

**Michal Helfman**  
Running Out of History  
3.1.2019 -23.3.2019

The main work in the exhibition is a video titled "Running Out of History". The work is based on my recordings of a series of meetings conducted in 2015 between myself and Gal Luski, chair and founder of the humanitarian organization *Israeli Flying Aid*. In the past seven and a half years, Luski and her volunteers operated within Syria, bringing in massive amounts of humanitarian aid for those who, due to their resistance to the government, deprived of any other help, including that of the UN. Communication with these isolated populations was made possible through the development of smuggling techniques based upon the physical entrance of Luski and her people into Syria, and a collaborative work with local humanitarian organizations.

What made me approach Luski, was my interest in the concept of smuggling, both for it being an active image in the reality of our time, but mostly because as a tactic mechanism, it operates in a way which resembles art: the finding of a path which has not yet been taken, the choice of position over opinion while cutting through an existing discourse, and the insertion of uninvited content which emerges as if from nothingness. My wish was to use Luski's smuggling mechanisms, only while Luski's smuggling act is an activist one, and is therefore substantive within reality, the presence and operation of the artistic smuggling is much more elusive and harder to quantify.



For a long while, I listened to Luski's stories, searching for a path in which our practices could meet. I had finally found a possible intersection when she shared her intention to smuggle a few 3d printers in order to print an "object": prosthetic hands.

I asked her to upload the printer with an object of my own, which would be printed during a training course to be given to medical teams, who were meant to operate the printer. The object, which was printed in Syria, was a contemplative one: a pair of dice, which on bare on their sides the words assembling the sentence: "we will not forgive, we will not forget". Luski had mentioned this sentence to me several times during our conversations, as an embodiment of a victim-aggressor perception, which in her opinion, is the cause for a certain stagnating fixation within Israeli society. Each throw of the dice forms a different and contradictory point of view in relation to the same starting point, physically constructing a complexity of

perception in relation to terms such as forgetfulness, forgiveness, will, generosity and courage, while also allowing their negation. The dice being repeatedly thrown has become the object leading through our conversation and the work as a whole.

Luski's willingness to bypass Israeli and international law, has granted her organization the position of the spearhead within humanitarian aid organizations across the world. On the other hand, her organization's jargon, operation and self-branding methods are of great similarity to those used by the state of Israel and the IDF, so that it sometimes seems as if Gal Luski sees herself as a branch of the state itself.

The logic at the core of her perception, which seems to be built upon an internal contradiction, was explained to me by Luski in one of our meetings when she said: "I don't work in places which are already saturated; saturated in good intentions, or in bad ones." Luski breaks through and out of the array of forces as we know it: for her, the good and bad are the same, in the sense that they both constitute a side, actively feeding and being fed by the conflict. Here is where I found the similarity between Luski's specific activist practice and a possible way of art making: finding the path, which has not yet been saturated. In light of the static structures of political order, and while mapping them, the smuggler advances through winding, bypassing roads, routes that reveal themselves or are discovered while moving. This repetitive motion, inwards and outwards, as well as the ever-repeating throw of the dice, became an inspiration to the motional and visual aspects that together form an infrastructure that is meant to allow reality to appear in a direct form.

