Maya Smira - Selected Art Work

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Artist Bio

Maya Smira is a multidisciplinary artist who use time based media, photography and installation, usually in simple, abstract and formal ways. Her creative process is deeply involved in larger global and social issues and events, and is effected by her constant travels around the world. Her work incorporate idea based compositions, referencing the verge between photography and video. Her portfolio has multiple different facets, each representing a different aspect of interest, all derived by her personal life experience and exploration. Born and raised in Israel, her work sometimes reflect living under a constant state of emergency, while other works refer to media, time & technology. Often these different lines come across, through humor, concept or figurative resemblance. In 2012, she obtained a BA in Arts and Humanities, and a BFA in photography in Tel-Aviv. In 2014 she received an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute New Genres department, along with the Ella King Torrey Award. In 2014 she participated a residency program at the East Side International Art Center in L.A. and was a finalist of the LG Art Of The Pixel Award. She exhibit in both California and Israel, as well as several other countries in the world.

Short bio:

Israel born Maya Smira has work in a wide array of mediums, from photography and video to performance, sculpture and installation. Her appetite for travels led her to take long journeys around the globe looking for new adventures. She studied photography at Minshar for Art in Tel-Aviv (BFA), and humanities at the Open University of Israel (BA). Later she acquired her MFA and specified in new genres at the San Francisco Art Institute. She exhibit in both California and Israel, as well as several other countries in the world.

Borderline, 2014

Interactive video installation, wall size projection and a motion sensor

https://vimeo.com/88966964   password: 1983

This interactive video was shot on the Israel-Egypt boarder line during constructions of a separation fence. The planned explosion in the landscape is a result of the countries collaboration, as a part of the peaceful relationship between them. The video is showing the serene desert landscape most of the time. An explosion is activated (by a motion sensor) while viewers enter the space, over and over again, reflecting the unbearable lightness of destruction. On a more global notion, the video depicts the destruction caused by human presence, wether it is aware and intentional, or not.

Still from interactive video

* *Borderline* received several **awards** and was shown around the world. Maya Smira received the Ella King Torrey Award for *Borderline,* at the San Francisco Art Institute while exhibiting at the San Francisco Old Mint in 2014. *Borderline* was also exhibited in Times Square in New York as a part of the LG Art Of The Pixel contest, where Maya was a finalist. In 2016 Maya received the Outset award for best video artist at the Fresh Paint Contemporary Art Fair in Tel-Aviv. Borderline is currently shown at the Haifa Museum in Israel.

Borderline is a site specific installation

The video+audio loop system, is connected and activated by a motion sensor, that sets the explosion every time viewers go through the designated area.

Installation view from San Francisco Old Mint, 2014 (Projection option)

Installation view from Haifa Museum, 2016 (Monitor option)

Cloud Pillar, **2013**

single channel video, 2:50 minuets loop, flat screen monitor or human scale projection

In the middle east, wars are no longer called wars, they are referred to as "military operations". Cloud Pillar is the name of the Israeli operation in Gaza on December 2012, which I was following from a distance, online. Wondering upon representation of war, I was collecting images and video's from news websites, transforming and abstracting them. By manipulating these documentations, I try to reconstruct the radical decadence of explosions, and the artificial face of the media.

Stills from video

Dye, 2012

Time based painting, video installation, four channel wall scale projections

Black Square, 2012 - https://vimeo.com/35290103 password: 1983
Who Is Afraid?, 2013, _(3 channel installation)_ - https://vimeo.com/87518202 password: 1983

This video installation, began as a poetic gesture to Malevich's _Black Square_. Soon it grew into an abstract manifesto about art, painting, and time based media, exploring the mediums and art history. Going threw the Russian constructivism, impressionism, minimalism and action painting, I experiment with a new kind of painting. A time based painting that shares constant relations with other mediums.

Who Is Afraid is an evolution of a time based media, as well as demolition. It is a trace of a long gone clean board, and it's transformation into the human ego. Ideally installed on 3 walls, communicating with one another.

