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Imagining Alternative Futures: Migrations in the Art of Yael Bartana

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Introduction

In opening up alternative or hypothetical scenarios, Israeli artist Yael Bartana reflects metaphorically on the history of her country of origin and its international entanglements. Her work touches on delicate topics and develops a platform for debate, digging into collective memory and strongly engaging the viewers.

Imaginary migrations have often been the starting point of Bartana's projects. The artist portrays unrealistic or paradoxical movements of people, with references to Israeli and European history. Fictive migrations, thus, become ways to ponder on real historical events and to open up discussions. This essay will analyse this strategy in relation to two of her most complex works: *And Europe Will Be Stunned* (2007-2011) and *Malka Germania* (2021).

Methodologically, the paper relies on the visual analysis of the artworks. It looks at them through an iconographical perspective and studies the way they are exhibited and how they engage and interact with the public. Additionally, it builds on interdisciplinary sources, such as historical or socio-political texts, to interpret the artist's explicit or implicit references. As to its results, it aims to understand how fictitious migrations in Bartana's projects become ways to reconsider real-world problems and challenge assumptions and beliefs from the collective imagery.

In and out of Israel: Yael Bartana

Yael Bartana was born into a family of Polish origins in 1970 in Kfar Yehezkel, a moshav ovdim: a traditional type of Zionist settlement from the first decades of the twentieth century. As early as 1996, however, she decided to move out of Israel, shortly after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995, the president much engaged in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. This event indeed “shaped her own and her generation’s worldview and collective identity” (Barkai, “Neurotic Fantasy” 246). The decision to leave the country, out of personal and political reasons, has given her a first impression of what it means to migrate, and has transformed her approach to art radically.

In her early career, Bartana calls herself an “amateur anthropologist” (Esche and Bartana 42). It is an expression from the writer Eva Hoffmann, who claims that every immigrant becomes so, in the way he/she looks at the new society from an outsider perspective (Pantenburg 54). Bartana, however, turns her gaze not to her new host society, but to her country of origin. She develops a distanced perspective that allows her to explore topics related to Israeli society with a sense of freedom that she could not find within the state.

She problematises the ways Israel raises its citizens and creates a sense of belonging while bringing together communities with different geographical origins. She uses art to examine the various rituals that establish an “imagined community” (Anderson 25), filming events such as the collective rites from the days of remembrance, or the mandatory military upbringing of the Israeli youths.

After some years in New York, Bartana moves to Europe, initially to the Netherlands. Here she leaves aside a simple documentary-observational approach. Her projects get more complex and more politically engaged. She begins to portray alternative historical scenarios and to imagine their potential consequences. She often draws on archival material and challenges its narratives, finally claiming to recover the imagination that politicians have lost.

The artist translates in her projects her own experience of moving out of Israel and begins to imagine hypothetical collective Jewish migrations. These fictional journeys shed light on the void that the Jewish community has left in Europe and hint at European responsibility for the destabilisation of the Levant region.

***And Europe Will Be Stunned* (2007 – 2011)**

Bartana creates *And Europe Will Be Stunned* (2007-2011) over several years and through long periods of field research, demonstrating her predisposition as an anthropologist. The main outcome is a trilogy of films, lasting just over 50 minutes in total. The project is set in Poland. The artist thus finds the opportunity to return and rediscover her family's roots.

The work narrates the story of a fictitious political movement which strives for the return of Jews to Poland: *the Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland* (JRMiP). It features many references to the history of Zionism and twentieth-century Polish history, creating multiple levels of interpretation.

The Polish Trilogy's First Film: *Mary Koszmary* ("Nightmares," 2007)

The first film opens with a man entering an empty stadium. He is Sławomir Sierakowski, an actual Polish political activist, whom Bartana met in Poland. Sierakowski steps onto a platform and begins a long speech. He addresses the Jews directly, and tells them that the Polish motherland misses them, she has not forgotten them, and she dreams of them every night. He vigorously invites them to return to their country, and to heal its wounds.

