

Esther
Shalev-Gerz
Entre l'écoute
et la parole

22.09.2012
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Musée cantonal
des Beaux-Arts
Lausanne



www.mcba.ch

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MUSÉE CANTONAL
DES BEAUX-ARTS
LAUSANNE



We are pleased to invite you to
the **press conference** of the exhibition

Esther Shalev-Gerz
Between Telling and Listening
22 September 2012 - 6 January 2013

on **Friday, 21 September 2012 at 11 am.**
The artist will be present.

GENERAL
INFORMATION

Opening reception Friday 21 September 2012, 6.30 pm

Press contact Loïse Cuendet
loise.cuendet@vd.ch, +41 21 316 34 48

To download press material:
www.mcba.ch, press relations
Username: mcba-presse / Password: gpresse

Address Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts
Palais de Rumine, Place de la Riponne 6, CH - 1014 Lausanne
T +41 21 316 34 45 / F +41 21 316 34 46
info.beaux-arts@vd.ch - www.mcba.ch

Opening hours Tuesday to Wednesday: 11 am - 6 pm
Thursday: 11 am - 8 pm
Friday to Sunday: 11 am - 5 pm
26 December: 11 am - 5 pm
Closed on Mondays, 25 December, 1 and 2 January
Opening to coincide with the Museum Night
22 September 2012, 2 pm - 2 am (www.lanuitdesmusees.ch)

Admission Adults: CHF 10.-
Pensioners, students, apprentices: CHF 8.-
Under 16: free
1st Saturday of the month: free

Access Metro M2: station Riponne-Maurice Béjart
Bus 1/2: stop at Rue Neuve
Bus 8: stop at Riponne

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ESTHER SHALEV-GERZ

BETWEEN TELLING AND LISTENING

THE EXHIBITION

This fall the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts of Lausanne presents the first large-scale solo exhibition to be devoted to the work of Esther Shalev-Gerz in Switzerland.

The Lausanne retrospective offers a vast panorama of the artist's work through her slide projections, photographs, video installations and projects in public space.

In the exhibition Esther Shalev-Gerz has devised for the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, the artist has designed an itinerary reflecting the different periods of her output. Major works are arranged in a non-chronological order, in keeping with the rooms and the questions they explore. Questions of places and landscapes, questions of memorial traces contained in objects or stories, questions of portraits structured by words and silence.

Born in Lithuania, Esther Shalev-Gerz grew up in Israel, and now lives in Paris. For more than twenty years she has been developing work centered on questions associated with the construction of memory, whether personal or collective. Her reinterpretation of history is firmly anchored in the present of her protagonists: The majority of her works are created in dialogue with people – be they the inhabitants of a specific place, or the witnesses of a particular event. Thus the past is always interpreted through the present of those who remember it, or work with its relics. Through different stories, in the gap between listening and telling, and by means of her installations, Esther Shalev-Gerz creates new spaces to tackle the questions of recollection, memory, bearing witness, and our relationship to history.

THE PUBLICATION

Esther Shalev-Gerz.

Entre l'écoute et la parole / Between Telling and Listening.

Bilingual monographic reference catalogue (Fr./ Eng.).

With original texts by **Nora Alter** (Chair of Film and Media Arts, Temple University), **Georges Didi-Huberman** (lecturer at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris), **Annika Wik** (Professor at the Department of Cinema Studies, Stockholm University), **James E. Young** (Director of the Institute for Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst).

Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne & JRP Ringier, Zurich.

Price: CHF 50.- / € 35.- / after the exhibition: CHF 60.- / € 40.-

Order from the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts/Lausanne,
p. & p. not included

THE EXHIBITION ITINARY

ROOM 1 The exhibition opens with one of the artist's first works, ***Just One Sky*** (1987-1989), which is accompanied by a recent video entitled ***Still/Film*** (2009). Both works question places that influenced the artist's childhood and youth – Lithuania and Israel –, how they are portrayed, the memories they convey, and the displacements they imply.

