

## Talking to Noa Zadka:

**Nomi Tannhauser:** Noa, we've been friends now for 15 years, doing things together, but for all that we hardly ever get to talk about art. Usually we talk more about ourselves, about the children, about life – but very little about art...

**Noa:** But art exists everywhere. For instance, there's a group called "Fluxus" of artists from the 1950s, a lot of their works were kind of simple instructions, trivia that didn't need any special ability. **For example** on the work "Sculpture Piece" by Ben Vautier - one of the group - he wrote "pick up anything at your feet". Art is to be found in everything, and it's easy, even rhetorical, to do. But the Fluxus hated subject, wanted to expel it, for them subject was connected with too much psychobabble, and they didn't want psychology. I hate works that have no subject, that's an exercise that is always important to me in art: always to exercise subjectivity, and that's really a kind of battle, even a kind of war. Subjectivity is not that simple, not elementary.

**Nomi:** Today you're a versatile artist, actually an artist of installation, of performance art, photography, video, text art, and now – print too. In spite of all those genres you define yourself as a photographer. Why?

**Noa:** I really did start off in art through photography, as a photographer. And after that beginning I had the courage to talk about what was inside my head, about what the world does to my head, what it wants to happen, what it wants me to feel. **It (the world)** gives me instructions all the time.

**Nomi:** It sounds like a spiritual process.

**Noa:** Right, I think that for me art was my entry into the world. It placed me in the world, emotionally, socially, and now a bit economically. In "Text – Anti-text" (that I wrote), everything is all mixed up. Normative social behaviors are backed up in opposition to a subject that does not agree with them. Reading a sentence by Barbara Kruger, such as "We won't play nature according to your culture" **helped** me in the world.

**Nomi:** So in the **Print Workshop**, wanting to work in print was another genre for you, apart from photography, color, performance, video, text...

Noa: It really is another possible field. I think that whoever does art is a kind of subject that wants to make its voice heard, must make itself heard. I think that for me art is a kind of therapy. However much you hate it, jeer at it, I think that by means of art I have healed myself, learned that what goes on in my head is permitted, specific, possible – that's a kind of therapy.

Nomi: So if we get back to printmaking, how was that for you?

Noa: Well, in the beginning I felt that I couldn't draw at all, even if I once used to draw. Drawing is very connected to physical trauma. It's not natural for me to come to the **Printshop**: I think that's maybe because of being afraid to draw, or perhaps because it's a kind of craft, or because it's not intimate... everything, all together. I see the studio as a place for **craftspeople** whose path is certain, of handiwork, of quick virtuosity, a very classic place.

Nomi: And you, as **an artist** who breaks everything...

Noa: I got tense about what I would do on that plate, I was embarrassed by that nothing, that blank plate on which I was supposed to start, it seemed so pompous and artificial to me. Perhaps that's why I take photographs, because I constantly face something that has a life of its own, doesn't need me in order to live, and in etching there's a plate, and I'm supposed to create something on it. **In my "Seclusions"** I take materials, objects, photos, parts of sentences. I've got a mattress there, I sleep a bit, I simply move, and conduct myself as usual in the **seclusion** space. Here I stood in front of a blank plate in a situation that seemed to require a definite artistic approach. Gradually I began to bring my notebooks, to read things I'd written. I brought a typewriter, and the moment I began to add sentences, drawing suddenly became possible. Without that text, which I knew would come, I couldn't start at all. I knew that I liked drypoint best because it's rough, you can't make curved lines with it. On the other hand, I'm annoyed by the automatic expressiveness that's integral to drypoint, so the texts (that I stick on) perhaps soften it.

Nomi: The etchings **are small, and so are** the images, and the handwriting – I've seen earlier works of yours with larger images.

Noa: I can't work large. At that time, when I made those images that were relatively big, I discovered **America (visually)**, and **also discovered the ability to make a "statement"**, I discovered that people connect hair with dirt, that they were telling me I was dirty or hairy, so I made hairy works. Today, the discomfort with the body, and those feelings of horror are **not so much what want to tell world**. Today, with Arkadiush (**my** partner) I feel more as if I exist, have a voice, even if it's in English, **but I have a voice**.

Nomi: And what about the frame? There's a frame around every etching.

Noa: I have to have my own place, everywhere, to calm the corners that escape, to soothe the white, even when it's a tiny sheet of paper. In some of the etchings, I add the sentence "For Karl Andre and Sol Levitt there is no excretion and no text". Excretion and text go together for me, they are not dichotomous, they do not confront each other.