"This is a call, not to the dead, but to the living", he states (*And Europe Will Be Stunned* / *Mary Koszmary* 2:30-2:40). Sierakowski seems to reverse the historical calls that leaders of Zionism made at the beginning of the twentieth-century. Back then, figures such as Yosef Vitkin were trying to convince Jewish people to do the *Aliyah*, emigration to Palestine (see Vitkin's "A Call to the Youth of Israel whose Hearts are with their People

and with Zion”, 1905). Here, inversely, the Polish politician is asking forgiveness and for them to come back to Europe.

The stadium where the speech is delivered equally holds a very symbolic meaning. Bartana’s film refers to Leni Riefenstahl’s *Olympia* (1938), where the stadium is the central site for a dictatorial state’s propaganda. The artist operates a visual subversion. Riefenstahl’s film shows the stands full of people, who during the opening ceremony do the fascist Nazi salute. Bartana’s stands, on the other hand, are sombre, spectral, and completely empty (fig. 1). Some sparse vegetation gives the only touch of colour. It is the most effective visual representation of the void that Polish Jews left behind after the genocide.

Indeed, Bartana mentions the feeling of emptiness she felt while visiting the villages in Poland where Jewish communities existed before the Holocaust: “It made a very emotional and powerful impact, even stronger than watching the real atrocities. To feel the void in these places was very strong” (“Yael Bartana Interview: Returning 3,3 Million Jews to Poland” 3:30-4:40).

Afterwards, Sierakowski continues his speech: “Return, and both of us, will finally cease to be the chosen people . . . Chosen for suffering, chosen for taking wounds, and chosen for inflicting wounds. Return, and we shall finally become Europeans” (*And Europe Will Be Stunned* / Mary Koszmary 5:40-6:00). The immigration project does not have a strictly Polish character. It dreams indeed of becoming an inspiration for a newly welcoming European community, as the leader will later add.

As he speaks, a group of children writes in white chalk on the playing field one of the movement’s slogans: “3,300,000 Jews can change the life of 40,000,000 Poles” (*And Europe Will Be Stunned* / Mary Koszmary 2:40-4:50). The boys wear a brownish suit, the girls a dark blue skirt, and both have a red kerchief around the neck. The children’s military clothing reminds the viewers of the official uniform of a fascist state and adds a militarist aesthetic in contrast with the words of peace of the movement’s leaders. The children, however, enliven the stadium and weaken its

sombre atmosphere (fig. 2). They bring in a playful dimension and transform a solemn moment into a game-like reality, echoing Gadamer's idea of *Spiel der Kunst*. This detail aligns Bartana with other video-artists like Wael Shawky and his *Telematch Sadat* (2007) or Jumana Manna and her *Blessed Blessed Oblivion* (2010), where historical events such as the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat or the history of Israel-Palestine relations are similarly staged by child actors.

The second film: *Mur i wieża* ("Wall and Tower," 2009)

And Europe Will Be Stunned's second film parodies the aesthetic of old Zionist photographers like Yaacov Ben-Dov or Leni and Herbert Sonnenfeld (who inspire Bartana's 2008 photo series *The Missing Negatives of the Sonnenfeld Collection*). The movie draws inspiration from their glorification of the work of the land and the heroization of the Eretz-Israel Zionist farmer pioneers and colourises the pictures. It features new pioneers (fig. 3) who return presumably from Israel to Poland. They look proud and are dressed like their ancestors, but the urban landscape that surrounds them makes their historical transposition parodistic. Moreover, their number (only a few) is far distant from the one promised in the first film.

After their arrival in Warsaw, they start to build a wooden camp with a couple of barracks and a watchtower. The construction takes place in the square where the monument to the Warsaw Ghetto's heroes stands, which was renamed "Hitler square" during the German occupation and that today houses the Museum of the History of Polish Jews (Dirié et al. 139).

The Polish anthem accompanies their work of digging, hammering, and pulling up. The music adds a solemn tone as if to emphasise that the state itself is sponsoring the process. Once the construction is finished, Sierakowski arrives and brings the official flag of the movement, which juxtaposes an eagle from the flags of Poland and a David Star from Israel. The banner passes from hand to hand and is finally raised on the tower. This scene recovers again the aesthetic of a kibbutz's collective work from old Israeli photographs.

