

# annet gelink gallery

PRESS RELEASE  
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## Yael Bartana

Annet Gelink Gallery proudly presents the second solo exhibition of Yael Bartana (Israel, 1970).

Yael Bartana produced two video and sound installations in the past year, *A Declaration* (2006) and *Summer Camp* (2007). Both works form part of her presentation in the gallery and a series of posters and photos. Both videoworks are inspired by the Zionist propaganda films from the thirties and forties, both in visuals and audio as in subject. For this occasion we have rebuilt the backroom of the gallery into a wooden construction in which Bartana's latest work *Summer Camp* can be viewed, also to be seen in Documenta XII in Kassel.

*Summer Camp* shows the activities of "The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions" (ICAHD); their actions consist amongst others of rebuilding Palestinian houses in the occupied territories. In the summer of 2006 Bartana filmed a group of ICAHD volunteers consisting of Palestinians, Israeli and various other nationalities, assisted by Palestinian construction workers, who were trying to rebuild in the village of Anata (east of Jerusalem) the former house of Abu Ahmed Al Hadad at exactly the same location where it was demolished by the Israeli authorities at the end of 2005. The result is a phenomenally edited 12 minutes image and sound composition in which Bartana uses the same stylistic devices as the Zionist propaganda films from the first half of the twentieth century.

For *Summer Camp* Bartana had herself inspired amongst others by Helmar Lerski's film *Awodah* (Palestine 1935), which just like other propaganda films from these days portrays the realisation of the Zionist dream to found a nation-state under the motto "We came to Israel to build and to be built". By quoting the old propaganda films Bartana's *Summer Camp* show the resemblance between the ideological and visual relation of building by the ICAHD as a form of resistance against the occupation and the building of the state of Israel by the Zionist movement. Helmar Lerski's film *Awodah* is shown in the middle space of the gallery, where also some documentation can be looked into.

### The Bakery

The Bakery shows Bartana's video work *A Declaration* (2006). The film pictures a man rowing at sea and arriving at a rock where he replaces the proudly waving Israeli flag by a young olive tree. This action takes place at *Andromeda's Rock*, a rock in the Mediterranean in front of Jaffa's harbour. The protagonist shows similarities with the first Israeli pioneers from the propaganda films, strong and muscular, dressed in a white shirt and ready to toil the land. Only this time the pioneer is presented to denationalise the country. One of the questions that *A Declaration* asks is: what effect will it have when one national symbol is replaced by another?

Bartana's video installations and photos were in display at many exhibitions in the past years. This year her work can be seen (was on display) at amongst others the Documenta XII in Kassel, The Powerplant in Toronto and The Jewish Museum in New York, last year she had a solo presentation in the VanAbbemuseum in Eindhoven, Kunstverein in Hamburg, Fridericianum in Kassel and the Sao Paulo Biennale. Her work has been included in renowned collections of national and international museums and collectors, such as Tate Modern, VanAbbemuseum, Boijmans van Beuningen, Israel Museum and the Jewish Museum in NY.

*Summer Camp* can be seen until September 23 in Documenta XII, Neue Galerie, Kassel (DE)

Annet Gelink Gallery is open from Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. till 6 p.m. and on Saturday from 1 p.m.- 6 p.m..  
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