Stills from videos

Iran-Israel, 2013

collaboration by Maya Smira & Samira Hashemi

video installation & durational live performance

Documentation of performance- https://vimeo.com/82992802

The video shows two young female artists leaning onto each other, pushing and holding at the same time. One is from Iran and the other from Israel, nowadays enemy countries. The scene takes place in a deserted landscape, which is similar both to the Israeli & Iranian remote landscapes. The women uses their bodies to create a simple shape of a triangle which they tend to keep stable even when their bodies start to exhaust and shake. The artists try to manifest the interpersonal tension that is generated by their bodies, as well as the political situation. This feminine manifestation of coexistence, depicts how bodies interact with each other in a situation of dependance & conflict.

Still from video

Iran-Israel, 2013

Documentation of live performance + video monitor

Borderline, Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco, CA

Iran-Israel, 2013

Documentation of live performance + video monitor

Borderline, Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco, CA

Iran-Israel, 2014

Documentation of live performance + video projection

Disjecta Art Center, Experimental Film Festival Portland, OR

Iran-Israel, 2014

Documentation of live performance + video projection

Disjecta Art Center, Experimental Film Festival Portland, OR

Playground, **2014**

A series of videos installed on monitors/i-pads/projections, depending on the space.
Installation view + details- https://vimeo.com/111990426   password: 1983

The installation include several videos, that can also stand alone:

1. *Atlas*, 2014 , digital video loop on TV monitor
2. *Rainbow*, 2014 , digital video loop on TV monitor
3. *Joshua*, 2014, digital video loop on TV monitor
4. *Birds*, 2014, 3 channels digital video loop on TV monitors
5. *Bubbles*, 2014, digital video loop on TV monitor

This body of work deals with philosophical questions about human nature and the world we live in. Can we own the earth or does the earth actually owns us? How do we perceive, view and treat the planet? This series of looping videos, create a conversation about popular culture and it's relations with the earth, by using simple gestures that manifest humorist ideas. Trying to embody trees, grasping the planet and shooting bubbles are some of the ways I use in order to challenge human concepts of existence, man and nature, man in nature.

Installation view from Somarts 2014, San Francisco

Still from video: Atlas.2014

Still from video-: Rainbow. 2014

Still from video: Birds, 2014

Live Organism, 2012

TLV Installation View- https://vimeo.com/49634284 password- 1983

SF Installation View- https://vimeo.com/79127947 password- 1983

Details- Excerpts from each video- https://vimeo.com/87046502

This is a series of 10 looped HD videos, installed separately or together depending on the space. Ideally they are standing all together in a circle, talking and looking at each other, while the viewer is standing in the middle, surrounded by sound and moving images.

