

The Use of Humor

in Israeli and

Palestinian Video

Art: A Case Study

on Two Artists

Luna Goldberg

School of the Art Institute of Chicago, EUA

Abstract

The subjects of land, nations, and borders are often intertwined with the topics of identity, conflict, and historical narrative. Over the years, many visual and performance artists have created work to subvert the racial, political, and cultural divisions that have acted as barriers among peoples living in Israel-Palestine. Their works tell narratives; they paint pictures of their daily lives while also reflecting the culture and politics of the region. This article examines the video work of two contemporary Israeli and Palestinian artists, Tamir Zadok and

Sharif Waked. Taking these artists as a case study, this paper will investigate the mechanism of humor in the works to reflect upon both the absurd aspects of the conflict as well as the collective traumas of Israeli and Palestinian societies. Specifically, I will use their works to explore how their respective use of satire functions as a means of confronting the relationship between occupier and occupied in border crossings, as well as the rhetoric and the mechanisms involved in the construction of national narratives and propaganda.

Keywords

Sharif Waked, Tamir Zadok, Video Art, Humor, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Introduction

The subjects of land, nations, and borders are often intertwined with the politics of identity, the body, and historical narratives. Over the years, many Israeli and Palestinian artists have created work around the racial, political, and cultural divisions within Israel-Palestine. Addressing their collective histories and cultural traumas, artists have used their work as a means of confronting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its repercussions on civilians. The aesthetic of many Palestinian artists is rooted in themes of national identity, displacement, and belonging as well as marked by the use of iconic cultural symbols such as keys, doors, and the sabra fruit (Ankori, 2006; Boullata, 2009). Similarly, many contemporary Israeli artists have utilized their work to criticize Israel's Zionist historiography, political leadership, and contested cultural symbols such as the Jaffa orange, the sabra fruit, and the watermelon (Zalmona, 2013).¹ For Palestinian and Israeli artists Sharif Waked and Tamir Zadok, the essence of their practice lies in highlighting the mechanisms of separation resulting from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the military occupation of Palestinian territories. Through their video work, both artists employ dark humor and satire in order to question the realities of living in a war zone.

This paper will investigate the mechanism of humor in Waked and Zadok's video work to reflect upon both the absurd aspects of the conflict as well as the collective traumas of Israeli and Palestinian societies. I will begin with a brief history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in order to ground the work of the artists, whose visual practices draw elements from the aesthetics and language associated with the Israeli occupation. I will then use their works to explore how their respective use of satire functions as a means of confronting the relationship between occupier and occupied in border crossings, as well as the rhetoric and the mechanisms involved in the construction of national narratives and propaganda.

1. A sabra is a thorny cactus fruit indigenous to desert areas in Israel with a thick and prickly skin, and sweet and soft interior. The fruit became a symbol of native-born Israeli Jews who are supposedly tough on the outside, but delicate and sweet at the core. It is important to note that for reasons of space, I cannot elaborate on the history of Israeli or Palestinian art, nor the history of contested national and cultural symbols that have been adopted by both Israelis and Palestinians over time. For more regarding the history of Israeli and Palestinian art, see: Yigal Zalmona's *A Century of Israeli Art*, and Gannit Ankori's *Palestinian Art*.

“Land is the Necessary Basis for Nationhood”²

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has persisted for over half a century. The dispute and ongoing conflict is one between two national groups – Israeli Jews and Palestinians – fighting over a small piece of land they have been unable to share, regardless of many attempts to divide it. Since the 1947 United Nations (UN) Partition Plan for Palestine and the establishment of the Green Line as a tentative national border in 1949, little progress has been made to divide the land according to internationally defined borders, despite recent efforts by the international community to push the government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) towards a peace process (Adwan *et al.*, 2012).³ To argue that this conflict is a territorial dispute would be an oversimplification, as it is one with social, historical, cultural, and economic facets. The land in itself however, remains a source of contention causing both literal and figurative divisions among peoples.

