

CRITICS' PICKS

CURRENT

PAST

New York

Mary Kelly
 Aria Dean
 José Leonilson
 Raghubir Singh
 Sheila Pinkel
 Alessandro Pessoli
 Keith Mayerson
 Marcia Marcus
 Jacob El Hanani
 Elia Alba
 “War and Pieced: The Annette Gero Collection of Quilts from Military Fabrics”

Los Angeles

Lynda Benglis
 Ruth Root
 Mary Corse
 Sowon Kwon

San Francisco

“An Idea of a Boundary”

Long Beach

David Lamelas

Marfa

Tel Aviv

Tamir Zadok

TEL AVIV MUSEUM OF ART
27 Shaul Hamelech Boulevard
September 19–December 16

Nothing is what it seems in *Art Undercover*, 2017, the centerpiece of Tamir Zadok's solo exhibition. The video traces the artist's quest to find a lost oil painting by Charduvai, purportedly a French artist who lived in Egypt in the early 1950s. With only a poor black-and-white reproduction of the piece and some anecdotal evidence, Zadok heads to Cairo to see the collection of the Egyptian Museum of Modern Art—what follows is a chronicle that reveals more via its meandering progression than any conclusive discoveries.

Viewers eventually learn that the artistic persona of Charduvai provided cover for an Israeli intelligence agent named Shlomo Cohen Abarbanel while in Cairo. What better role than that of “artist” to avoid tricky questions about one's agenda when traveling or living abroad? As Zadok searches for traces of the “French” painter's legacy in Egypt, he begins to perform a variety of stealth research tasks himself. With a fresh haircut and a new suit, he approaches a Western curator at an exhibition opening about presenting his own work in Egypt. At first hesitant, the curator becomes more receptive once Zadok subtly switches the accent on his name, changing its pronunciation from the Hebrew, Tamir Zadok, to the Arabic, Tamer Sadek.

The artist's earlier work also plays with the boundaries between political realities and fictional narratives, such as in *Gaza Canal*, 2010, a mockumentary (also on view) of an Israeli-run visitor center in Gaza built after the Israeli government pushed the territory into the sea. This Swiftian satire gives way in *Art Undercover* to internal reflection about art, nationalism, authenticity, and the mixture of exhilaration and trepidation that



Tamir Zadok, *Art Undercover*, 2017, HD video, color, sound, 27 minutes.

William Cordova

Minneapolis

Dave Muller

Toronto

Amalia Pica

London

“Melancholia. A Sebald Variation”

Terre Thaemlitz

“Everything we see could also be otherwise (My sweet little lamb)”

Grace Weir

Gianfranco Baruchello

Nicola Tyson

Andy Holden and Peter Holden

Cookie Mueller and Vittorio Scarpati

Berlin

Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet

Alice Neel

Harun Farocki

Rodrigo Hernández

Irma Blank

Michel Majerus

Milan

Oswaldo Licini

Rome

Betty Woodman

Venice

“Intuition”

“The Boat Is Leaking. The Captain Lied”

Bern

Tilo Steireif

accompanies border crossings and secret missions of all kinds.

— [Chelsea Haines](#)

[f](#) [t](#) [g+](#) [d](#) [p](#) [e](#) PERMALINK COMMENTS [PRINT](#)

[◀ return to current picks](#)

Wettingen

Monica Studer and
Christoph van den Berg

Amsterdam

Apichatpong
Weerasethakul and Cao
Guimarães

Oslo

Matias Faldbakken

Warsaw

Mika Tajima

Madrid

Christian García Bello

Istanbul

Jasmina Cibic

Cape Town

Cameron Platter
Kudzanai Chiurai

Hong Kong

Toshio Matsumoto

Shanghai

“Scraggly Beard
Grandpa”

Seoul

“Urban Ritornello: The
Archives on Community”

Tel Aviv

Tamir Zadok

Sydney

Hilarie Mais

NEWS | DIARY | **FILM**

Newest Entries

Nick Pinkerton on Poverty
Row Classics at the
Museum of Modern Art
Howard Hampton on
Stephen Frears's *Mary
Reilly* (1996)
Tony Pipolo on Philippe
Garrel
Tony Pipolo on Robert
Mitchum at the 55th New
York Film Festival
Tony Pipolo on
Projections at the 55th
New York Film Festival
Nick Pinkerton on
Wavelengths at the
Toronto International Film
Festival

DIARY | [PICKS](#) | NEWS | VIDEO | FILM | PASSAGES | SLANT | ARTGUIDE | IN PRINT | 500 WORDS | PREVIEWS | BOOKFORUM | A & E | 中文版

All rights reserved. artforum.com is a registered trademark of Artforum International Magazine, New York, NY