

Many Moons

Curator: Hannah Rothschild

It lights up the night with its familiar and comforting face, adding rhythm to our lives in an ongoing cycle of growth, reduction, and regeneration. The relationship between humans and the moon is complex-it is a dynamic of observation and acceptance, one that negotiates a balance of stability and change. Like every fascination with a distant figure, the moon-unable to answer us-has become a canvas for projection, a mirror for reflecting back to us our interiorities. Still, we turn to it in need, we personify it, we ask our questions and float our desires up into the surrounding sky. Its soft light illuminates the night while we dream; we relax and loosen our tight grips on reality, if only for the night. In the presence of the moon we make room for all the fears, loves, conflicts, and hopes that are hidden from the sun.

In the ancient world-besides fire, fireflies, and cats' eyes-the stars, moon, and the elements of the sky alone would light up the night. People lived by the rhythm of the moon, which paced every day, month, and year-the Hebrew calendar was also a consequence of this movement. Yare'ach ("moon" in Hebrew) is a synonym for

the word month, and from it evolved the phrases: nine moons of birth, honeymoon, as well as the name of the exhibition, Many Moons. In North America, the ancient tribes used to say to one another when they reunited, "I haven't seen you in many moons." The cyclicity of the moon's filling and emptying is implicitly tied to menses, or monthly menstruation. Perhaps this connection contributed to the creation of the feminine moon goddesses in various mythologies-among them the Greek Goddess Celine, the Roman goddess Luna, and the Chinese goddess She-noy.

In the central space of the gallery are presented 54 works by the illustrator Ya'ara Eshet. Eshet was born in Kibbutz Degania Bet, and is a graduate of the department of Graphic Design in Jerusalem's Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design. Nowadays, she lives in Toronto, Canada. In the foyer is presented a collection of photographs by the artist Bezalel Ben Haim, who is a graduate of the department of Industrial Design in Jerusalem, and in the program for continuing studies in the Arts, in Hamidrasha in Beit Berl. He was born in Be'er Sheva and lives and works in Tel Aviv.

Ya'ara invites us to her world rich with textures, colors, cultures and local contexts. She absorbs what is around her and creates, through her brush, a hybrid, pluralist and feminist language. In her works appear interesting combinations between man and animal, between ancient pagan gods and contemporary cultural signs. She lives in Canada and her many excursions into the natural landscape of this great country are present in her illustrations. Combinations of motives of Native Canadians,

Virgin forests, lakes, trees in the fall and wondering geese – all these are softly woven with fields of wheat, palm trees, deserts, and other images that were assimilated into her in Israel. In the current exhibition three groups of her many illustrations were collected: names of the moon, holidays and goddesses and personal moons.

Bezalel Ben Haim looks into his soul with the absence of the moon. He walks silently in dark deserts in the Negev, and particularly in the vicinity of Be'er Sheva, his place of birth. In the exhibition are presented two photographs out of a series that he made with slow exposure and open aperture in moonless nights. What thoughts do the gray images of the silent spaces evoke in us? Facing these, are presented three photographs out of his research process in the search for an alternative light, artificial moons and light circles that he found or created by the turn of the camera. His images invite us to dive into the dark unconscious, in the places where we connect to dark associations in our souls, to look up in order to look inside.

You can see more of the works of Ya'ara and Bezalel on Instagram: @yaaraeshe @bezalelbc

Please scan the barcode for additional information on Yaara's work