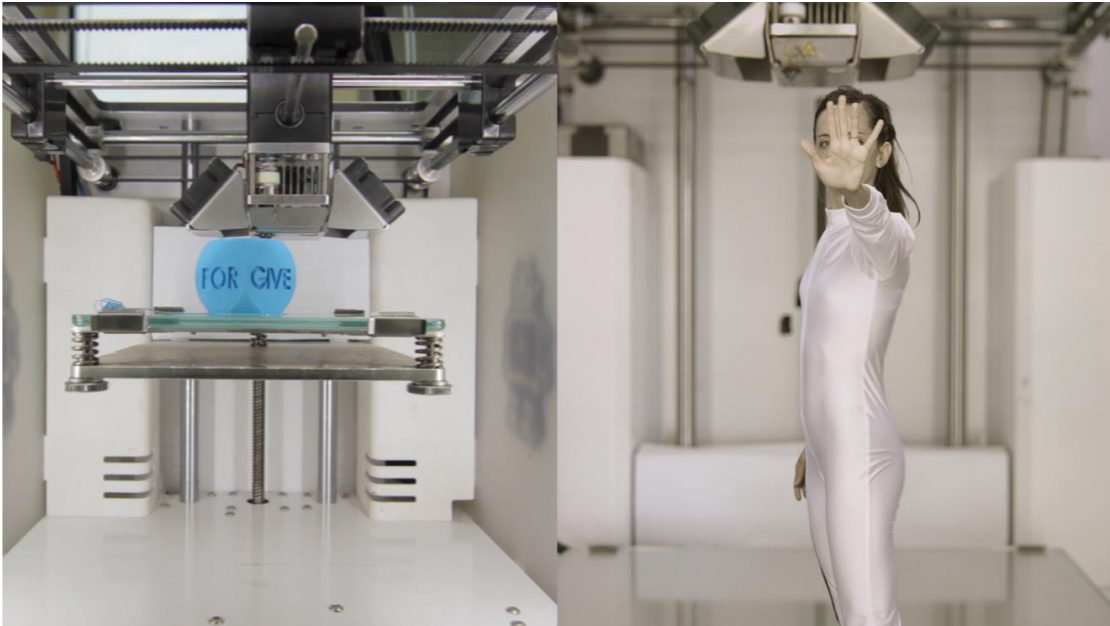
To Luski's request, I did not show the work in Israel as long as IFA was still working in Syria, until approximately a month ago, when political changes led to its termination.

**Michal Helfman** (b. 1973, Tel-Aviv, Israel) lives and works in Tel-Aviv. She is a senior faculty member at the BFA and MFA programs, Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem. . Exhibited solo shows at KW institute Berlin p! Gallery, NY, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Herzliya Museum of Art, Herzliya, CCA, Tel-Aviv and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv. She participated in group exhibitions at Upcomming Sao-Paulo Biennial, Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin and the Venice Biennial, among rest. She is a recipient of the Ministry of Culture Award (2010), the Anselm Kiefer Prize and The Wolf Foundation prize (1998)

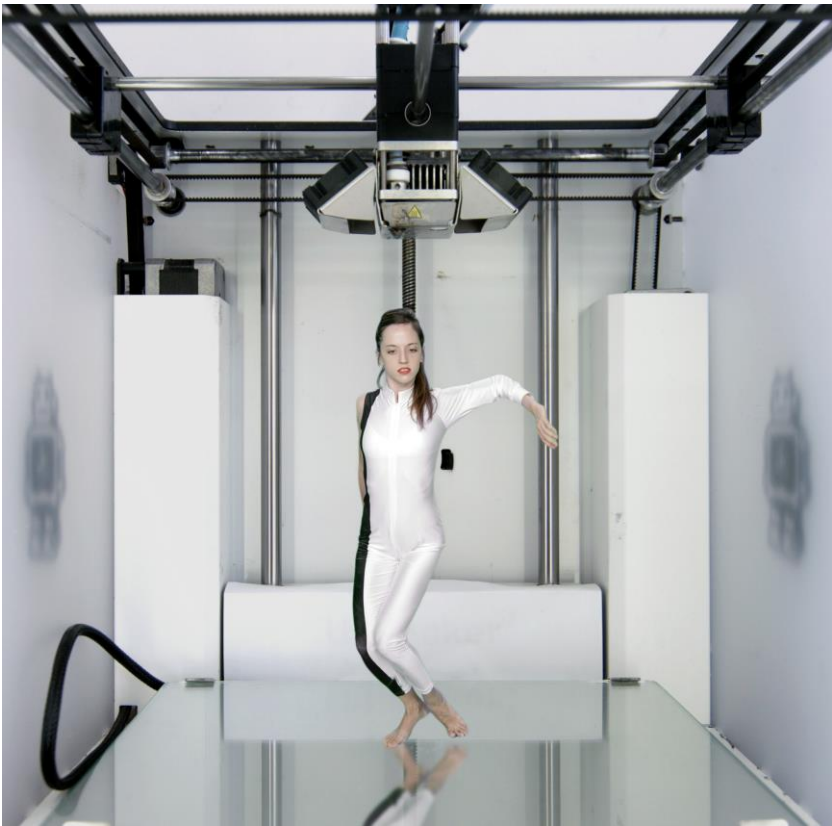
Running Out of History- Video:

