

**Postgraduate Program in Curating ICS, ZHdK presents at White Space
– Curatorial Practice - Samstag 28. 11. – 14h**

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**Political Activism in Israeli Video Art.
by Sergio Edelsztein**

Video art in Israel developed in the last 15 years in direct connection and response to the political developments in the Middle East. In fact, it was rather the reflection of these historical events in the booming televised media of the 1990's that became the main subject matter or early video art in Israel.

The specific characteristics of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict offer an infinite range of postures regarding the possibilities of artistic reaction. Activism in the artistic communities might equally mean fighting disinformation and - since stagnation is the main weapon of reaction - also fight "political correctness". Activism unveils media manipulation, army repression and criticizes government policies.

Video and film artists working in this vein use a variety of technical and thematic means. Some artists record a simple defiant gesture of abuse and repression and introduce it in the art circuit (or publish it on the internet) circumventing media bias and the control of information flow. Others recur to more "artistic" practices of cropping pieces of reality, of reversal and manipulation. Still, others apply the actual staging of situations that are meant to highlight and ridicule present political situations. Through these strategies, artists on both Israeli and Palestinian sides seek a way of voicing discontent, uncover abuses – and elaborate their own personal fears and traumas.

Sergio Edelsztein is director of the Centre for Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv

List of Works:

David Reeb

Ni'ilin, 7.6.2008. 2008, 6:10 min

Fida' Abu 'Ayesha

Sharmuta / Settlers at the Door, 2006 (Palestine), 7:00 min

Avi Mograbi

Detail, 2003, 8'

Yossi Atia & Itamar Rose

The State of Judeo-Arabia, 2007 (Israel), 4:30 min

Raafat Hattab

Untitled, 2009. 3.50 min (no subtitles)

Yael Bartana

A Declaration, 2006, 7 min

Summercamp, 2007, 12 min

Mary Koszmary, 2007, 10:50 min

Operation Wall and Tower 2009, 13:00 min

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White Space // Office for Curating / Art / Theory

Programming: Dorothee Richter, Siri Peyer

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Postgraduate Program in Curating

Institute Cultural Studies in the Arts

Züricher Hochschule der Künste

www.curating.org