

Games we play

From the mimicry and repetition of infancy to the pretence and encoded symbology of toddlers and the cognitive reasoning and social order of youth, games are a self-contained world of learning and establishing order. Whether it is Chess, Snakes and Ladders, a computer game, or the free form play of dolls and soldiers, any game provides both a metaphor and a framework to life.

Rules (either predetermined or invented) give structure and boundary, where those most able to navigate them are deemed winners. However those who break the rules, no matter how arbitrary, are labelled cheats, unable to play, losers. The behavioural model that games establish is thus reflected as a metaphor for life where levels of success are similarly rewarded and lauded.

In life, games continue between lovers, colleagues, states, races, sexes, convictions and countries. The veracity of the stakeholder is determined by the size of the team and of course the rules, though often the rule-book

differs between parties. In Yaeli Ohana's latest body of work, the artist explores games as metaphor for life.

In one set of paintings she has superimposed the childhood game or pretence of war over abstracted scapes of conflict. In another, delicate flowers on fields of feminine fabric are blurred with overlays of soft ink and veiled so finely that only a skeletal outline remains. In effect their super abundance of femininity and fragility has conspired to render them ephemeral, too delicate to exist, their impact diluted to the point of invisibility.

Nostalgia also plays a role in this work as the games trigger memory of budding cognition. It is in games and play that we first learn to experiment, negotiate, bluff, take chances and place value on a stake. Ohana has used these symbols of childhood, to play with disparity of fantasy, belief, expectation, and most importantly, intent.

Gillian Serisier, arts writer, April 2010

NG Art Gallery

warmly invites you to the opening of

Yaeli Ohana games we play

to be opened by **Leanne Carr** ArtExpress Curator, AGNSW

tuesday 22nd June
6pm — 8pm

exhibition 22 June — 10 July 2010



Yaeli Ohana - Barcelona Postcard 3 - mixed media on canvas board - 13 x 18 cm - 2010



Yaelli Ohana *Fragile 6* mixed media on linen 13 x 18 cm 2010



Yaelli Ohana *War Games for Kids 2 (detail)* mixed media on linen 55 x 70 cm 2010



Yaelli Ohana *Fragile 10* mixed media on linen 13 x 18 cm 2010



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 ng art gallery tue – sat 11am – 10pm mission tue – fri 11am – 10pm sat 9am – 10pm