Afterwards, a language class is held inside the camp. The teacher translates from Hebrew to Polish words like 'land' and 'peace' for a few enthusiastic students. The film subverts once again Zionist history. After the birth of Israel in 1948, the imposition of Hebrew in the land was one of the key strategies to create a new nation out of different immigrant communities. Ilan Pappé describes "the dynamic expansion of Hebrew as a living language" as "one of the greatest achievements of the Zionist movement" (*Israel* 83). In Bartana's film, on the contrary, the neo-pioneers start to learn their future Polish compatriots' language as one of their first actions, beginning right away a process of integration.

Nevertheless, they surround the settlement with barbed wire. Visually, it creates the look of a concentration camp (fig. 4), or of a new ghetto on the ashes of the old one. On a second level, it could also refer to the militarization of the territory in Israel and Palestine. The sunny day, however, brightens up the whole scene and lowers the contrast between the camp and the city that surrounds the park where it stands.

Joa Ljungberg writes that "they are constructing the kibbutz as a *Homa Umigdal* – a type of prefabricated homestead developed during the Arab revolt in 1936" (Bartana et al. 41). She quotes Sharon Rotbard who "describes the powerful symbolic value of the *Homa Umigdal* to the nation's history – an embodiment of sacrifice, dedication, and heroism – but also argues that it served to perpetuate a ghetto mentality" (41).

In contrast, the neo-pioneers show, therefore, both openness and suspicion toward the Polish natives. They get in touch with them and start a process of social integration, while at the same time they arm their settlement as if to organise for a potential military defence. These ambiguities are a distinct hallmark of Bartana's artistic style, intended to raise doubt and reflection in the viewer.

The film indeed values viewers' reactions, as it features, for instance, Warsaw's citizens discovering the new construction in their neighbourhood. The camp is abandoned by its founders, and after a shortcut, we see some passersby who stop to examine it or even try to go inside.

Significantly, they find it empty, like the ruins of a concentration camp. These scenes break down the barrier between reality and fiction, confronting ordinary people with the possibility of unexpected turns of history.

The third film: *Zamach* ("Assassination," 2011)

The third film is centred around the funeral of Sierakowski, who has been assassinated. It opens with a shot from inside of the funeral car (fig. 5). The back doors open, and the coffin is taken up by a group of men who solemnly accompanies it inside a palace, seen afar through a De Chirico-like perspective.

After a last tribute to the movement's leader inside the palace, a procession then departs. Here we see signs stating "Jews and Poles refuse to be enemies", or "more colour, less blood" or even "fascism kills" (*And Europe Will Be Stunned / Zamach* 8:40-12:00). The crowd gathers under a stage, where some speeches and chants follow.

The whole event recalls, on a smaller scale, Israeli President Rabin's public funeral from 1995 (fig. 6). Sigal Barkai writes about it:

Throughout the trilogy, Bartana appeals to Israeli viewers directly while bypassing the Poles and Europeans, communicating with them through schemes, ceremonial patterns and formal rituals known only to them. The construction of wall and tower settlements, youth delegations to Poland and the assassination of Rabin are cultural events . . . that can only be fully understood by Israelis. ("Historiographic Irony" 7)

Sierakowski's death, however, also evokes the assassination of the Polish President Gabriel Narutowicz in 1922. He was much engaged in the inclusion of the Jewish community in Polish political life, and he was killed in 1922 by an artist during a visit to the National Gallery in Warsaw. These kinds of references, like the numerous European Union flags at the memorial ceremony, contradict Barkai's argument and demonstrate how Bartana is addressing not only the Israeli public but also the European one.

Indeed, one of the first venues that Bartana's project travelled to was the Venice Art Biennale. Here she represented the 2011 Polish pavilion: an exception, since usually the national pavilions present artists from the country itself. The pavilion's large hall was divided into multiple rooms: in each one a movie from the trilogy was projected, without, however, a structured or logical continuity. This left the viewer to experience the exhibition without a prefabricated mental path, leaving them a free interpretation of the works (fig. 7).

