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Image:

Merav Shinn Ben-Alon (on the left) and Janine Gerber standing in front of an installation created during the project “Together//Zusammen”, exhibited at K70.

Headline:

The Art Project That Connects Lübeck and Tel-Aviv

Janine Gerber and Merav Shinn Ben-Alon provide an inside look into their joint period of work at K70.

by Dorothea Kurz-Kohnert

Lübeck. “Together//Zusammen” is the title of the exhibition displayed at the K70 Art Gallery. There, the local artist Janine Gerber and the Israeli artist Merav Shinn Ben-Alon are currently presenting the outcomes of a two-week workshop titled “Part #1: Lübeck”. The project will continue as “Part #2: Tel Aviv” at the Art Gallery of the Minshar Academy of Art. “It was a very intense period.” Janine Gerber says. “We worked together on a daily basis for two weeks, and Merav also stayed at my place.” The 43-year old artist, whose studio is located in Klein Barmitz, is among the most exciting artists of the Norths — she recently received the Possehl-Art Prize, awarded for the first time. Her characteristic works are large scale paper installations, in which she cuts tears. They provide transitional views and the surface of origin becomes a space, a body. The work of her 52-year old artistic colleague, Merav Shinn Ben-Alon, focuses more on narrative, using minimalist drawings. Her drawings, which are comprised of a few lines on a small scale, present touching human gestures which signal pain. The artist, for whom this is the first visit to “beautiful” Lübeck, says that the period of work at Kunstraum K70 was a “forceful experience”. Both artists experimented with new materials, and allowed themselves to be

influence by the work methods of one another: Merav Shinn Ben-Alon began to create a large drawing of one of her figures on packaging paper, while also combining with cuts . In contrast, Janine Gerber was able to see herself in films and photos through her “struggling with the paper material”. She says: “It was another informative view of how I move and act.” Even though the artistic approach was the main issue, the politic-historical context in which both artists are located vis-à-vis one another is important and present. The first time they met was in 2015, during an international symposium in Latvia. “I was touched by the fateful story of Merav’s grandmother, who escaped to Israel before the beginning of World War II.” Janine Gerber says.

A year later, they met again at the NordArt, to which Merav Shinn Ben-Alon had been invited to exhibit her work at the Israeli pavillon. In 2017, Janine Gerber traveled to Tel Aviv to work at her colleague’s studio. The two artists’ current joint project pursues the issues the Post-World War II “Third Generation” is engaged with: the desire to understand one another and to learn from each other.