Today, the Green Line continues to divide Jerusalem and trace some of the boundaries between Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. The Israeli West Bank Barrier for instance, was built along the Green Line.⁴ In his chapter, “The Wall: Barrier Archipelagos and the Impossible Politics of Separation,” Eyal Weizman (2007) describes the construction process, aesthetics, and implications of the Wall separating Israeli cities and Jewish settlements from Palestinian villages and towns. Approximately 430 miles long and 26 feet tall, the many stretches, bends, and wrinkles in the Wall are made up of both concrete and barbed wire, plotting the influences of different political interests. Commenting on the imposing nature of the Wall, Weizman notes the following: “The illusion that with a set of unilaterally fortified lines, reinforced with concrete, barbed wire and surveillance

2. This section header is borrowed from Jean Genet as quoted in Trinh T. Minh-ha’s “An Acoustic Journey.”

3. From December 1947 to May 1948, a civil war between Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine broke out as a result of the adoption of the United Nations (UN) Partition Plan for Palestine. The plan proposed a partition of the land into two independent Arab and Jewish states, with the transformation of Jerusalem into an internationalized enclave. With the termination of the British Mandate for Palestine and the Israeli Declaration of Independence in May 1948, the civil war grew into an inter-state conflict between Israel and four of its neighboring Arab countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria). As a result, in 1949, a set of armistice agreements were signed between the Israeli army and those of its neighbors establishing a cease-fire and what would later be called the Green Line. Drawn by Moshe Dayan, the commander of the Israeli forces in the Jerusalem region, the Green Line served as a demarcation line between the Israeli forces and its neighbors. Though it was not meant to delineate a political or territorial boundary, the Green Line replaced the partition plan proposed by the UN up until 1967, constituting the Israeli borders, and was used to determine citizenship and the status of refugees based on residence.

4. For the purpose of this text, I will be using the Israeli West Bank Barrier, the Wall and the Wall of separation interchangeably.

technology, Israel and Palestine could both become ordinary, territorially defined nation states, disguises the violent reality of a shifting colonial frontier” (2007, p.179). In its construction, the Wall not only became part of the Middle-Eastern landscape, it became a persistent barrier reflecting issues of national security, identity, and sovereignty. The works of Waked and Zadok mirror the centrality of land in the conflict by reflecting its overarching presence which manifests itself into all aspects of daily life. Through the use of satire, their works highlight both the tragedy and absurdity of the conflict for their viewers.

The construction of the Wall is not only responsible for limiting movement, it also implements psychological and emotional trauma on Israelis and Palestinians. As Weizman eloquently states, the Wall has “become a discontinuous and fragmented series of self-enclosed barriers that can be better understood as a prevalent ‘condition’ of segregation – a shifting frontier – rather than one continuous line neatly cutting the territory in two” (2007, p.177). Limiting mobility through its checkpoints and barbed wire fences, the structure acts as a means of segregation, perpetuating the so called ‘other,’ for as we will see through Waked’s work, even Palestinians legally working or residing within the Green Line are subjected to ‘security measures’ such as checkpoints and strip searches. By contributing to each group’s ability to view the other as a threat and an enemy, the physical division of the Wall adds to the promotion of particular historical narratives leading respective groups to dehumanize the other.

In his essay “Zionism from the Standpoint of its Victims,” Edward Said (1979) maintains that the greatest tragedy of the Palestinians is that they are the victims of victims. Through his writing, he argues that both peoples are so entrenched in their respective identities, histories, and struggles that “it has been impossible for Jews to understand the human tragedy caused the Arab Palestinians by Zionism; and it has been impossible for Arab Palestinians to see in Zionism anything except an ideology and a practice keeping them, and Israeli Jews, imprisoned” (Said, 1979, p.23). To be sure, the Holocaust played an influential role in the development of Zionism and as a result, in the founding of the State of Israel (Ofer, 2004).⁵ Today, it continues to act as a crutch used by the political right in order to enforce unethical policies by creating a sense of urgency and threat

5. In her chapter, “Fifty Years of Israeli Discourse on the Holocaust: Characteristics and Dilemmas,” Dalia Ofer discusses the ways in which the Holocaust became instrumental in both shaping Israel as well as its people. The Holocaust provided the Zionist movement with the ideological justification for the existence and necessity of the Jewish State. Following the creation of the State, it not only became central to the history of the country and its people, but also to its future. For instance, through the analysis of a speech given by Prime Minister Moshe Sharrett in 1954, Ofer notes that for Sharrett, the “freedom and the existence of the state are dependent on remembrance [of the Holocaust].” In Zionist historiography, the memory of the Holocaust was necessary in justifying the existence of the State.