After showing it in Venice, Bartana brought the trilogy around Poland. She even screened it in small villages, to create a debate among the locals and all those who could not travel to Italy. She did the same in Israel, where she mentions that the audience's reactions were often strong and emotional. She has said that many people there did not understand why she was proposing that Jews return to a country like Poland, which, for obvious historical reasons, is still the worst possible destination in the collective Israeli imagination.

And Europe Will Be Stunned (2007-2011) thus develops as a courageous challenge, and it shows Bartana's interest in engaging locally and creating a debate out of the elitist art world. The Polish trilogy, however, also hides a personal journey. Through it, the artist returns to the roots of her family, and tries to reconnect with them: "When I went to Poland, I felt very connected to the place on some strange level. It is something I never felt in the Netherlands" (Bartana et al. 115).

Bartana's return to Poland gives her the opportunity to explore the European Jewish and Yiddish cultures. She often comments on how Israel has gone through a process of removal and denial of its European origins, echoing what Ilan Pappé has described as:

[A] struggle against the rich Jewish heritage of the townships of Eastern Europe. The constructors of the new culture went through a process that critical Israeli historians and sociologists called 'the denial of exile'. Denying the Jewish culture of Europe was seen as the safest way of returning to a normal and healthy existence of nationhood, as it had been during the biblical time. (*Israel* 83)

Additionally, Bartana also subverts the tradition of delegations to Poland's concentration camps regularly organized by Israel for young people. She has explained it explicitly:

Zionism in Israel has made us very strongly disconnected to our previous history. Poland is used systematically by the politics of memory, for instance in the practice of sending young kids to visit the concentration camps, to visit the monuments in Poland, while having zero contact to Polish youth, or anyone in general. This makes sure that they will come back stronger and ready to become soldiers. It is very much part of a process of propaganda, that uses the victims to transform them into soldiers. ("Yael Bartana: Reflections on the construction of the national identity and the politics of memory" 19:40-20:35)

With her project, the artist reverses this tradition: she promotes contact with the local Polish population and creates a space for dialogue. In doing so, she courageously touches very delicate (or even taboo) topics, such as the memory of the Holocaust and the politics around it in Israel.

The proposal of a reverse migration to Poland has often been framed as impractical and labelled as a mere provocation. Sigal Barkai, for example, quotes Gideon Ofrat, who writes: "It goes without saying: no man in Poland would ever make this kind of call, and also the artist – post-Zionist as she is – doesn't advocate for a 'Jewish return to Poland'. Yael Bartana is an impostor, and irony is the intellectual and creative tool she uses in her deception" ("Historiographic Irony" 6).

Bartana's work looks, indeed, for such strong reactions. It gives no unquestionable solutions but rather asks questions. The Polish trilogy seems to take up what the Italian intellectual Pier Paolo Pasolini had already asked in a 1967 essay: "would Europeans be ready to welcome back the Jews, guaranteeing that the atrocities of the XX century would not happen again" (145)?

In 2012 Bartana organised the *First Congress of the JRMiP Movement* at the Berlin Biennale by setting up discussions with people from many different backgrounds. The debates focused on delicate topics from the

films, such as the European origins of Zionism, the colonisation of Palestine, the future of Europe, and the possible political solutions for the region's conflicts.

The Polish trilogy transforms here into a platform for a public debate and shows, indeed, how the whole project was not a mere provocation. The talks have a very serious visual configuration (fig. 8): they are held around a round table, which mimics those featuring reunions like the G20. Around it, dozens of spectators could sit in several circles of chairs and bring in the perspective of a general public – like the Warsaw's people did in the second film of the trilogy.

The event overturns the various Zionist congresses held in Europe prior to the colonisation of Palestine, which established the historical steps of the movement. Furthermore, it adds to the *And Europe Will Be Stunned* project a performative aspect. Unlike the movies, nothing is scripted and acted, although everything is filmed. The discussions are real, as are the debates that confront opposing positions. Like a play, it is attended by the audience of the Biennale, which brings the reaction of someone from outside the work.

