

AMOS GITAI

BEFORE & AFTER

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

24 Jan 2015 - 14 Mar 2015



Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac Salzburg is pleased to present the first exhibition in Austria of works by Israeli artist Amos Gitai in the Villa Kast. For several years Gitai has used various modes of artistic expression, ranging across films, theatre, installations and photography. This has led to more and more frequent invitations from many museums and galleries including the MoMA New York, the Reina Sofia, and the Centre Pompidou. While Gitai's films have made him famous as an artist worldwide, his photography, which has only recently come to attention, is now beginning to be widely appreciated.

The history and all it entails and people's destiny in the face of potentially overwhelming odds, are the subjects of a formal and thematic quest which he pursues relentlessly. Here, his photographic work also becomes an interrogation of different narrative modes. His photos become visual ellipses, their figurative quality almost vanishing into abstraction.

In the exhibition *Before & After* Amos Gitai presents two Super 8 films, *Before & After* and *Black & White*, along with works from his photographic series.

Before & After is an experimental film shot in 1973 during the Yom Kippur war. In the film Gitai revisited an event that occurred when he was only 23 years old, namely a helicopter crash from which he miraculously escaped with his life. It was after that that he decided to make films. The Super 8 features the military jacket Gitai was wearing at the time of the accident; and it becomes the central 'character' of the film.

With the series of new photographs presented here, Amos Gitai continues his work of decoding and conducting a post-mortem on that instant when experience of what has happened turns into personal memory. It is a process in which the subject disappears; what appears in its place is the extreme density of thick, granular, matter translating the stigmata of time and resulting in something with a painterly aspect. What artistic modes can give a proper account of that event, that trauma? What traces did it leave in the memory – a few weeks after, or forty years after? The artist's quest is nourished reciprocally and simultaneously by both film and photography.

In 2014, the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid presented the exhibition *The biographies of Amos Gitai* – an intellectual biography of the artist and his many modes of expression. Parallel with his Salzburg exhibition, the show *Strade/Ways* is on display in the Palazzi Reale in Milan from 1 December 2014 until 1 February 2015, and an exhibition devoted to Amos Gitai's oeuvre is running in the Musée de l'Elysée in Lausanne until January 2015. In autumn 2015, Gitai will shoot and produce his new film *Dona Gracia*, with Isabelle Huppert in the leading role.