Building Castles in the Sand

Kinetic sand is a material that Tal Amitai-Lavi has begun exploring in recent years. In contrast to her series of works made of baking soda and glue, this time there is no binding substance, no material or chromatic separation between image and background, and the works look like reliefs appearing and disappearing in the sand. The working process in the studio assumes the character of an archaeological excavation; the artist uncovers the hidden image beneath the surface, encrypted within the wooden drawer.

According to her, working with kinetic sand is challenging due to the nature of the material, which refuses to settle and solidify and slips through the fingers. The process demands alertness and meticulous caution, necessitating a decision at any given moment regarding a grain of sand—whether it will turn right or left.

The video work "Fragments," which depicts childlike sand structures collapsing in a loop, allows the viewer to contemplate the mesmerizing beauty inherent in their slow disintegration. Observing the crumbling sand invites the viewer to linger within an indefinite space where the structure disappears just as it appeared.

The preoccupation with dissolution, crumbling, and collapse stands at the core of many of Tal Amitai-Lavi's works, echoing actual states of breakdown, destruction, and ruin. The structures collapsing into themselves offer a visual expression of moments of fracture, while simultaneously presenting a surrender to processes of decomposition and transformation. The work invites the viewer to find beauty and solace precisely within this infinite change, wherein construction and destruction are inextricably intertwined.