One of the most burning issues which Bartana's movies imply is the potential consequences of such a migratory movement back to Poland for Israel. In the second film, we see only a few dozen people actually returning to Warsaw, but the first one promises a displacement of 3.3 million people. Such a phenomenon would require a "massive housing project," to quote a definition that Yael Allweil has coined for Zionism (5).

If those people had come from Israel, they would have left a great void in a population which in 2011 was only 7.7 million. This would determine a major demographic shift and undermine the Israeli historical process of Judaization of the land.

The congress in Berlin, however, discerned reality from fiction. Inspired by the hyperbolic scenarios of the Polish trilogy, it tackled actual demographic problems which pose sensitive issues in Israel, for instance,

the right of return for Palestinians. During one of the panels, the curator, Reem Fadda addresses this question. She had co-curated with the Israeli curator Galit Eiat the project *Liminal Spaces* (2006-2008), a dialogue between the Israeli and the Palestinian art scenes against the occupation and the separation wall. In Berlin, she states:

I would like to ask that we acknowledge the right of return to both Jewish and non-Jewish people. There needs to be addressed a historical violence that was perpetrated on native people in Palestine through the insertion of a colonialist entity and the building of a nation, suppressing the right of one people in favour of the other with a large supremacist understanding that is predominantly white, let's say European model of a colonialist building of a nation started in a place that they are more deserving of it. ("Yael Bartana: Reflections on the construction of the national identity and the politics of memory" 1:21:35-1:22:30)

This is an example of how Bartana's work is able to blur the line between fiction and reality, and create an actual platform for debate addressing the concrete problems of the region. The fictive aspect of her films becomes an occasion to rethink history through a transnational perspective and to establish a dialogue about new possibilities and imaginative solutions.

***Malka Germania* (2021)**

Malka Germania (2021) is a 43-minute film, with an oneiric, slowed-down rhythm very different from the Polish trilogy. It tells the story of the sudden arrival of an androgynous messiah in the city of Berlin and the side events that occur as a result. The messiah comes to awaken the ghosts of the past, but she also brings redemption. This coincides again with the return of Jews to a place where they had left a void. The movie is full of references to both the Holocaust and Israeli history, hence addressing a mixed audience.

It was first featured at the exhibition *Redemption Now* (2021) at the Jewish Museum in Berlin, which had commissioned it. It was projected on three huge slightly curved screens (fig. 12): on them, the images sometimes alternated, and sometimes came along together. This confused the perception of the viewer, who had to decide which screen to follow, but

was likewise enveloped by the pictures. The sound completed the immersive experience: the film has no dialogues but only sounds of eerie sirens, bells, footsteps, and barking dogs; constantly creating a tense atmosphere.

The film opens with the arrival of the Messiah in a forest, where she starts to walk along some rail lines. She is completely dressed in white, the same colour as her hair. Her dress resembles a sort of ancient peplos. A tunic with wide sleeves and a hood covers her around a pullover; around the waist, she has a strap looking vaguely like an explosive belt, contrasting her redeeming aura.

At her side, a white camel or a donkey alternatively accompanies her: she will ride the second proudly while entering victorious in Berlin. She thus resembles the traditional German figure of the Palmesel (Jesus on the Pamesel, see *Christus auf dem Palmesel* at the Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst).

While the messiah strolls through the trees, military men move around (fig. 10). Some youngsters run and exercise in the forest, as do some girls on another screen. They mimic faithfully the athletes at the beginning of the second part of Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia (Fest der Schönheit)*. The location is also the same: the light penetrates the vegetation, and the surrounding mist creates a suspended atmosphere. The Messiah is thus almost visiting Riefenstahl's movie as part of her wandering around the ghosts of the past: in this case, she examines fascist body worship and militaristic aesthetics.

Finally, the location reveals itself. We are at the Wannsee: while various people and family enjoy their day at the beach, on the other side of the lake we can see the famous villa where the Final Solution to the Jewish Question (the code name for the Jewish genocide) was taken. As a lugubrious reminder, at the end of the film Albert Speer's "Große Halle" (Halle des Volkes, part of the gigantic transformation plan of Berlin desired by Hitler) will emerge from the water. The Messiah will walk defiantly towards it.

