

Michal Rovner

(Tel Aviv, Israel, 1955)

The large themes of history and time are fundamental to Michal Rovner's art. Combining multiple languages and her own multifaceted expertise, the artist uses video, film, sculpture, photography, music, and dance to create installations that are able to envelop viewers in environments rich in multi-sensory stimuli, where individual memory often finds the occasion to introject personal experience, establishing parallels with the exigencies of the contemporary world.

Created for the courtly spaces of Castello di Rivoli, *Cracks in Time*, 2009-2012, includes a large-scale video projection in which two, large, veiled, human figures stand out, making simple but evocative gestures, including bowing to each other and taking each other by the hand. A series of small silhouettes passes behind them, in the middle ground; in overlapping registers, they seem to take on a linguistic connotation, like elements of a discourse that repeats incessantly. Without including references to directly recognizable places or facts - Rovner has utilized footage shot in Russia, Romania, and Israel and developed the installation at Rivoli in the spring of 2012, the same period when a violent earthquake struck regions of central Italy - the work summarizes a sense of dramatic truth, evoking the feeling of stories that repeat, of a humanity driven by the winds of history, which it at times tries to resist. Music, composed by the artist, is an important component that helps merge the work with the surrounding environment, uniting the projection with the wall that supports it, almost as if they were a single element. Thus even the deep cracks that occasionally appear in the projection become threatening lacerations that seem to cut the underlying wall and transform it into an unstable ruin, or perhaps knock down the boundary that it represents. According to David Grossman, this concept is common to all Rovner's works. "All Michal Rovner's works," the Israeli author writes, "are about boundaries. The artist challenges the idea of boundary, she moves beyond it, extends it beyond its limits. It sometimes seems that she likes standing at the edge, and perceiving the trembling of realities that are different from or even hostile to one another, at the moment when they meet or collide. Michal Rovner was born and lives in a place - and a reality - whose boundaries are subject to frequent violations. Someone who lives in this way, whether Israeli or Palestinian, is like a person who lives in a house whose walls continually move, rattle, and sway." (MB)