

Cursed Spirits: Exercises in Continental Philosophy

[Media installation: Costume-made camera and software, infra-red illumination, sensors, light, sound and video, 50 min loop]

In this work, viewers are invited to enter a darkened space, to observe – and take part – in a theatrical performance that is projected on a large screen, which looks at times as though it is still at the stage of rehearsal and improvisation. The viewers' own image is captured in real time by a camera, and becomes an integral part of the action on screen – their presence given equal footing as the actors' reflections, the pale and unnatural quality of the image suggesting a phantom presence.

The filmed script was written and directed by Miri Segal and Yoni Niv. They also play the lead roles in it, along with director Michael Gurevich and the child actor Solo Geva. The script is based on the play *Ahmed the Philosopher* (1995) by the French philosopher Alain Badiou (b. 1937). In a tribute to Badiou's research and teachings, the artists preserve his avant-garde spirit. Of his original play – which is structured as a series of 34 lessons on philosophical questions that use comedy in the service of philosophical inquiry – three lessons were chosen: "Nothing," "The Subject," and "Death". The experimental theater that Badiou espouses is one of contemplation; it is not merely a site of emotional purification (catharsis) and a play on identification or reflection, but also a means of disassembling and assembling reality. In "Cursed Spirits" the relationship between the characters is erratic (ranging between aggression, provocation, humor, and passion), and the dialogues likewise swing, pendulum-like, between reality and acting, scripted reality and playful fantasy.

text: Aya Lurie

Miri Segal and Yoni Niv

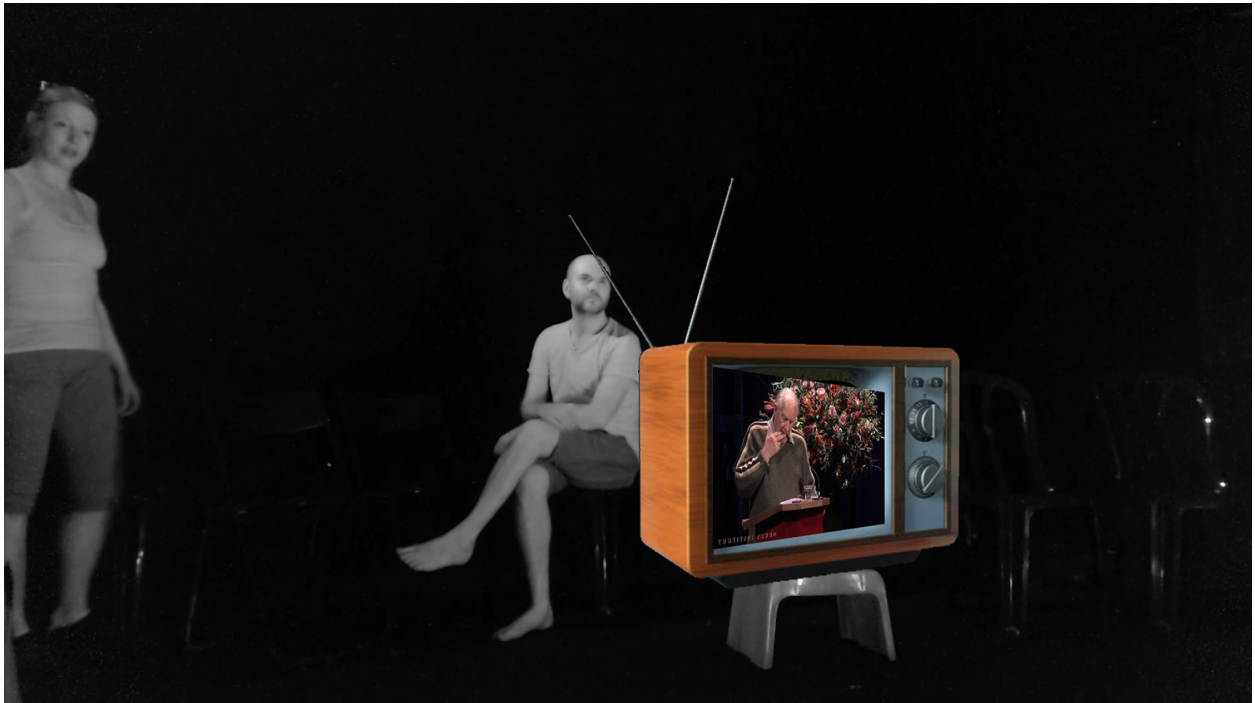
Written and directed: Miri Segal and Yoni Niv