The videos represent repetitive acts of either a human body or a machine, articulating a bond between these two mechanisms.
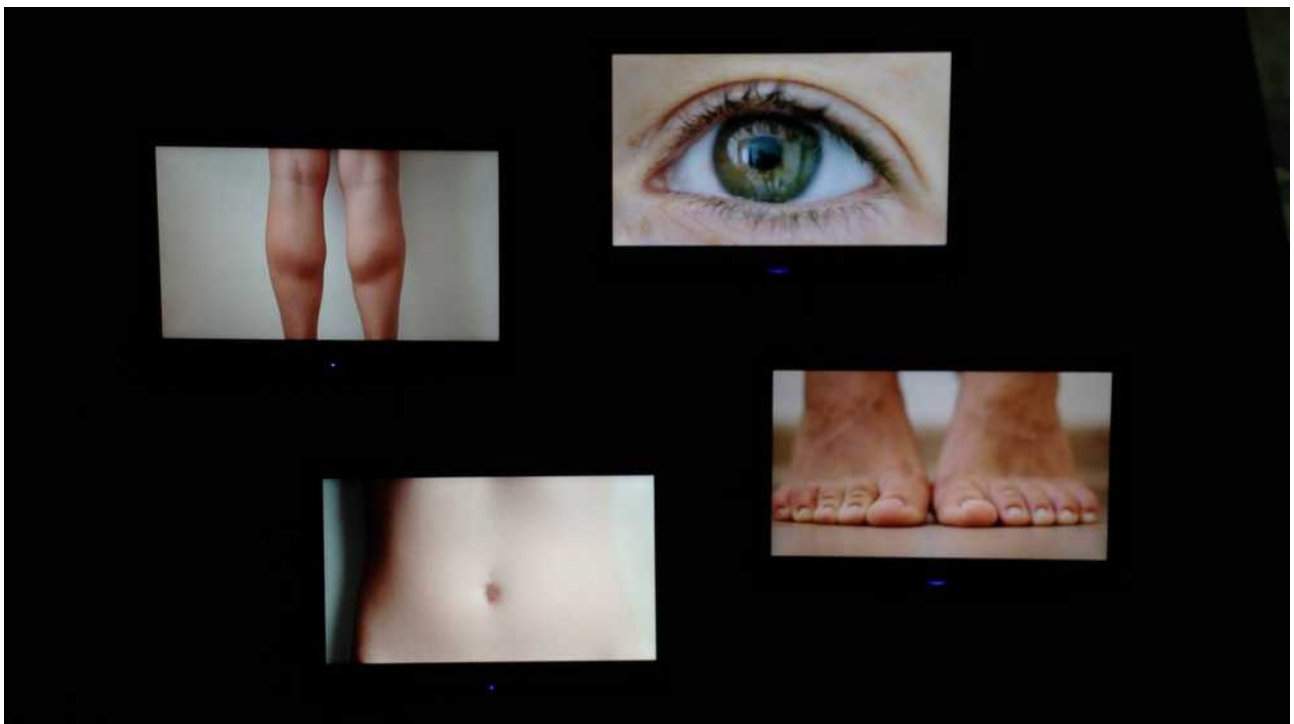
Stills combination taken from 9 channels Video Installation:

Live Organism, Installation view from Minshar exhibition, 2012

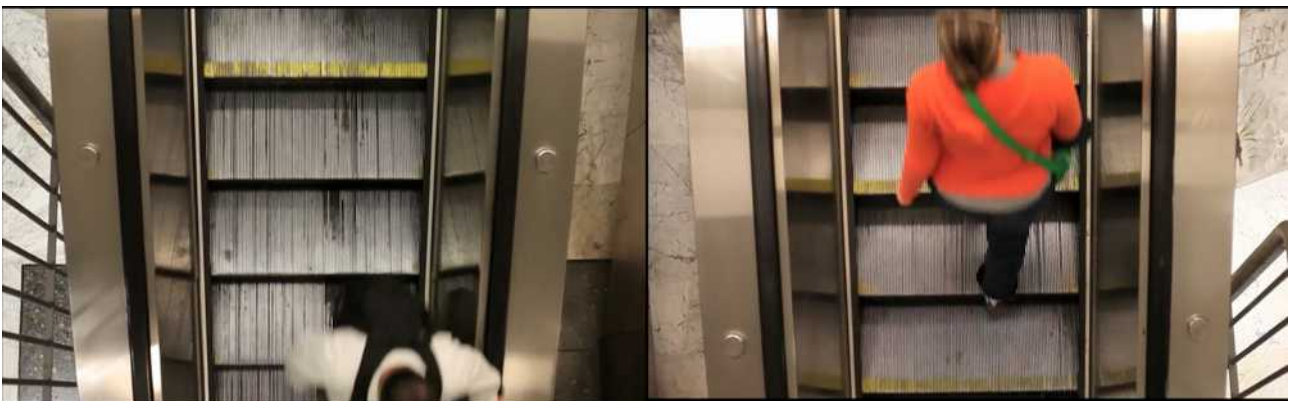*Live Organism,* Installation view from Queens Nails Gallery, 2013

Escalating, 2012

Two channel video projection, human scale, looped.