for the Jewish people. Further, the Holocaust has become a significant aspect of Israeli identity; a psychological collective trauma which to this day remains ingrained within society to the point of providing justification for immoral Israeli policies and political actions towards Palestinians, something we will further examine through Zadok's work. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, neither Israeli Jews, nor Palestinians wish to acknowledge the hardships that the other has faced. Thus, they are engaged in a dialogue based on very different historical narratives which only contribute to the maintenance of the conflict: Israeli Jews fighting for the creation of a state of their own and safety after having lost so many to anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, and Palestinians fighting to protect what is their homeland.

Waked and Zadok are among a legacy of Israeli and Palestinian artists who are deeply engaged in the region's politics and the current political reality through their artistic practices. It is their use of satire and absurdist humor however, which distinguishes them from others. As I will argue, their strategic use of humor in a highly politicized state acts as a means of confronting the "unfolding realities, ideas, and power relationships" in the region, while partially escaping the heaviness of tragedy, suffering, and tremendous loss tied to the conflict (Lionis, 2016). As a result, their works function in a way which effectively critiques the political situation through the use of carefully crafted, often bitter-sweet humor; one which allows viewers to come to their own understanding of the conflict without forcing a position on its spectators.

"Chic Point: Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints"

In her chapter "Foreignness and the New Color of Fear," Trinh T. Minh-ha writes about the Israeli network of barriers and checkpoints along the Occupied Territories, and the failure of the Israeli "authorities' colossal effort to censor and separate" (2011, p.3). Minh-ha notes that what is supposed to take the form of a security wall has in fact become a wall of insecurity. Moreover, she describes the building of physical barriers as indicative of a fearful nation entrenched in current notions of racism and observes that "the high wall that keeps out is the same wall that keeps in" (Minh-ha, 2011, p.3). The creation of military checkpoints in the Occupied Territories and between Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip began during the 1967 war (Hochberg, 2010). The addition of the Wall during the Second Intifada starting in 2000, further acted as a means of surveillance and monitoring the movement of Palestinians between Israel and the Occupied Territories. Over the years, the construction of the Wall and addition of checkpoints along the border has only reinforced the significant and divisive impacts on daily life.

The work of Palestinian artist Sharif Waked is characterized by his sharp use of humor, particularly in relation to the political climate in Israel-Palestine. Through his practice, he often employs absurdist humor in order to represent the Palestinian experience of living under occupation. In 2009, for instance, he created *To Be Continued*, a short video which aesthetically referenced “living martyr” videos – short clips left by men and women prior to carrying out suicide operations. While these film protagonists typically announce their will and determination in carrying out these fatal missions among their enemies, the living martyr in Waked’s video recites tales told to King Shahrayar by Scheherazade in *One Thousand and One Nights*. In telling these narratives, Scheherazade is able to perpetually postpone her death and that of other women destined to marry the King. Similarly, through his narration, the living martyr in *To Be Continued* is able to gain time before his execution. By pairing this text with the stereotypical framing of a suicide bomber’s final words, Waked poetically reflects on the unnecessary loss of innocent lives and the power of words on one’s destiny. In another of his works, *Beace Brocess* (2010), Waked transformed a clip from the Camp David talks in 2000, when Israeli and Palestinian leaders, Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat, awkwardly scuffled over who would enter the room first. A Middle-Eastern sign of the respect and hospitality, in Waked’s work, their gestures are transformed into a dancing circle on loop played against an upbeat soundtrack, turning their tussle for power into a lighthearted dance.

