

About the work **Something is Going to Happen**, 1998-1999, in the catalogue: *Fragments: Mosaics and Reality* (Curator: Neta Gal-Atzmon) , Time for Art: Israeli Art Center, 2004, p. 7.

Tal Amitai “sails” an origami paper boat on an embellished “notebook page,” while the words “something is going to happen” threaten to capsize the boat at any minute. The boat and its surface, both made of hardened polyurethane, “masquerade” as a checkered notepad page, extracted from the world of schoolchildren, and the bluish coloration of the color squares, rendered in acrylic and marker, conflicts with the sense of danger arising from the text.

About the work **Untitled**, 2000, in the catalogue: *Fragments: Mosaics and Reality* (Curator: Neta Gal-Atzmon) , Time for Art: Israeli Art Center, 2004, pp. 13-14.

Tal Amitai articulates a sense of vulnerability and desperate anxiety as well.

Personal and national futures are linked to the notions of the house and home via construction of a textual maze from small wooden toy bricks. The words quoted in the piece are extracted from Paul Auster’s *The Invention of Solitude* (1982): “At what moment does a house stop being a house? When the roof is taken off? When the windows are removed? When the walls are knocked down? At what moment does it become a pile of rubble? ... And then one day the walls of your house finally collapse. If the door is still standing, however, all you have to do is walk through it, and you are back inside. It's pleasant sleeping out under the stars. Never mind the rain. It can't last very long.”¹²

This quote from Auster is especially disconcerting and uncanny due to the way in which it is employed by Amitai in the context of Israeli reality during the ongoing Intifada. The words become charged with connotations from the jargon of current affairs: security, separation fence, demolition of houses ...

The yearning for a home, whether a personal, concrete home or a metaphorical national home, leads to a quest for a refuge; it prompts one to explore his sense of belonging, and transforms into a tool as part of the

attempt to define identity. The thin line between order and chaos, between home-owner and homeless, is defined by Auster in terms of the door. Against the background of the dramatic and painful Israeli reality, it sometimes seems that if only the door of the house had stood firm, a sense of security would have been regained and it would have been possible once again to deny the internal fragmentation, the spiritual collapse and the loss of identity. The maze and the toy bricks revealing the text are game elements, albeit these are ancient and highly-meaningful games. Ever since the Knossos labyrinth, wandering in a maze has come to symbolize human fate, and various dice games have been an expression of the vicissitudes of fate.