http://www.mayasmira.com/#!video/c1z7c

Text by **Sharon Grace**, artist and writer :
" *Maya Smira's video installation is a folded loop of video images that present an overview of a pair of escalators, one ascending and the other going down. The destinations linked by the escalators do not appear, and audience is drawn to the movement of the mobile stairs and the bodies that pass through the relatively narrow window established by the framing of the camera. The video allows us to interogate the delivery systems of late corporate capitalism, which promise objects and objectives, but appear to deliver human bodies only to further delivery systems. By focusing on this apparent space of transition between "from" and "to", the concept suggests that there is something fundamentally uninhabitable in the center of this circular logic. The objects and spaces orient knowledge and provide the context we call "history" seem to have slipped away. We are left to contemplate the extraordinary difficulty of finding a place to stand in time.*
Maya's installation shows the audience a closed circuit of the 21st Century Flanarie, where time is relentlessly machine coded. "

still from video

Sun Salutation (2015)

Looped video on projection, preview available soon.

Technological era has brought humanity into a new virtual dimension in which we can expand our knowledge further beyond our limited physical boundaries. We can watch over others and monitor our surroundings without even leaving the house. In Western society, where cameras watch over everything, I wish to explore the space between surveillance and observation.

This video is a documentation of an ongoing sun surveillance. It was captured through public cameras in over 30 different locations around the world. Utilizing cameras that can be controlled online, I shifted the gaze from navigating through the crowd into an object that is beyond our human conceptions of privacy. The repetitive sunsets over the ocean, also function as a romantic blink in a world of changing information. This sun celebration formed by "watching over" the sun, create surreal moments of truth within the manipulative context.
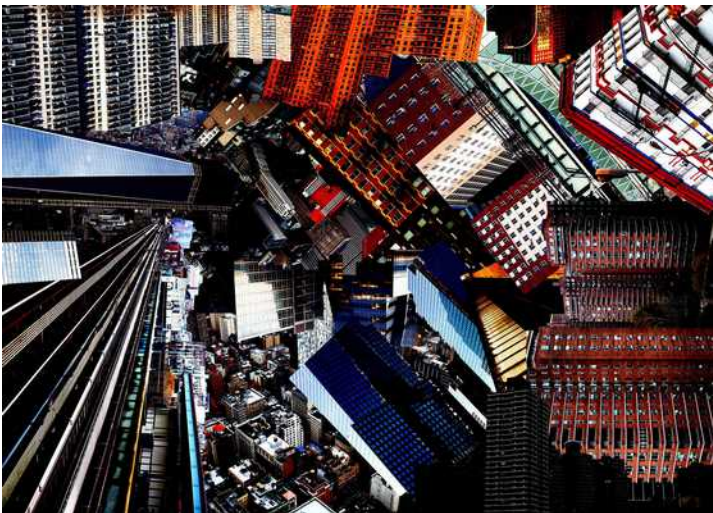

Sun Salutation (2015), Still from Video

The video exhibited at the San Francisco International Arts Festival at Fort Mason, as a part of the exhibition- *Bearing Witness: Surveillance in the Drone Age*, curated by: Hana Regev & Matt McKinley

Cityscapes , 2013

photo-collage series, printed & mounted on Plexiglass
available in two sizes: 8.5"x11" and 20"x30"

The Cityscapes series was built as a combination of architectural visuals, taken in New-York, San Francisco, and Tel-Aviv. It depicts the portraits of three cities, each reconstructed into a unique metropolis presenting it's own feel, colors and rhythm. They were all born out of original photographs into digital collages, trying to express the notion of the modern urban life.

Cityscape (NYC)

Cityscape (SF)

In Space, 2014

The *In Space* project consists a series of photographs and a looping video from outer space.