Afterwards, she starts to walk around historical places in Berlin: the Brandenburg Gate, the Victory Column, and the Checkpoint Charlie. The film focuses on her emotional reactions and her inquisitive look as she discovers these sites. In one scene, she arrives at a station with a Hebrew signboard, where a group of people are waiting. They resemble the Shoah's deportees: the Messiah arrives and leads them away, following the tracks in the forest.

This last scene is part of a process of salvation and redemption, which in Judaism is inextricably linked to the arrival of the Messiah. One element, however, disturbs this salvific happening: the constant presence of the army. They roam the streets of Berlin, with barking dogs kept on leashes which epitomise their threatening presence.

The military men often carry the Israeli flag on their shoulders: this suggests an ongoing conquest of the city by their country. One of them is wearing *tefillins* (Jewish prayer tool) and plays the shofar (fig. 11). He might be a historical reference to Shlomo Goren, who, as Pappe writes, "was famous for blowing the shofar [after the end of the 1967 war] – the traditional Jewish horn – on the Wailing Wall, declaring his intention to accelerate the coming of the Jewish Messiah to Jerusalem" (*A History of Modern Palestine* 199).

The redemption process thus develops ambiguously not only through the arrival of the Messiah but also through military conquest. This echoes what the historian Masalha calls the "Zionist ideal of redeeming the biblical 'soil' by conquest" (33). In a very significant scene, we see a series of people replacing street names, and covering old street signs with new Hebrew inscriptions while the Messiah silently observes (fig. 12). This significantly takes place in Berlin, a city with a strong ongoing debate about the possible replacement of street names linked to the nation's colonial past. Yael Bartana claims that she was inspired by a dream. Anyone familiar with Israel's history, however, will immediately associate the scene with the politics of changing names in the Palestinian land's topography, which was part of the process of nation-building and Judaization of the territory, something that historians Nur Masalha and Ilan Pappe have

labelled, respectively, a “toponymicide” or a “memoricyde” (Masalha 10; Pappe, *A History of Modern Palestine* 146).

Bartana audaciously overlays many delicate and emotional references to the Holocaust and allusions to the modern history of Israel. She juxtaposes references to the fascist aesthetics of Riefenstahl’s movies to hint at the role of the army in Israeli history. With the latter, she aligns herself with other Israeli artists, such as Adi Nes or Nir Hod, who equally address this topic (see the 2016 volume *Civic Aesthetics: Militarism in Israeli Art and Visual Culture* by Noa Roei).

Malka Germania works thus on two levels. The first one follows the Messiah’s discovery of hidden Holocaust memories in Berlin. In the second one, the film refers to the messianic aspirations intertwined with a military history which have characterised the history of Zionism in Palestine. However, it gives no direct explanation of the relationship between the two (the army and the Messiah). It leaves to the viewers their interpretations and a questioning of the potential consequences of the portrayed scenarios. The arrival of the Messiah could transform Berlin into a new Jerusalem. Would that lead to a Jewish migration, or return, to the city, similar to what happens in the Polish trilogy?

Many issues interweave: the re-emergence of tragic memories, the possibilities of redemption, and the risks of new violence taking place. *Malka Germania*, just like *And Europe Will Be Stunned*, gives no answers to its questions, and aims to become once again a platform for debate. Indeed, just like the trilogy, it features the reactions of accidental spectators: in more than one scene, we see Berlin citizens looking out of their windows and observing the strange actions taking place in their streets. They represent the addressees of the project, whom the film wants to make think.

Conclusion

Both *Malka Germania* and *And Europe Will Be Stunned* act as reflections on history. They do so through hypothetical (or fantastic) alternative scenarios, imagining fictive migrations and displacement of people. They

suggest embracing history completely, to expose its ghosts in full, as if only through a cathartic process one could find redemption or new solutions.