The series of slides in ***Just One Sky*** echoes the anonymous posters that covered the walls of Jerusalem at that time. Esther Shalev-Gerz photographs the city she left in 1984 from different angles, then overlays these images, thereby juxtaposing areas that are not next to one another in reality. The projection of the slides introduces a rhythm, a movement from one image to another, an approach anticipating the video work still to come.

The first room also presents documents and videos retracing the many works in public space created by the artist, in particular her famous ***Monument against Fascism*** (1986) made in Hamburg with Jochen Gerz.

ROOM 2 The second room brings three works into resonance, ***Books Inhaled by the Sky*** (1998), ***Inseparable Angels: An Imaginary House for Walter Benjamin*** (2000) and ***MenschenDinge*** (2004-2006), which can all be interpreted as forms of memorial.

The installation ***Inseparable Angels*** is conceived as an imaginary house for Walter Benjamin, and its title refers to Paul Klee's painting ***Angelus Novus*** (1920). The video retraces the journey between Weimar and Buchenwald concentration camp filmed through the window of a taxi. The driver tells the stories of the places he passes through. At times the picture wobbles, slows down or becomes double, with texts by Franz Kafka, Heiner Müller, Gershom Sholem, Paul Klee and Walter Benjamin as voice-overs, all evoking angels. A double-faced clock with hands that turn in opposite directions and a double chair with no back as well as three photographs accompany the video.

Four years later, Esther Shalev-Gerz made ***MenschenDinge*** for the Memorial to Buchenwald concentration camp. She chose to get museum professionals who are in daily contact with the objects found on the camp grounds to speak. Therefore it is through the portraits of individuals located in the present that the portraits of the people who made those objects are implicitly sketched, objects that are signs of humanity within a concentration-camp system intended to completely strip them of it.

ROOM 3 In this room, the video installation **On Two** (2009) explores a different form of portrait : that of two people Esther Shalev-Gerz met in Paris, Rola Younes and Jacques Rancière, and that of two landscapes, the Île Seguin in Paris and Cortes Island in Canada. Rola Younes speaks of her passion for languages (Yiddish, Hebrew, Persian, Arabic...) in order to be able to assimilate different histories, and Jacques Rancière reads a passage from his book *The Emancipated Spectator*, in which he describes a formative moment in his thinking which led him to “reformulate the established relationships between seeing, doing and speaking”, and comments on the function of contemporary art.

ROOMS 4, 5, 6 Located at the heart of the Museum, the following rooms present three works that are central to the artist’s approach and have inspired the title of the exhibition: *Between Telling and Listening*. Between what is heard and what is articulated there is the image, the philosopher Jacques Rancière says, i.e. the place where the meeting with the viewer becomes possible: “We are not in front of, we are not in place of. We are always between.”

Thus, in **White Out – Between Telling and Listening** (2002), Esther Shalev-Gerz draws a magnificent portrait in two phases of a woman between two cultures, two places, two time frames. Elsewhere, in **Does Your Image Reflect Me ?** (2002), the artist continues her research into the gap between telling and listening by making a double portrait, that of a Polish Jewish woman who survived the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, located not far from Hanover, and that of a German woman who spent the war years in that city. They each tell their story and listen to one another through interposed images on their television sets. Their stories are about the same time but different places.

Finally, in the last of the three rooms, we find a video triptych taken from **Between Listening and Telling: Last Witnesses, Auschwitz 1945-2005** (2005), an impressive installation commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, originally exhibited at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris. Here, projected on to three screens, the faces of the survivors filmed in close-up are captured in the silence that occurs between a question and the articulation of the answer to it.

ROOMS 7, 8, 9, 10 The last four rooms of the Museum present series of photographs taken by the artist between 1986 and 2012. They explore natural or urban landscapes, shifts within the images or between places, our relation to time through objects, and are a picture within a picture of the very nature of the medium of photography.

With **Irreparable** (1986-2000), Esther Shalev-Gerz questions the possibility of capturing reality by means of photography. Starting

from black and white or color photographs, she cuts rectangles out of them and repositions them, so introducing a break in the readability of the image, in order to destabilize the concordance between the real and how it is represented.

