

Artist Statement for:

OPEN CALL – WEB BASED ART

On view August 21, 2015 – September 13, 2015

Submitted by: Yehudit England

First, I wish to convey my deep appreciation for the fact that your gallery has chosen to focus on alternative ways to subvert the conventions of displaying art in galleries and museums.

My project engages with a more pointed question regarding what art is and how and who should be capable of assessing its quality in a time of digitally accelerated mass distribution, as this question pertains to the broader issues regarding what we see and how we choose to see it in the public space.

My work in this project seeks to bridge the gap between the mediums canonically recognized as art and the digitized means of their display and distribution. By all means, I do not advocate discarding paint and brush in favor of web-based digital design, but rather expanding on the unlimited space for expression and representation that digitalized technology opens up beyond the institutionally-derived limits of the gallery, museum, and associated sites of consumption.

This project draws on the dynamic pulse of the city, wherein I take the canvas off the wall to create new surfaces on which to display it. Integrated within the rapid pace of the streets, it both forms and contributes to a colorful urban collage.

To both the pedestrian and the driver, the images integrate with the everyday. Art is not imprisoned in galleries with set hours of visitation, but open and available to everyone as part of the urban landscape, providing colorful flashes of imagery, variations of transformative moments. These flashes urge a contemplative break from the monotony of commute, visually “soundtracking” one’s carpool or *flanerie*.

My approach in this project was inspired by the politico-cultural climate and wave of protests that occurred in Tel Aviv in the summer of 2011. I sought to bring forth my own voice of protest, while questioning art’s potential to alert the public, educate, or even affect a change in social realities. I chose to do this through a lens of Jewish intertextuality. “Shoes Protest,” for example, which I exhibited in my show *Fouzia* in Jaffa (2012) is a large work of 210x600cm in which I glued shoes of all shapes and sizes to the canvas to express the intensified dynamic mobilization that such a protest entails. It is intimately tied to the imperative in *Genesis* for Abraham to “*lekh lekha*,” to go forward, as a shift in both consciousness and praxis.

Here, I walk one step further: one has to travel “far” in order to introduce the work to new audiences, including those not comprised of frequent gallery and museum-goers. This digitized imagining of new possibilities of display redefines the street as a friendly space where classically recognized art can be more engaging and enter into a dialogue with the less obviously “artistic” banalities of the everyday.

This video is indebted to the endless conversations that the work itself has already generated. I wish to thank all my dear friends and relatives, for their support and their genuine patience in bringing this project together.

(The musical accompaniment is that of Antonín Dvořák’s “Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104, B. 191”)

Yehudit England, June 2015