



Michal Baratz Koren |
Mayne Tayere *(My Dear)*
Zemack Contemporary Art



“My works are the products of longing”, says Michal Baratz Koren about the series of photographs that comprises her solo exhibition “Mayne Tayere” (My Dear). “There is no attempt at an objective or historical documentation of a situation. The photographs in the series express images and feelings that have been with me from childhood, an amalgam of my own memories and tangible experiences, with stories and old family photos and images from Hebrew literature, theater, and painting. It is a collection of associations, interpretations, and feelings that stem from these charged family gatherings, personal as much as they are universal.”

THE WEDDING
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Michal Baratz Koren

Baratz Koren is driven by a longing - for her childhood, for stories her grandparents had told her, for the smells and flavors that accompanied her life. With sensitivity and compassion, she rummages through memories, gathers pieces of information, explores and interviews and re-arranges the puzzle that is the history of her family, and hers. These become raw materials, which she stages into multilayered and elaborate mise-en-scènes. She uses objects drawn from the heart of eastern European Jewish culture, with dramatic lighting and landscapes that have become synonymous with both the diasporic story and the pioneer story. When her family members are called to be the models in the photographs, the family memories gain contemporary validity, not only recreated but relived.

However, the force of Baratz Koren's photographs does not lie only in their personal dimension, but rather possibly in their generic nature. The staged scenes are familiar to us, taken from the array of images and stories we grew up with: the stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer, Chagall's paintings, old photos of the Holy Land and pioneers, and of course the local landscapes. Baratz Koren's photographs are like a knock on the walls of our collective memory, masterfully fusing nostalgia and the present, while shedding a new light on the singular cultural and social tapestry of this place.

Curator: Yaron Haramati





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