The series was created in the National Air & Space Museum (Washington) and the

Exploratorium (SF), and includes images that contemplate illustrations of spaces outside of

human reach. The scientific and the creative merge into a sometimes abstract sometimes

formal juxtaposition of art and science and their representation.
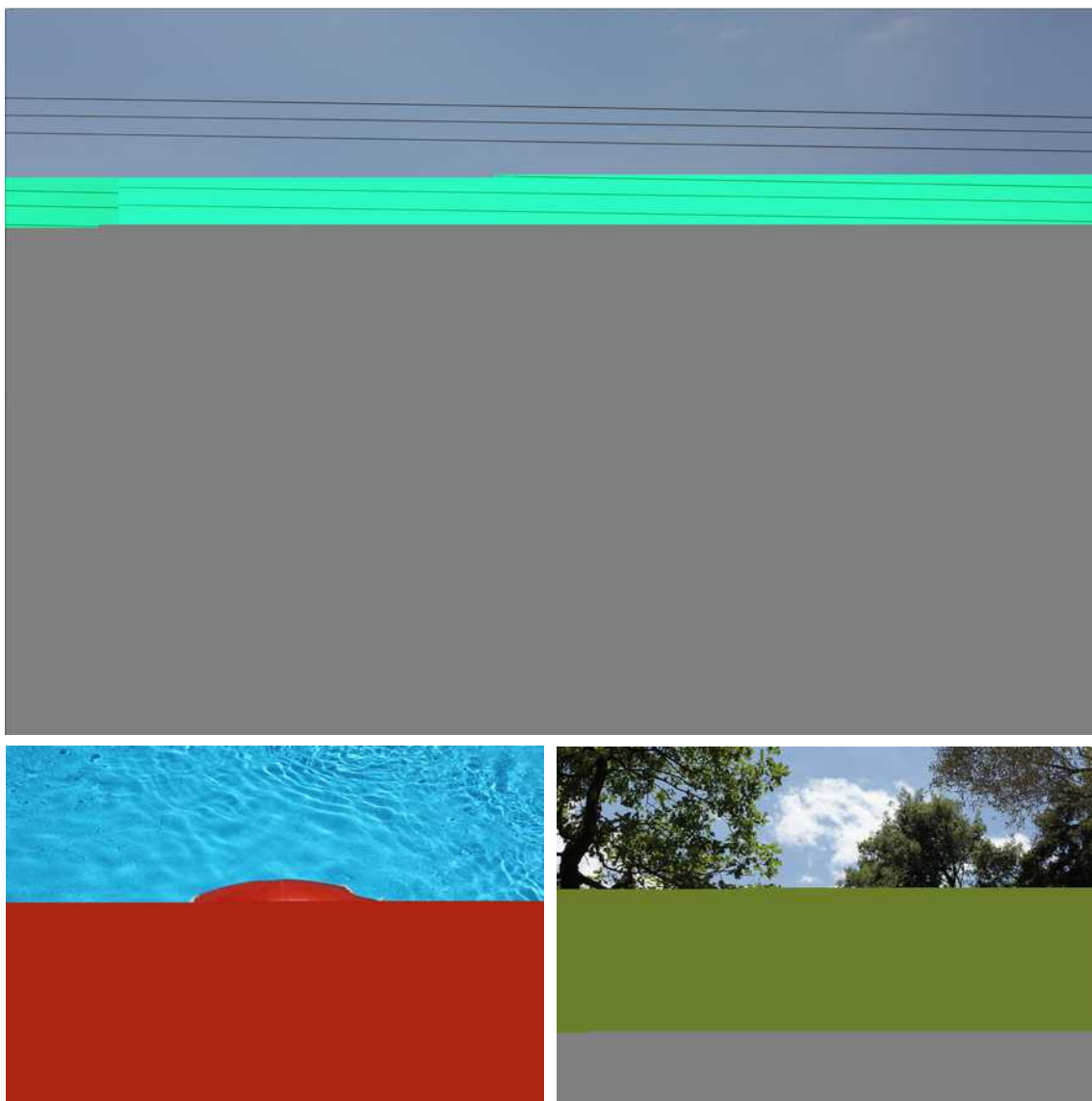

All photographs are mounted on plexiglass and available in 20"x30" or 30"x40"

Digital Disruptions (My Trip To Greece), 2013

This series of images consists of the evolution of photographs into technological errors.

