

The Pulsating Room / Ravit Harari

"The Pulsating Room" is a site-specific installation designed for the precise dimensions and architectural features of one of the gallery's rooms, where a century-old well is located. The City's historic Well House, which was deprived of its original function and has been converted into an art exhibition space, is transformed under Tal Amitai-Lavi's skilled hands into an ethereal, illusory space infused with memories, a fantasy of a home consisting of disembodied architectural elements devoid of body and function, producing an optical illusion of domesticity, at once embracing and disintegrating.

The works in the exhibition divide the gallery into a two-bedroom apartment of sorts, thereby converting it into a domestic space, beckoning observers to gather themselves, physically and mentally, in a magical, illusory space that is both reflective and unsettled – based on material diversities, opposites, and translocations.

Architectural elements and domestic objects on display, made of transparent, airy materials devoid of volume or weight, are disembodied specters. Despite their spare, minimalistic appearance, their creation involved a great deal of work. It took months to lay out and intertwine thousands of thin, transparent nylon strings to create a hovering staircase, a pair of windows – replacing the real-life gallery windows – a curtain, which appears to be swaying of its own free will, illuminated by the beams of light flickering across the room. Also, the animation, which is projected cyclically, consists of elusive beams of light choreographed for circular motion – fanning out and converging, building up and disintegrating. A carpet that appears to draw itself out on the floor, its ornamentation lines derived from elements of the Well House's floorplan; a crackling fireplace, with an imaginary fire flickering inside it, and ripples on the

surface of the water beamed onto the wellhead where they pulsate to the rhythm of a virtual underground pulse.

The home, with its physical, psychological, and metaphoric layers, seemingly encapsulates a promise of stability and security. However, in Amitai-Lavi's skillful hands, it is constructed as an ethereal space whose foundations are brittle, being based on optical illusions offering no real protection or containment. This is a disrupted home, undermining any sense of security. In Freudian terms, this is the "Uncanny", whose components have undergone an unsettling defamiliarization. The architectural elements marked within it are primarily passageways and portals leading nowhere; the objects are not functional interiors but rather whispering, flickering decorative objects. Ghost objects infused with a soul, appearing to have supplanted the home's original occupants. As psychoanalyst Itamar Levy suggests in his article "The Pulsating Room" in his book "Home and Road", it seems Amitai-Lavi treads those "seamlines between architecture and dream, between interiors and imagination, in a fantasy of light, in an animistic world where objects have souls".