

Esther Cohen / Looking at the Land of Israel from the Vantage

Point of Wild Flowers

In detailed ballpoint pen drawing on a map or blank paper, Esther Cohen explores the relationship between nature and man, cultural rituals and marking and defining real and symbolic borders. Dialoging with field guides and artists of the past from contemporary critical point of view, she documents processes of growth and wilt.

Seriality characterizes her work, as can be seen in her series of flowers. For her, drawn flowers are part of a local seasonal ritual, in which people go out to watch typical ephemeral blossoming, and they represent the infinite cycle of life and death. In a diptych from this series, *Untitled* (2015), the drawing of which was inspired by Operation Protective Edge (2014), she presented the two sides of war from the vantage point of flowers. In a detailed, yet expressive and poignant, drawing, the war is portrayed as part of the infinite cycle of life and death in this country.

The political is also present in her series of maps. Original geographic maps of the Land of Israel from different periods are turned into painting surfaces for her Israeli flora. The borderless drawing of wild flowers on a map simulates their untamed growth in nature, which does not recognize man-made political boundaries. In another work inspired by Operation Protective Edge, *Poppies Watching the Negev* (2015), black poppies look at a map and follow the changing contours of the country.

Esther Cohen was born in 1972 in Tel Aviv. 1999: graduated from Hamidrasha School of Art's faculty of art (BAEd). Her work has been shown at Tel Aviv Museum of art, Haifa Museum, Petach Tikva Museum and the Artist House in Tel Aviv among other venues. Lives and works in Tel Aviv.

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