Developed with the participation of the residents of a down-at-heel district in north-east Dublin, ***Daedal(us)*** existed first as a temporary intervention in public space, before taking the form of a series of photographs. Photographs of twelve façades are projected on to twelve buildings standing close to one another. Producing a simultaneous effect of displacement and recognition, this labyrinth invites us to discover other places in the district and to reappropriate the space of the city.

The Last Click (2010) explores the changes brought about by the journey leading from silver-based to digital technology, and their implications in terms of the construction of memory and the depiction of time. A photographic series shows the Rollei factories devoid of any human presence. In a video, people wanting to get rid of their film cameras go over the stories that link them to those cameras.

To close the exhibition, a new work entitled ***Describing Labor*** (2011-2012), created during a residency at the Wolfsonian Museum in Miami, is presented in a partial way as a preview in Lausanne before its official unveiling in Miami in December 2012. During her residency, Esther Shalev-Gerz explored the Wolfsonian's huge collection looking for documents illustrating labor and laborers. Formerly a heroic image of class consciousness and the ideal of one nation – very much to the fore during the Great Depression, the Soviet Revolution, and the two World Wars – the figure of the worker has since almost disappeared from contemporary representations. By means of video, photography, sound and text, the installation gives a voice back to this figure who shapes our everyday realities. Just as the Wolfsonian's collection offers an image of labor at its heroic historical moment, ***Describing Labor*** rearticulates that image for our own time.

CURATOR

Nicole Schweizer

ESTHER SHALEV-GERZ

BIOGRAPHY

Esther Shalev-Gerz was born in Vilnius, in Lithuania, in 1948. Her family moved to Jerusalem in 1957, the city where she spent her youth and trained at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design (1975-1979). She spent some time in New York in 1980-1981, before settling in Paris in 1984, where she has lived and worked ever since. Since 2003 she has been teaching at Valand School of Fine Arts, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

EDUCATION	BFA Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem (1975-1979)
SOLO EXHIBITIONS (a selection)	Wolfson Museum, Miami, Florida (2012); Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne (2012); Kamloops Art Gallery, Kamloops (2012); Jeu de Paume, Paris (2010); Museum für Photographie, Braunschweig (2010); Vilnius Art Academy Museum, Vilnius (2010); Art Monitor, Göteborg (2008); Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London (2008); Hôtel de Ville, Paris (2005); Multicultural Centre Botkyrka, Fittja (2006); Stiftung Gedenkstätten Buchenwald und Mittelbau-Dora, Weimar (2006); Fire Station Artists' Studios, Dublin (2005); Sprengel Museum Hannover, Hannover (2002); Historiska Museet, Stockholm (2002); Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers, Aubervilliers (2000); Musée municipal de La Roche-sur-Yon, La Roche-sur-Yon (1996); DAAD, Berlin (1991); Galerie Giovanna Minnelli, Paris (1990)
GRANTS AND RESIDENCIES (a selection)	DAAD Grant, Berlin, Artist in Residency (1990); IASPIS Grant, Stockholm (2002); The Wolfsonian Museum, Florida International University, Miami, Artist in Residency (2011); Swedish Council Research Grant (2011-2013)
WORKS IN PUBLIC SPACE (a selection)	1981-1983 - <i>Oil on Stone 4</i> , permanent installation, Tel Hai, Israel 1986 - <i>Monument against Fascism</i> , permanent installation, Hamburg-Harburg (with Jochen Gerz) 1995 - <i>The Dispersal of Seeds, the Collection of Ashes</i> , permanent installation, United Nations Park, Geneva (with Jochen Gerz) 1997 - <i>The Dispersal of Seeds, the Collection of Ashes no. 2</i> , permanent installation, Marl, Germany (with Jochen Gerz) 2000 - <i>Judengang</i> , intervention in public space, Berlin <i>The Portraits of Stories – Skoghall</i> , participation in “Public Safety”, Skoghall, Sweden 2004 - <i>First Generation</i> , permanent installation, Botkyrka, Sweden 2006 - <i>A Thread</i> , permanent installation, Glasgow, UK 2008 - <i>The Inseparable</i> , permanent installation, Wanas, Sweden

