism. Anat Rimon Or’s work deal with silencing and the education that opposes it. She is the author of the book series “Raising a Human Being” (Pardes), gathers testimony for the rearguard battle for the right to speak and the right to understand, and tries to transform this testimony into a voice; she is an expert in rearguard battles.

Alongside the symbolic representation of fish, I decided to focus on the figure of the palm tree, infested and consumed from within by palm weevils throughout the country. The figure of the palm signifies for me our sadness and helplessness in the face of the situation in Israel. Withered and consumed from within, palm trees cry out my internal feeling of the complex situation in which I live and create in 2017.

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1. Yaakov Hecht, *Democratic Education – A Beginning of a Story* (Tel Aviv: Keter, The Institute for Democratic Education, 2005), 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)