Technology: Israel Levin, Nimrod Kerret

Actors: Michael Gurevitch and Solo Geva

Curator: Aya Luria

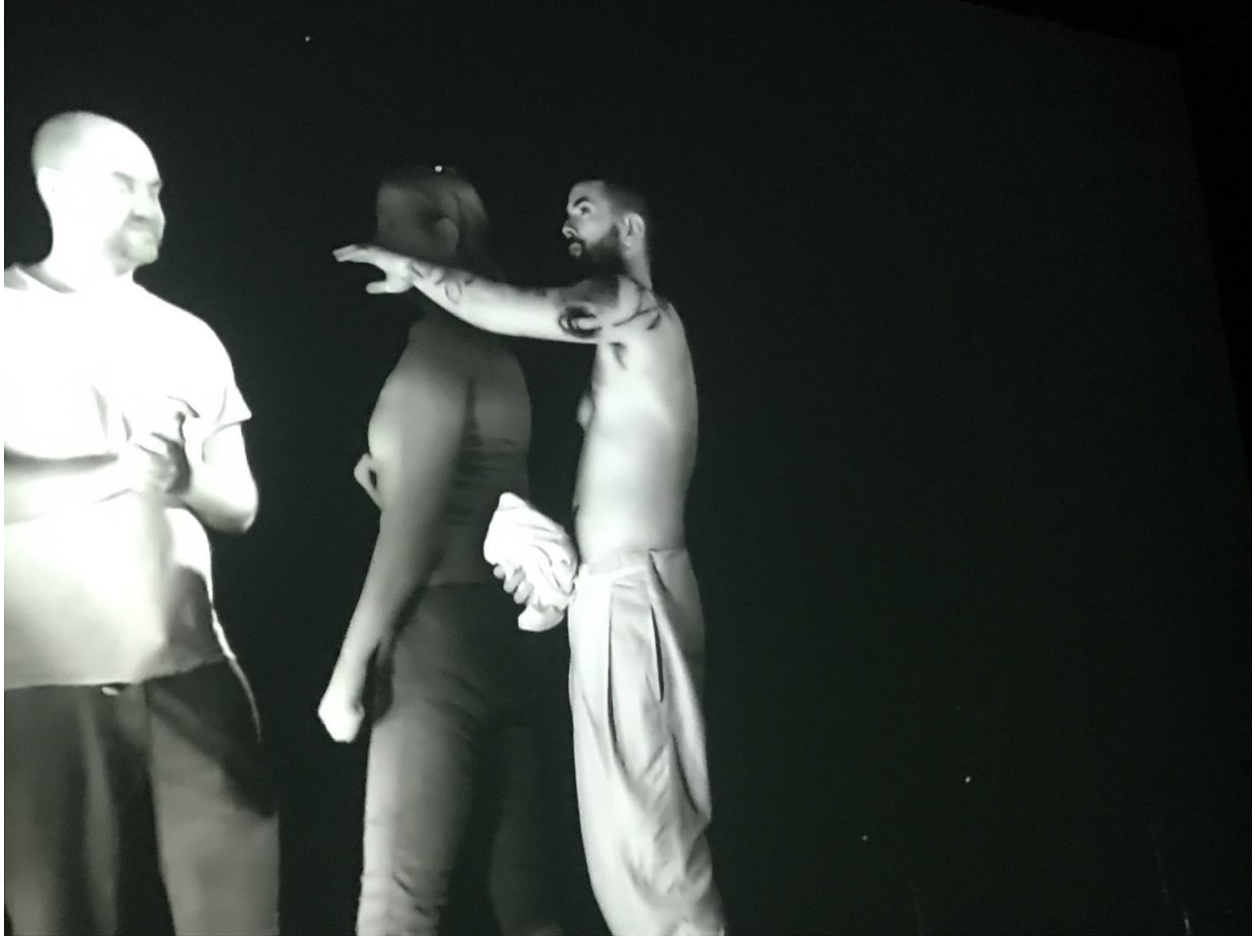
Herzeliya Museum for Contemporary Art, Herzeliya. Curator: Aya Luria, 2018.



