

Zamir Shatz: Mozambique

16.01.25 — 22.02.25

Curator: Maya Frenkel Tene

The current exhibition presents two distinct bodies of work. The first comprises approximately fifty small-scale oil paintings on canvas, while the second features about 300 drawings compiled in an artist's book. Created between 2013 and 2015, the works in the book serve as a visual diary, documenting the intimacy of domestic life alongside significant political and military events in Israel. These include two election cycles, a wave of terrorist attacks, and Operation 'Protective Edge'. The drawings, scanned and digitally enhanced, were published daily on the artist's Facebook account, often accompanied by short texts, either integrated within the drawing itself or within the body of the post. Some of these drawings appear in **Zamir's Book**, which is released in parallel with the current exhibition. The full body of work is projected in the gallery's project space.

In 2023, Shatz embarked on an extraordinary journey to Africa. He accompanied a local friend on a 2,500-kilometer journey from South Africa to Mozambique. Upon his return, he painted **Kima and I Dream of Africa**, a work inspired by this trip. The serene color palette and surreal, fantastical atmosphere of the painting stand in stark contrast to the harsh living conditions and political reality that Shatz encountered during his journey—a bloody civil war, scattered refugee camps across the country, and slum cities surrounded by military bases. Mozambique, once rich in natural resources and lush in greenery, has been ravaged by unrelenting conflict, leaving its citizens in prolonged suffering. This painting became the point of departure for a series of oil paintings created over the last two years, which took a new direction following the October 7 massacre and the war that erupted thereafter. The imagery in these works—rows of tiny houses, tents, plowed fields, sinking ships, water containers, flocks of birds, and mounds of stones—reflects the devastation unfolding on both sides of the border. A horizon line frequently traverses the compositions, marking and defining place, separating earth from sky. In some works, African wildlife appears, offering an exotic respite. These endangered animals, seemingly out of place, trace a subtle connection between the sense of catastrophe that enveloped Zamir's visit to Africa and the ongoing disaster in our region.

Zamir Shatz (b. 1969, Kibbutz Kinneret) is a graduate of the Bezalel MFA program (2012) and holds a B.Ed. from The Camera Obscura School of Art and the Hamidrasha School of Art, Beit Berl (1999). Shatz has exhibited extensively, with notable shows at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Haifa Museum of Art, Mishkan Museum of Art at Ein Harod, and the Nahum Gutman Museum, among others. His exhibition *Habibti, A State for All Its Citizens* at Rosenfeld Gallery, Tel Aviv was acquired in its entirety by the Tel Aviv Museum of Art. A recipient of the 2024 Mifal Hapais Grant for Artist's Book Support. Shatz's works are part of numerous private and public collections, including the 'Haaretz' Art Collection.