

Ventilator

Exhibition: **Shir Moran & Shiri Tarko**
Monkey Business | עסקי קופים

Reception: Thursday, January 25th, 8pm | Dates: January 25th – February 3rd | 14 Menahem Begin Rd. 3rd Fl. Tel Aviv, IL
by appointment only

Ventilator Gallery is delighted to announce the opening, on Thursday, January 25th, of *Monkey Business*, Shir Moran's and Shiri Tarko's first collaboration.

With a new group of paintings hung in the exhibition, Shir Moran and Shiri Tarko use principles of medieval illuminated manuscripts as anecdotes for the investigation of different subjects of matter such as femininity, animosity and morality. The unique handicraft recognized with illuminated manuscripts was once drawn by nuns and generally considered as ornamentation, illustration or decoration. It accompanied biblical content, or historicized legacies of royalties, however here; this handicraft is reconsidered by the artists as painting. The Images, symbols and texts that are seen in the artists' paintings may refer to aesthetics most commonly found on pages of illuminated manuscripts. They are sometimes pleasant, romantic, erotic, heroic or harmonic, whereas simultaneously, they present diabolical scenes – an inventory of compositions that belongs to a world in which animals dominated humanity, where violence, torture, plagues, sex rituals and death were conditioned to belief, obedience, mastery and sovereignty.

In *Monkey Business*, each painting also refers to a chosen session from Jacques Derrida's last seminar *The Beast and the Sovereign* originally presented in 2002-2003. In the book Derrida pursues relations between solitude, insularity, cannibalism, boredom and death as they supposedly affect humans and animals in different ways. Derrida's seminal seminar and the interest in medieval illuminated manuscripts motivated the artists' own collaborative process through the medium of painting. Raw pieces of thick leather are treated by Shir Moran and Shiri Tarko with markers and gold leaf. The leather refers to the traditional materiality of vellum – a prepared animal skin used as a surface for writing; to produce scrolls, codices or books. In that sense, for their painting and its actual surface, animalism exists both as a symbol and a concept. Every painting is constructed as a spreadsheet of a book. It is an allegorical diptych full of layered meanings which consists two dichotomized "pages" that organize a codex of symbols, calligraphies and quotations.

The series of paintings is installed on an existent long wall that was built as a grid of windows. In fact, this "rear window" installation allows the gaze to constantly dart between foreground and background. The allegorical scenes, animals' characteristics and architectural spaces that are depicted inside Shir Moran's and Shiri Tarko's paintings naturally move outside, to the real cityscape of South Tel Aviv.

Shir Moran (1986, Ramat Gan, IL) lives and works in Tel Aviv. She holds her MFA (2017) and BFA (2013) degrees from Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, IL. Her paintings were shown in public and private spaces such as Third Floor On The Left, Tel Aviv, IL (2017); Miriam Nissenholtz Gallery, Tel Aviv, IL (2016); Inga Gallery, Tel Aviv, IL (2015); Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Herzliya, IL (2014); Gordon II Gallery, Tel Aviv, IL (2014); among others. Shir Moran is a recent recipient of Young Artist Prize by The Israeli Ministry of Culture.

Shiri Tarko (1978, Romania) lives and works in Tel Aviv. She holds her MFA (2017) and BFA (2009) degrees from Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, IL. Her works and projects were shown in venues such as Artport Art Book Fair, Tel Aviv, IL (2016); STA Gallery, Tel Aviv, IL (2015); HaHanut Gallery, Tel Aviv, IL (2015); Belinggggg Art Book Fair, Berlin, DE (2014); Petach Tikva Museum of Arts, Petach Tikva, IL (2014) among others. Shiri Tarko is the founder of Re-Feel Magazine & Art.