They both start with a private journey of the artist. She moves out of Israel and travels around Europe as an immigrant, and as an “amateur anthropologist” (Bartana et al. 42). Here, she rediscovers the European origins of her family and of her country and develops a distanced perspective. However, Bartana’s personal path aims to find a value for the community through artistic projects that engage the public and seek to create debate.

Bartana’s fictional stories are filled with references to real history: when they tell of a fictive political movement striving for a Jewish return to Poland, or of the Messiah’s arrival in Berlin and the alleged conquest of the city by the Israeli army. Fiction thus becomes a metaphor of reality, and imaginary migrations and displacements are ways to reflect on thorny issues. The plots take unlikely turns, and develop as “what ifs”: what if Jews were really to return to countries like Poland or Germany? What if a new Jerusalem was set up out of Israel? What if the ghosts of history re-emerged in all of their obscure aspects? Bartana’s works ask these questions directly to their viewers. Ideally, they try to test their responsiveness. This is why both the Polish trilogy and *Malka Germania* include scenes with the locals reacting to the strange events happening around them.

When it comes to exhibiting her work, Bartana shows them out of the elitist circles of art biennials and fairs. For instance, she showed *And Europe Will be Stunned* around little villages in Poland to provoke discussion about home and belongings for Jews and non-Jews. Her art unfolds, thus, naturally a platform that accommodates all the debates in and around Jewish migration. Here contrasting positions meet, while the artistic fiction retrieves the “fantasy that the politicians have lost” and the courage to tackle sensitive but crucial issues (“Artist Talk: Yael Bartana” 9:10-9:30).

Appendix: images



Fig. 1. Yael Bartana, Mary Koszmary ("Nightmares"), 2007, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam and Foksal Gallery Foundation, Warsaw



Fig. 2. Yael Bartana, Mary Koszmary ("Nightmares"), 2007, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam and Foksal Gallery Foundation, Warsaw



Fig. 3. Yael Bartana, *Mur i wieża* ("Wall and Tower"), 2009, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv



Fig. 4. Yael Bartana, *Mur i wieża* ("Wall and Tower"), 2009, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv



Fig. 5. Yael Bartana, *Zamach* ("Assassination"), 2011, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv



Fig. 6. Yael Bartana, *Zamach* ("Assassination"), 2011, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

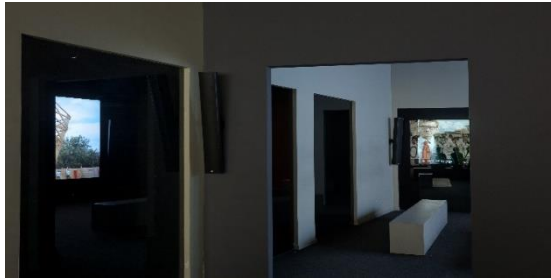


Fig. 7. Yael Bartana, *JRMiP*, Installation view Polish Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale, photo by Ilya Rabinovich



Fig. 8. Yael Bartana, *Congress of The Jewish Renaissance Movement in Poland (JRMiP)*, Berlin, 2021

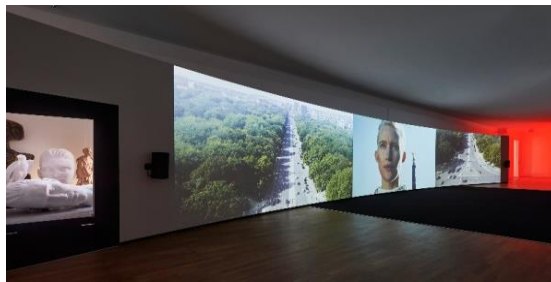


Fig. 9. Credit: Jüdisches Museum Berlin. Photo by Yves Sucksdorff



Fig. 10. Yael Bartana, *Malka Germania*, 2021, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam; Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milano; Petzel Gallery, New York; and Capitain Petzel, Berlin



Fig. 11. Yael Bartana, *Malka Germania*, 2021, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam; Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milano; Petzel Gallery, New York; and Capitain Petzel, Berlin



Fig. 12. Yael Bartana, *Malka Germania*, 2021, video still, courtesy of Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam; Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milano; Petzel Gallery, New York; and Capitain Petzel, Berlin

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