

Orit Livne, Painter



Fig. 1: Guy and Sally Gottlieb, France, 1943.

My mother and her little brother are photographed here, and their names are written on the photo "Sally and Guy". Date: 1943. I have no information about this photo. I only know that it was taken during the period when my mother and her brother were hiding and fleeing, during the German invasion of France. When they started running away, in 1940, my mother was only six years old. She lost everything all at once, her home, her father who was drafted, her mother who abandoned the family. I think she has carried this feeling of placelessness and liminality all her life, this inability to feel a sense of belonging. At an older age she immigrated to Israel, got married and raised two daughters, but we returned to live in France for a while and I never managed to settle in properly in Israel. I think my mother passed on to me the inability to feel a sense of belonging. It created in me a place of inner exile. In all my paintings there is an element of somewhere else. Some kind of otherness. It's hard to say that this sky is the sky of Jerusalem. . . I named this series of cloud paintings "No Longer There and Not Yet Here." Something in transition. My mother was always in transition, and I feel that way to this day, unable to belong. In art I have a feeling that there is a place. Even it's a cloud in the middle of the sky, it's a place I exist in, express myself. Albeit somewhere I created myself, but a place nonetheless. My place.

Orit Livne

Clouds

Clouds are always in transition, no longer there and not yet here. Even when I paint the clouds of this land, they are soaked with the climate of my childhood, a mother landscape that has been assimilated and exists in me as a mother tongue.

“That notion of the embodiment of Time, the inseparableness from us of the past [. . .] all that indefinable past unrolled itself which I did not know I had within me.” (M. Proust)¹

The clouds painted as an object fixate the moment, but they are a symbol of the complexity of the relationship between past and present. The one true fixated thing in them is transitioness as a place with an existence of its own.

‘No longer there and not yet here’ is the mark that is tattooed in me, a personal memory from a mother who could not find her place after the Shoah.

¹ Proust, Marcel. (2012). *In Search of Lost Time: Time found*. Translator: Helit Yeshurun. Tel Aviv: New Library, Hakibbutz Hameuchad. 338.



Fig. 2: Orit Livne, *Untitled*, oil on canvas, 140x105 cm, 2013.



Fig. 3: Orit Livne, *Untitled*, oil on canvas, 70x130 cm, 2016.

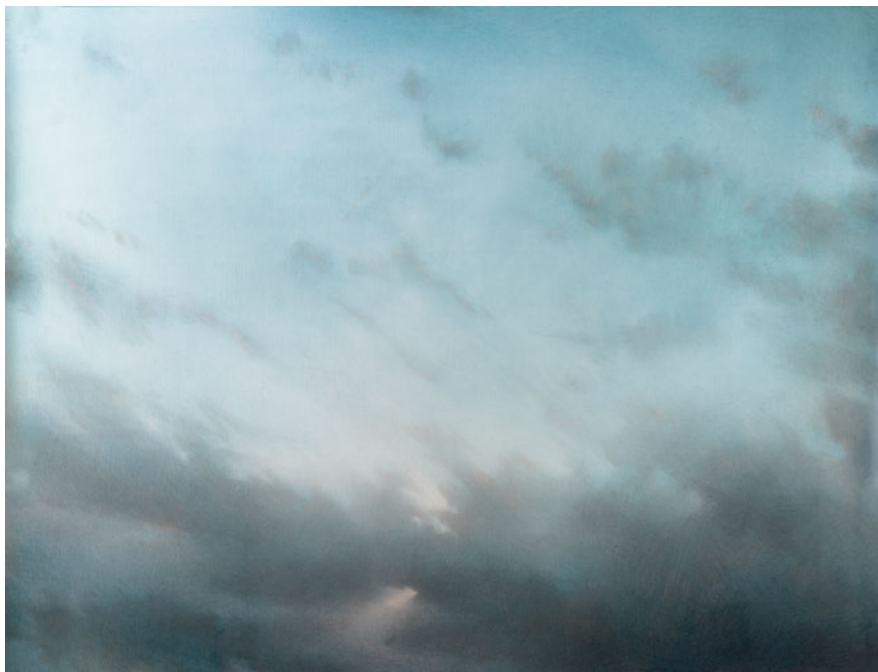


Fig. 4: Orit Livne, *Untitled*, oil on canvas, 140x105 cm, 2014.

