

Email Subject: Nira Pereg Opening at LAXART, March 4, 2018

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*NIRA PEREG: Melt Away Before You or I Can't Believe it's Not Battle!*

March 4 – April 7, 2018

Opening Reception March 4, 4-7pm with a walk-through with the artist at 4pm

LAXART is pleased to present *I Can't Believe it's Not Battle! Melt Away Before You*, a new multi-channel video installation by Israeli artist Nira Pereg. This new body of work revolves around the site of Fort Irwin National Training Center, a major training area for the United States Military located in the Mojave Desert in northern San Bernardino County, California. Fort Irwin is a simulation of another place—a fake Middle Eastern town—that becomes a subject of investigation into the nature of authenticity, simulation, fiction, and the theater of war. As America's embedment in the Middle East has become increasingly entrenched, complicated, and violent, the Armed Forces are looking to theatre and performance as new counter strategies to keep pace with the shifting specificities of war. The army has constructed vast simulations of war-time Iraq and Afghanistan to train troops for unconventional tactics and to make them aware that they are under the media's gaze.

The work "*Melt Away Before You*" or "*I Can't Believe It's Not Battle*," is the second part of Pereg's "Redemption" trilogy, a body of work that deals with the heritage of ideology—the religious/political/economic representations—that Israeli artists must contend with. As the artist has explained, "I think of the exhibition space at a "total institution" (to quote sociologist Erving Goffman), incorporating different scenes and elements from 'real' and 'staged' events, and blurring the boundaries between the two. In this work, we see a was performance staged in a realistic mock-up of a generic Middle Eastern village, with real soldiers depicting civilians; real Iraqi-American Immigrants depicting real Iraqi citizens; shipping containers depicting Middle Eastern bazaar streets; and finally, real soldiers firing fake ammunition. For me, it was possible as well as impossible to see ideology in its making at Fort Irwin."

About the Artist

Nira Pereg, born in in Tel Aviv. 1969 spent the 90s in New York, where she received her B.F.A from Cooper Union at New York USA. On her return to Israel, she graduated from the Bezalel M.F.A studio program in Jerusalem, and has been teaching internationally since. Pereg's works have been collected and exhibited at Center Pompidou Paris, PS 1 New York, the Hirshhorn Museum, HDK Berlin, KW Berlin, ZKM Karlsruhe, The Israeli Museum of Art in Jerusalem, House Der Kunst Munchen, Edith-Ruß-Haus für Medienkunst, Kusntahlle Dusseldorf, and The Tel-Aviv Museum of Art.

About LAXART:

Founded in 2005, LAXART is one of Los Angeles premiere alternative venues. A platform for emerging and under recognized talent, its mission has expanded to encompass thematic exhibitions that engage with key issues of our times.

LA×ART

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