<https://vimeo.com/154973009/7c67d84fa1>

Password: sommer



Michal Helfman, Running Out of History, Video still, Sommer Contemporary Art, 2019



Michal Helfman, Running Out of History, Video still, Sommer Contemporary Art, 2019



Michal Helfman, Running Out of History, Exhibition view, Sommer Contemporary Art, 2019



Michal Helfman, Running Out of History, Exhibition view, Sommer Contemporary Art, 2019



Michal Helfman, Running Out of History, Exhibition view, Sommer Contemporary Art, 2019



Michal Helfman, Running Out of History, Exhibition view, Sommer Contemporary Art, 2019





Michal Helfman, Untitled, Iron, 1.85 X 55 X 30 cm, 2018

**Michal Helfman**

Born 1973, Tel-Aviv, Israel

Lives and Works in Tel-Aviv

Senior faculty member of the BFA and MFA program of Bezalel Academy of Art and Design

Awards and Scholarship

- 2009 Ministry of culture award
- 2001 Young Artist Prize ministry of culture
- 1998 Premium in Final Project
- 1998 Anselm Kiefer Prize, The Wolf Foundation

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2020 "Show vs Time" Tel Aviv museum of art.
- 2018 "Running out of history" Sommer gallery Tel Aviv
- 2017 "Running out of history" A Tale for a Tub, Rotterdam
- 2016 "Running out of history" KW Berlin.
- 2015 "I'm so broke I can't pay attention" K. period gallery NY
- 2013 "Change" CCA Tel-Aviv
- 2012 "Experiments in techniques of awakenings" Jaffa 23 Jerusalem
- 2010 "Doctor doctor" Sommer gallery Tel Aviv
- 2009 "The lesson" Cardi black box Millan
- 2009 "The lesson" Tel – Aviv museum of art.
- 2008 "Mekomon", Public Lobby for Art TLV
- 2007 "Bat- Dor", Israel museum, Jerusalem
- 2003 "Cochav Yair", Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv
- 2002 "Tiesto" Institute of Visual Arts, University of Wisconsin
- 2001 "Caesarea" Institute of Visual Art, San Francisco

Group Exhibitions

- 2019 An alternative for living , Kunstmuseen Krefeld
- 2018 Kedem-Kodem-Kadima, CCA, Tel Aviv
- 2017 Current Affairs, Helena Rubinstein, Tel Aviv  
Dance Macabre, Felix Nussbaum Hause, Osnabrück, Germany  
Conditions of political choreography NBK Berlin and CCA Tel-Aviv
- 2016 "Incerteza viva" Sao-Paulo biennale
- 2015 "Tel Aviv museum show in Martin Gropius Bau Berlin.
- 2014 "Bitcoin" Eli Ping Frances Perkin gallery NY
- 2013 "Anti anti" Tel Aviv university museum
- 2011 Art TLV and the Herzelia biennial, Herzelia museum
- 2010 "a duet for a boy and a flame" Herzelia museum
- 2009 "wild exaggeration" Haifa museum of art
- 2008 "Real Time-Art in Israel 98'-08'", The Israel Museum,
- 2008 "The Colony", Museum of Art, Ein Harod

## **sommercontemporaryart**

- 2007 "Rear", The Herzlyia Museum of Art
- 2004 "Don't Touch the White Woman", Fondazione Sandretto, Italy
- 2003 "Dreams and Conflicts", The 50th Venice Biennial, Venice;
- 2002 "La Riviera", Curator Jerome Sanse, Madrid  
"Aspis" Kalisher Gallery, Curator Yael Bergstein
- 2001 LISTE 2001, Basel, Switzerland
- 2000 "Platforma", Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel-Aviv  
"A Long Lion", Curator Guy Ben-Ner, Peer-Hamidrasha
- 1999 "Autocream", ArtFocus, Curator Kaspar Koenig, Sultans Pool Jerusalem