Waked’s best known work, *Chic Point: Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints* (2003), is a satirical video addressing the hegemonic structure of space and movement for border-crossers in and out of Israeli territory (*Chic Point: Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints*, 2003). In *Chic Point*, the viewer is presented with a number of young Palestinian male models walking down a runway in garments revealing bare torsos, lower backs, and midriffs against a black backdrop and electronic beat. The ready-made clothing items in Waked’s catwalk are built from various Palestinian symbols and imagery associated with the occupation such as the fences and the intricate pattern of the *keffiyeh* (a checkered black and white scarf typically worn around the neck or head, which has become a symbol of Palestinian nationalism and solidarity). Such garments are meant “to preempt the daily imperatives of the soldiers, who order Palestinians to lift clothes and expose their flesh as they cross the checkpoints” (Azoulay *et al.*, 2007). One model’s navy T-shirt exposes his bare skin by replicating the *keffiyeh*’s net-like motif with gaping holes carved out of the cotton fabric. A second walks up to the camera before unzipping a seam across his torso, revealing his ribcage and lower back. Another wears what appears to be a white traditional tunic, designed with a second collar exposing the young man’s upper abdomen. One after another, these handsome men walk down

the catwalk, some already exposed, while others reveal themselves as they reach the end of the runway. The video ends with dated black and white photographs taken during the Second Intifada from 2000-2003. The men lift their shirts with one arm, their remaining hand in the air as if caught in the act of illegal activity.

Waked's work playfully confronts state-enforced practices and violent mechanisms such as strip searches that act as daily barriers to those living in the West Bank. Most affected are those who must pass through checkpoints regularly to work in industries such as construction or food services in Israel in order to support their families in the territories. Despite their legal employment status or permanent residency within the State of Israel, the Palestinian body is still viewed as a dangerous weapon, and subject to such 'security measures.' (Azoulay *et al.*, 2007, p.162). The garments that Waked presents act as a means of resistance and of reclaiming the Palestinian body by returning agency to those who are subjected to forced body searches, a common practice in military checkpoints. The men modeling the clothes walk confidently, their eyes meeting that of the viewer's until all that remains within the frame is a close up of the model's chest exposed by the checkpoint fashion. As a result, spectators of the film are placed in a position that mirrors the gaze of the Israeli soldier controlling the checkpoints. The images at the end of the video capture ordinary Palestinian men, disrobed and partially naked, standing and on their knees at various checkpoints, some of them held at gunpoint, while others are blindfolded and facing tanks.

Through its combination of the imaginary and the real, *Chic Point* simultaneously situates the Palestinian man as both a threat and a victim, 'the terrorist,' and 'the occupied' (Hochberg, 2010, p.578). While the film takes place outside of the physical realm of the checkpoint, the reconstruction of its spatial dynamics through the form of a fashion show politicizes the walk of the models as well as their gaze. By reversing the gaze, Waked disrupts the practice of asserting control over the Palestinian body through humiliating strip searches and obligatory flashing. The film makes visible the inhumane practices of power which Palestinians are subjected to in border-crossing, all while highlighting their position as a national threat to Israeli armed soldiers enforcing border control. As a result, through its subtle yet poignant use of satire, *Chic Point* offers critical commentary on the spectacle of violence that creates such polarized positions, while also reflecting on the stark reality of living under occupation for Palestinians.

“Gaza Canal”

Much like Waked, Israeli artist Tamir Zadok is known for his use of humor in exploring the visual history and culture of Israel as well as the ongoing conflict



Fig. 1 · Sharif Waked, still from “Chic Point: Fashion for the Israeli Checkpoint,” 2003.

Photograph courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 2 · Sharif Waked, still from “Chic Point: Fashion for the Israeli Checkpoint,” 2003.

Image copyright of the artist, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org, School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

through his practice. Zadok's work often uses satire to reflect on the construction of national narratives, and stereotypical representations of social, political, and cultural aspects of Israeli identity. In one of his early works, *Wonder Jew* (2002-2006), Zadok created a series of postcards staging himself in front of monuments around the world. The series plays on the legend of the "Wandering Jew," which began to spread around Europe in the thirteenth century – a tale about a Jew who had been cursed to walk the earth until the Second Coming after taunting Jesus on the way to the Crucifixion. In his work, Zadok satirizes this stereotypically negative image of Jews by transforming the "Wandering Jew" into the "Wonder Jew," as he proudly stands in front of major monuments across the globe, dressed in his Israeli army uniform. He is thus able to reverse the image through a series of visuals emphasizing that his wanderings are in fact a personal choice. While this piece of Zadok's does not rely on the moving image as a medium, it reasserts a playful artistic style consistent in his practice, that does not force a position onto its viewers, but rather allows the viewer to form their own stance.

