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Title of article: Captured Artist (word play on the name Deliverance)

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Body of text:

Behind Tom Pnini's exhibition "Ballade to the Double" hides a story of an artist searching for an old steam train and finds himself driven to the same place over and over again.

A loud noise of a train welcomes me as I enter Chelouch Gallery. The rattling of the wheels and the sound of the horns arrives from four stereoscopic amplifiers, each synced to one of four screens, positioned horizontally on the wall next to each other. Although the image is simple and lucid- a train rides on tracks- there is something decisive about the screens. It takes a moment of focus and decoding to realize there isn't a sequentially movement between them, but repetition. It as if the same image is projected back and fourth with quadrangular duplicity. But it is not the same image: the location is the same, the action on the screen is the same, but the background vary and changes with the seasons of the year. Behind the work, named the same as the exhibition "Ballade to the Double", hides a story of an artist searching for an old steam train and finds himself driven to the same place over and over again. "in interested in the duplicity", says artist Tom Pnini. "Much like the search for a difference in identical twins." Pnini (33) studied in Hamidrasha and continued his master studies in NY. There he searched last year for a suitable place, with an old train, to recreate the act of stereoscopic photography- the primal father of modern three-dimensional photography. In the exhibition he presents, as sort of research background, a couple of end of the 19th century images of the kind, that follows the construction of the rail road led by the Central Pacific Railroade company. constructing the iron tracks was one of the most impressive engineering project of conquering the wilderness of America. An act of domestication nature and overcoming the limitations of distance.

An Intimate encounters with nature.

Pnini was planning of shooting a reenactment of the same train plowing through snowy scenery. He arrived on his search to a train museum in Connecticut, north from NY. But the heat wave that followed that week had melted the snow and with it brought Spring to the set. And so, completely by accident, the series of videos constructing this interesting

work of art, was born. “coming back to the same spot in four different seasons creates a duplicity to the double, it contains my experience as a tourist or residence in a new country. It holds my admiration of nature, and of seasons. It occurred to me to make a sort of a journey film, like “Deliverance”, from which I adopted the character of the banjo player meeting the protagonists a moment before everything deteriorate”, says Pnini. The journey he recreates by using the train. The role of the so American banjo player is being replaced here by a young talented New-Yorker kid. She plays various instruments, places pennies on the track in Spring and collects them flatten and frozen in Winter. By doing so he presents his viewers a documented year in four channels, an act of meticulous planning and intimate encounters with nature. “The train always stop in a similar spot, but the range of braking is different”, he explains. The same happens with the girl, standing always at the same spot along the way in each season, as a variable that is not part of the equation. In each one of the frames she does something different, creating an effect of acquaintance accompanied by alienation- as if we were parents looking at an adolescent we cannot understand. The inspiration to the second video work in the exhibition, “Double Windsor”, Pnini took from the famous Buster Keaton train scene from the movie “The Goat”, from 1921. Alongside the original scene a steam locomotive is speeding towards us, on it sits Howard Picus, the New England Railroad Museum director- where Pnini shot his project. The duplicity here is a humorous homage to a prestige past of Hollywood adventures and visual history of trains. Watching American trains is always a cinematic experience, filled with fantasy about freedom. Pnini’s trains are a way to time travel, slightly anachronistic, as if they laugh about the distance between the age of travelers and our currant virtual world. Same as the joke about an Israeli artist that left to shoot snow and found Spring.