Originally, the images were supposed to be a photographic documentation of my trip to

Greece but while transferring the files into my computer, an error has occurred and

transformed my images into these abstract representation of the defected transition. The

interesting idea about this unpredictable process is that each time I transfer the files they turn

out differently, creating a continues line of errors.

All photographs are available in different sizes

Headlands (Army Memories), 2013

In this series of photographs, I try to resolve my personal army memories, through the stories of other deserted military bases. Being far from my homeland, which is also a region of constant conflict, made it easier for me to look back. Through the portraits of army structures and landscapes, I follow the nature of organized warfare. In a wider context, I draw a connection between Israel and the US, as allies and brothers in arms.

Thailand (Army Memories) , 2010

Thailand is a code name used by the Israeli military, meaning – end of task or end of mission.

This body of works relates to land, body and territory issues, in relation to the complexed national reality in Israel. The images were taken in abandoned locations of army trainings in the Israeli Negev desert, later exhibited in a forgotten old school in Tel-Aviv & San Francisco.
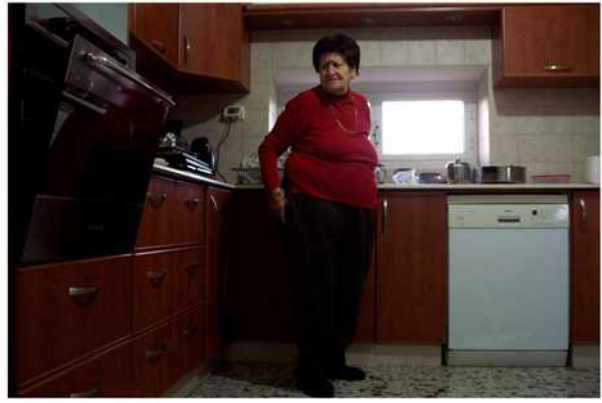
My Family (Grandmothers) , 2011

This series of 22 Images presents an integrated portrait of my two grandmothers. Coming from East & West, both my grandmothers escaped to Israel after being pursuit in their home countries, France & Iraq. Growing up as a combination of these two worlds, I have always enjoyed a mixture of cultures, languages, tastes and smells, that also describes the story of my country. This series of paired photographs try to show the similarities within the different circumstances of these two lives, that were joined together in the middle east.

Maya Smira, CV

Education:

2012-2014   MFA, New Genres, San Francisco Art Institute, CA

2008-2012   BFA, Photography, Minshar for Art (with honors), Tel-Aviv, Israel

BA, Art & Humanities, The Open University (with honors), Israel

2007   Advanced Photography Training, Geographic center, Tel- Aviv, Israel

2003   Beginner Photography Training , The Rotchild center, Tel-Aviv, Israel

Solo Exhibitions:

2017   Upcoming: New project supported by Outset Contemporary Art Fund

2016   Intervention, Minshar Gallery, Curated by Oded Yedaya, Tel-Aviv, Israel

2013   *Code Name: Thailand*, Paul Sacks Still Lights Gallery, San Francisco, CA

Group Exhibitions:

2017   Upcoming: MADATAC International Video Festival, Madrid, Spain

2016   Upcoming: Haaretz Photo Exhibition, Binyamin Gallery, Tel-Aviv, Israel

2016   Upcoming: Teddy Gallery, Curated by Carmit Blumensohn, Jerusalem, Israel

2016   Upcoming: Avi Video Festival, Jerusalem, Israel

2016   San Francisco Art Institute Alumni Exhibition, curated by Katya Min, SF, CA

2016   Petach Tikva Museum, Video Stage Project curated by Or Tshuva, Petach Tikva, Israel

2016   International Festival TANZTENDENZEN 2016 Greifswald, Germany

2016   Spirit of Israel Fund Raise Exhibition, Tel-Aviv, Israel

2016   Haifa Museum of Art,Curated by Svetlana Reingold, Haifa, Israel

2016   *Fresh Paint Contemporary Art Fair*, Tel-Aviv, Israel

2015   *See Me,* Florentin 45 Contemporary Art Space, Tel-Aviv, Israel

2015   *See Me Exhibitions*, Landscape Collection, Musee du Louvre, Paris, France

