

## **TUREL ART GALLERY EXHIBITS BRURIA CARMİ – WORKS – 20.12.80-9.1.81**

Bruria Carmi's sand-pictures provoke questions about the nature of such picture-drawing, and about the relation between the exhibit itself and its interpretation by the viewer. Is the picture a window onto an illusionary reality or field of artistic events, using forms not familiar from Nature? Or does the sand, collected from the seashore and the Negev *wadis*, serve itself to constitute a visual language? Or, rather, is the picture a direct indication of the materiality of sand?

Bruria Carmi's works are perceived as topographies of the Negev's sun-drenched landscape as well as mappings of sensations devoid of familiar forms. The sand's monochromatic materiality and the delicate treatment afforded it in these works prompt one to believe that the eye is identifying part of an actual sand-rock, directly transferred from its natural situation, and at the same time discovering the illusion of expansive landscapes, seen as if through khamsin screens.

Determining the fine border between illusion and documentation constitutes one of the fascinating qualities of these works. The granular structure of sand produces a soft relief, in the tradition of ancient Near Eastern carving, while the metaphor created here refers us back to familiar relics of desert civilizations such as the Nabataean relics in Avdat and Petra. The minimalist tonality, the restrained, condensed style – which leaves signs of the hand on the sand surface – and the transferred desert tones, all stimulate sensation, combining into an introverted, abstracted expression. While taking a minimal approach to pictorial means, the artist produces wide-ranging variations in expression, from sand as material to sand as theme, from archeological metaphor to pure abstract form, from the illusion of vast desert landscapes to the exploration of sand grains' microstructure.

Bruria Carmi's current sand-works result from a process of development, beginning with oil paintings emphasizing materiality. The abstraction of these paintings manifested itself in the very act of producing a picture:

engraving, exposing paint surfaces, scribbling. The affinity to the work of Arie Aroch results from the two artists' common view of process as goal, and of handwriting as language. The painting functions as a personal diary gradually accumulating forms and hints of color, as an intimate experience between the artist and the emerging work; thus, in the present stage of the artist's oeuvre, it becomes an experiment with sand as material, as color, and as constituent of a visual language.

Amnon Barzel

*Ha'aretz*