First Act: On Nothing - Alan Badiou on Television



Second act: The Subject, with Michael Gurevitch

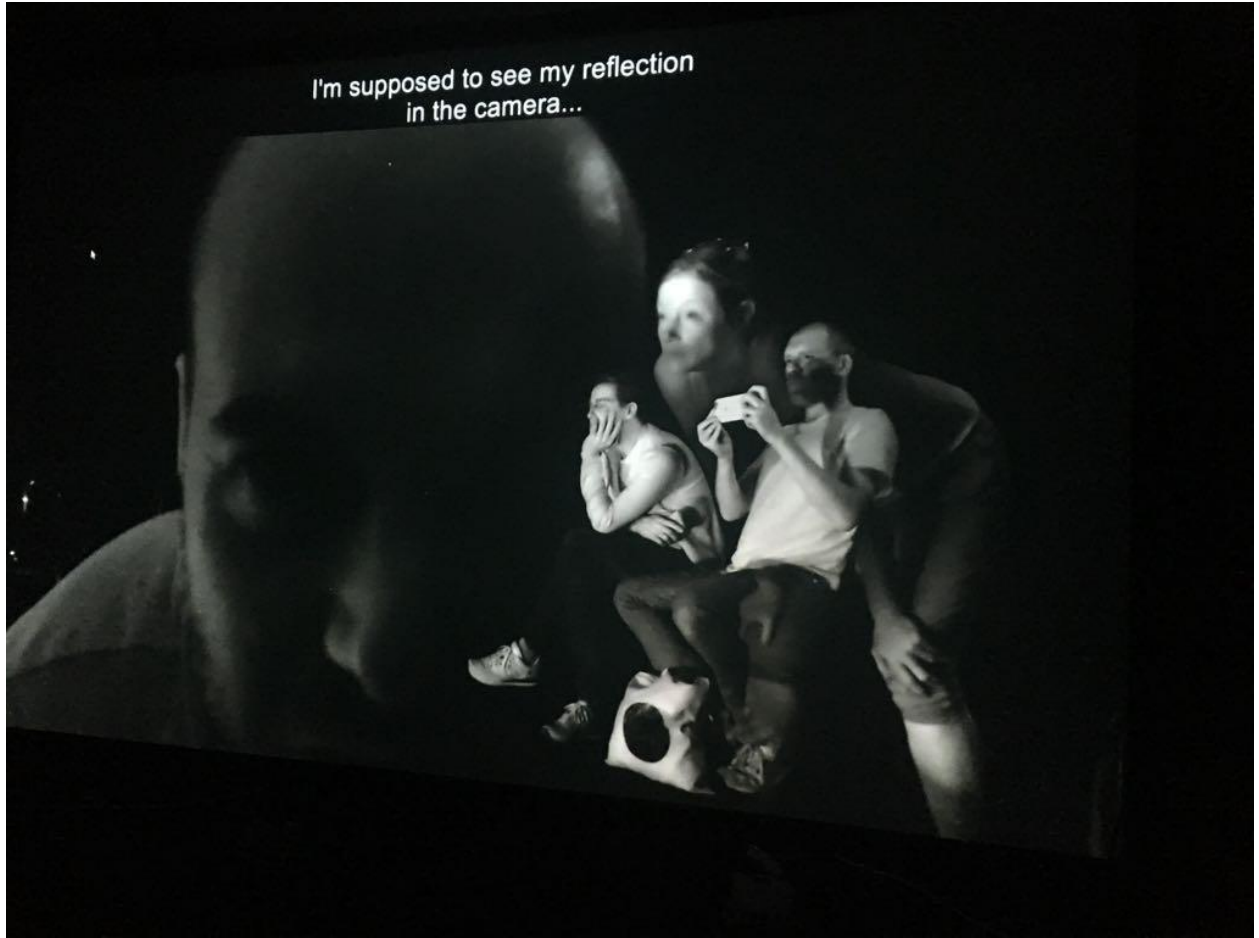


Viewer interacting with work

Miri is daydreaming beneath her tree.
No sarin, no Japanese, no fireman...



Third Act: On Death



Viewers shooting the screen in which they appear in Real Time