In her chapter, "Foreignness and the New Color of Fear," Minh-ha cites a Ramallah based Fattah leader, who notes that the Wall of separation between Israel and the territories has become "a monument to the failure of the peace process" (2011, p.4). In Zadok's mockumentary *Gaza Canal* (2010) however, borders no longer function as barriers or as a means of controlling Palestinian mobility, rather, they serve to resolve the ongoing conflict. The film is a fictional promotional or propaganda video for an imaginary man-made site, the Gaza Canal, which came into being in 2001 as a result of an Israeli and Arab collaboration to dig a canal around Gaza and render it into an island separate from Israel.

Gaza Canal begins with a virtual tour of the canal narrated by a radio announcer. The narrator traces the history and construction of the island through a series of satellite shots, diagrams, and interviews with project participants, initiators, and visitors. Produced out of the Yitzhak Rabin Visitor Center on the Gaza Canal, the center invites the viewer to join them on a journey documenting the excavation process of the canal, undertaken by 15,000 workers, both Arab and Jewish over the course of eight years. As the camera hovers over the digitally rendered island, the narrator announces "don't say, 'cannot,' say, 'Canal!'" What was once conceived by Americans after a series of crises, he notes, has now "become one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Middle East" (*Gaza Canal*, 2010, 1:25). "One of the wonders of the world," echoes Ben Gurion University of the Negev professor, Uri Abraham.

Less than 40 miles long, the canal came about at the suggestion of an American special envoy to the Middle East. In 2002, the digging began under the title of Operation "Still Waters," overseen by Minister of National Infrastructure, A. Melamed. A collaboration with the Egyptian government further enabled the



Fig. 3 · Sharif Waked, still from "Chic Point: Fashion for the Israeli Checkpoint," 2003.

Image copyright of the artist, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org, School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Fig. 4 · Tamir Zadok, still from "Gaza Canal," 2010.

Photograph courtesy of the artist.

excavation along the northern and southern borders of the Gaza strip. “For years there has been blood-shed, and we are trying to find an appropriate solution,” Melamed notes, as images of past wars flood the screen (Gaza Canal, 2010, 03:32). The film transitions to footage from the construction site itself, where an Arab worker narrates the way heavy machinery is used to mobilize the sand and rocks for reuse in the canal project. A number of young construction volunteers equipped with shovels and pickaxes are backlit by the sunset as they dig into the soil. Coming from across Israel and abroad, they tell us: “We work from dusk until dawn. Making the canal is very hard work, but we feel proud to be a part of something important” (Gaza Canal, 2010, 04:18). The young men and women feel that they are making a difference, participating in the “physical” building of history.

In 2008, shortly before the completion of the canal, an unanticipated earthquake struck, pushing the island further out to sea and leaving a number of casualties in its wake. The Earthquake on the Great Rift Valley caused monumental tsunami waves and water flooding in various regions of Israel, Egypt, and Gaza. Today, a memorial site to the victims of the earthquake is located on the island. Professor Abraham notes that as a result of the manmade excavation and the natural disaster, the island was caused to drift, increasing the distance between Gaza Island and the Israeli-Egyptian coastline. Still, he maintains that the island was in fact naturally caused and not artificially created in the same way as other man-made islands around the world (ie: Palm Island, Dubai). The film concludes with an announcement that there is a regular ferry service to and from the island at Philistia Harbor or Philadelphia Bay, as well as a display of “Plants and Animals of the Canal,” and temporary art exhibitions on other levels of the visitor center.

Zadok’s 9-minute video plays on the absurdity of the political situation in Israel-Palestine by presenting a simple, yet unethical solution to the conflict. Presenting cliché after cliché, the film plays off of the Israeli ‘fantasy’ “to throw all the Arabs into the sea” (Shemesh, 2003).⁶ Through his work, Zadok not only realizes this fantasy, but makes visible the mechanisms through which Israel legitimizes its historical wrongs and conceals its war crimes through the use of its Zionist discourse (Yahav, 2010). The film shows how language is used as a mechanism to create a truth or a solution which despite appearing to be dialogue-based, reflects the vision of only one side. Zadok adopts the rhetoric of Knesset members, their mannerisms, and gestures to ensure that such a project “will bring

6. There is a long debated history regarding the origin of the phrase “to throw the – into the sea.” On the eve of the Six Day War, the founder of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) apparently called on Arabs “to throw the Jews into the Sea,” a claim which to this day has stuck to the Palestinian name. How the use of the phrase made its way into the Israeli rhetoric is something I have not yet found documented, though it has become a cliché in relation to the conflict.