2015   *Bearing Witness: Surveillance in the Drone Age,* San Francisco International Art
             Festival, Fort Mason, SF, CA

2015   *Everybody's Ocean,* Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History, CA

2015   *Living with Endangered Languages,* Root Division, SF, CA

2015   *The Smell Of Dust,* Photography & live performance, Sau Paulo, Brazil

2014   *Fresh,* South Bay Contemporary, Rolling Hills Estate, CA

2014   *APAture,* Kearny Street Workshop, Arc Gallery, SF, CA

2014   *LACDA Art Fair*, Center of Digital Art, Los Angeles, CA

2014   *Stoff,* Stockholm Fringe Festival, Stockholm, Sweden

2014   *Night Light* , SomArts , SF, CA

2014   *Art Basel Contemporary Art Fair,* Galeria Zero, Basel, Switzerland

2014   *Experimental Film Festival Portland*, Disjecta Art Center, Portland, OR

2014   *Principal*, SFAI MFA Exhibition, The Old Mint, SF, CA

2014   *Generation,* SFAI & CCA Collaboration, Some Thing Spacious, Oakland, CA

2014   *Emerging Artists Exhibition,* University Art Gallery, CSU East Bay, CA

2014   *Imagining Cityscapes,* Swell Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2014   *Group Study*, Refusalon Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2013   *Cubic Sound²*, The Lab, San Francisco, CA

2013   *Borderline*, Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2013   *Sirens*, Paul Sacks Still Lights Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2013   *Untenable Dynamism*, Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2013   *Code Name: Thailand*, Paul Sacks Still Lights Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2012   *Balls Out*, Queens Nails Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2012   *Then and Now*, Paul Sacks Still Light Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2012   *Minshar Graduation Exhibition*, Minshar for Art, Tel-Aviv, Israel

2012   *Israeli Film Festival Exposition*, Cinema des Cineastes, Paris, France

2011   *Photography Students & Neighboring Communities*, Hangar 2, Jaffa Harbor, Israel

2009   *TLV 100*, Jewish Museum, Vienna, Austria

Awards & Residencies:

2016   Current: AICAD Residency Program, NYC

2016   Exhibition support by the Cultural Department of Tel-Aviv Municipality and Yehoshua
        Rabinovich Foundation for the Arts

2016   Outset Award for Video Greenhouse Artist, Fresh Paint Art Fair, Tel-Aviv, Israel

2014   Finalist Award, LG Art of the Pixel Contest, New York City, NY

2014   ESXLA Artist in Residence Program, LA, CA

2014   Ella King Torrey Award, Commencement Ceremony, San Francisco Art Institute, CA

2014   Paul Sacks Building Award, Honorable mention, Academic Honors and Awards
Ceremony, The Photography Program, San Francisco Art Institute, CA

2013   Christopher Coppola "Pah" Festival, Cellphone Art First Prize

2013   Christopher Coppola "Pah" Festival, Mobiflicks Competition First Prize

Publications:

Israeli Lens, Fine Art Photography Magazine, December 2014, Tel-Aviv, Isreal

Art In America Magazine, August 2014 Issue, NY

MFA Exhibition Catalog, San Francisco Art Institute, 2014, CA

Zine Colloquy, Jessica Montgomery, 2014, SF, CA

MFA Now Archive Project, Root Division, 2014, SF, CA

MFA Now Archive Project, Root Division, 2013, SF, CA

Erev Rav: Art. Culture. Society, Shani Varner, July 2012, Tel-Aviv, Israel

Minshar For Art Graduate Catalog, July 2012, Tel-Aviv, Israel

Calcalist Magazine Promising Artists, March 2013, Tel-Aviv, Israel