Grounded

Yoav Fisch and Dana Tannhaouser

Vila Gallery for Contemporary Art, Emuna College, Jerusalem

2019

In the exhibition Grounded, artists Dana Tannhauser and Yoav Fisch present sculpture and installation works from the past year, inspired by the exhibition space of the Villa Gallery. The space that was built in the early 20th century as the home of an Arab family, and served this function for many decades, has retained its original shape, the layout of rooms, and the intimacy that a space of this nature summons.

The sculptural exhibition consists of autonomous objects (including ready-mades) that offer a personal interpretation of constructive and functional elements borrowed from this domestic space (fence, roof, shower etc.). These were then subjected to material conversion, conceptual shifting, and formal abstraction, until all that was left from the original image was a vague memory.

The exhibition's name, Grounded, betrays something of the relationship formed between the exhibition space and the objects that were placed inside it, revealing their desire to cling to the ground, be fixed to the earth, and surrender to the physical laws of gravity. At the same time, it also alludes to settling down in the socio-economic, middleclass sense of the term. And yet, the feeling of security, stability, and balance we would have expected to find here is disturbed. Removed from their original context, in their new placement Tannhauser's and Fisch's sculptural objects transform the familiar arrangement of the space, inventing a different and surprising order.

In this transformative process the objects gain a new life. For example, the piece Overhang (Fisch, 2019), which is based on the roof of the building and performs a material conversion into wood, tarpaulin and concrete, is evocative of a mountain ridge, while Fence (Tannhauser, 2019), inspired by the fence surrounding the house translated into a series of neon and glass arches, loses some of its volume until it becomes a 3D drawing in the space.

While they were not created in a collaborative process, Tannhauser's and Fisch's works share a similar aesthetics – minimalist, simple, and clean in essence. Poetic in appearance, the works look like they belong to a larger system, bringing to mind a religious-ceremonial space, as though at any moment they may become a tool means to be used in a participatory event.