Fig. 5 · Tamir Zadok, still from "Gaza Canal," 2010.

Photograph courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6 · Tamir Zadok, still from "Gaza Canal," 2010.

Photograph courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 7 · Tamir Zadok, still from "Gaza Canal," 2010.

Photograph courtesy of the artist.

peace, it will create jobs, people will be appeased” (Gaza Canal, 04:48). The artist cleverly mimics the means through which national propaganda is constructed, at once convincing the spectators of the possibility of such a project, while simultaneously revealing its impossibility by presenting them with an undertaking all too simple, too innocent, and carefully concocted to become a reality. For Zadok, *Gaza Canal* “gives all these aesthetic solutions [to the conflict] without asking any ethical questions...it’s the way that we deal with the subject, we have a lot of things in mind, but we don’t really create a dialogue with the other side” (Goldberg, 2016). The film rather assumes a fictitious balance between Israelis and Palestinians, normalizing the history and power relations among the groups involved in the project. Moreover, the film draws on Israel’s “long history of national projects that change the environment and shape it according to a half biblical and half modernist vision” (“Tamir Zadok”).⁷ Perhaps, Zadok means to foreshadow the unlikely success of such an initiative in pointing to past failures of Israel and its attempts to transform the land.

While the work highlights the absurdity of the political situation and the mechanisms through which propaganda is created, the reception of the video and its interpretation by viewers function as an extension of the piece. Upon first showing the work in 2010 at Rosenfeld Gallery (Tel Aviv), Zadok received a number of letters from viewers praising him for the work and urging him to “share his vision with Obama,” among others (Goldberg, 2016). Many viewed his work not as a satire, but as a utopia or even worse, a reality. After he made the video accessible on Youtube, it received half a million views, and was shared both by members of the political right in Israel as well as Hamas through various media outlets. When Egypt started to dig a canal on the border of Gaza, Hamas published the video on Facebook, as news that Israel was collaborating with Egypt to dig a canal.⁸ That his work has been interpreted in so many ways emphasizes the effectiveness of Zadok’s film in replicating the formula used by the State and mass media to produce nationalistic propaganda. It further accentuates the wide range and variety of opinions and beliefs regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its resolution.

7. Since the founding of the State of Israel, the government has been involved in a number of national projects that acted as a means of shifting the landscape in order to “make the desert bloom.” One such instance was the draining of the Lake Hula shortly after the establishment of the State in 1951. The project was meant to transform the land on the floor of the lake and make it fit for agricultural cultivation, however it disrupted the ecological balance of the land and in 1993, portions of the lake’s dried areas were flooded and restored.

8. In October 2014, Egypt began building a canal on the border of Gaza to reduce terror attacks in northern Sinai and put an end to the issue of underground tunnels. See: www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/premium-1.623082

Conclusion

While both Waked and Zadok utilize dark humor and satire in their work, their motivations differ. It is important to acknowledge that they come from different cultural backgrounds and positions in regards to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the words of Zadok, “being under occupation is very different than being the oppressor” (Goldberg, 2016). Still, both their works look at notions of contested space, mobility and borders, seeking to dismantle the differing power dynamics between the occupier and occupied. Waked does so in examining the mechanism of violence used by Israeli soldiers in military checkpoints, and drawing attention to the resulting position of the Palestinian as both a terrorist and a victim. Similarly, in replicating the mechanism by which national propaganda is constructed, Zadok makes obvious the means through which Israeli politicians use language strategically in order to obtain their objectives. Using humor as an incisive weapon, they are able to engage spectators in a way which forces them to take a stance on a particularly tragic and complex political reality. Thus, through their satire and dark humor, these artists effectively draw in viewers to critically reflect upon the conflict, and present an alternative to the stereotypical representation of the experience of life in Israel-Palestine.

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