www.shalev-gerz.net

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Thursdays at the MCBA	<p>Guided tours at 6.30 pm 4 October 2012, with Sandrine Moeschler, museum educator 15 November 2012, with Esther Shalev-Gerz 29 November 2012, with Sandrine Moeschler 13 December 2012, with Nicole Schweizer, curator</p> <p>Guided tour for the Friends of the Museum 27 September 2012, 6.30 pm, with Nicole Schweizer</p> <p>Guided tour for the Friends of the Cinémathèque suisse 18 October 2012, 6.30 pm (further information: www.cinematheque.ch)</p>
The Museum Night	<p>Saturday 22 September 2012, 2 pm - 2 am Further information: www.lanuitdesmusees.ch</p>
The MCBA at the movies	<p>Friday 2 November 2012, Cinémathèque suisse, attended by Esther Shalev-Gerz 6.30 pm: <i>Night and Fog</i> by Alain Resnais, followed by <i>Man with a Movie Camera</i> by Dziga Vertov 9 pm: <i>Happiness</i> by Alexander Medvedkin In partnership with the Cinémathèque suisse (www.cinematheque.ch)</p>
Writing workshop at the MCBA	<p>Saturday 10 November 2012, 1 pm - 5.15 pm (in French) Run by : Naël Lafer CHF 30.- /person / CHF 20.- with reduction (places must be booked beforehand)</p>
Conference at the Museum	<p>Thursday 15 November 2012, 8 pm, Aula of the Palais de Rumine Georges Didi-Huberman: "Le partage des émotions" [The sharing of emotions] Preceded by a tour of the exhibition with Esther Shalev-Gerz Free</p>
Saturdays at the MCBA	<p>Each 1st Saturday of the month, admission is free and a guide answers the public's questions about Esther Shalev-Gerz's work. 2 pm - 5 pm</p>
Young visitors at the MCBA	<p>An audio-guide (in French) is available at the desk for 10-year-olds and up. Free</p>
Guided tours for teachers	<p>Wednesday 26 September 2012, 12.30 pm and 5 pm (Places must be booked beforehand) Free</p>
Guided tours for schools	<p>Tuesday - Friday from 9 am onwards (Places must be booked 10 days in advance) Free</p>
Private guided tours	<p>Available for groups of up to 30 people upon request French and English CHF 120.- + admission charges</p>

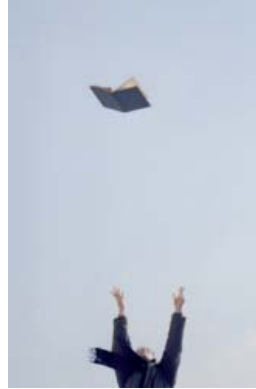
IMAGES FOR THE PRESS

1



Inseparable Angels 10, 2000-2010. Two-sided electric clock, 120 cm. Courtesy of the artist

2



Books Inhaled by the Sky, 1998. Video projection, color, with sound, 14 min. Courtesy of the artist

3



From the serie *Irreparable*, 1986-2000. Black and white photograph, variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist

4



Esther Shalev-Gerz and Jochen Gerz, *Monument against Fascism*, Hamburg-Harburg, Germany, 1986. Courtesy of the artists

IMAGES FOR THE PRESS

5



The Last Click, 2010. Installation, 70 color photographs, variable dimensions . 1 photo album with 13 photographs, in black and white, 21 x 21cm. 1 color video projection, with sound, 26 min. Courtesy of the artist

6



Just One Sky, 1987-1989. Slide show (9 images), variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist

7



On Two, 2009. Installation. 2 synchronized HD video projections, color, with sound, 30 min. each. 6 audiotapes, 10 min. 12 black and white photographs, 40 x 60 cm each. Courtesy of the artist

8



Poster