

Sigalit Landau (Jerusalem, 1969)

Politics and poetry coexist in Sigalit Landau's work. She often develops references to reality, including that of her native Israel, through installations, sculptures, and videos in which viewers are emotionally involved. The human body, with its fragile and transitory nature, is often presented or evoked as an unavoidable metaphor, a common denominator for multiple languages, religions, and cultures.

In *Oh My Friends, There Are No Friends*, 2012, the artist presents twelve pairs of men's and women's shoes, cast in bronze and arranged in a circle. Choosing bronze as the material traditionally employed for monuments and to commemorate heroes and public figures, Landau refers to her piece as sort of memorial for the future, "when we will be able to slip into these shoes and be part of a community who will create a better history, with more solidarity, more generosity, and more imagination." Life-sized, the shoes are joined to one another by their laces, exposed in their simple vulnerability. At the same time, functioning as a link, the laces seem to transform the group of shoes into a single potential organism, analogous to the veins in a human body. Landau also explores this reference to the childhood diversion of tying one's shoes in unusual ways, in a video from the previous year, in which a little girl, hidden under a large table, ties together the shoes of a group of unaware adults, while they are involved in a long meeting at a negotiating table. As in other works by this artist, both these pieces involve the concept of individuals connected in a shared environment, on a common path where there are no winners or losers, but only fellow creatures who converge for a single purpose, reaping possible success or failure in equal measure. (MB)