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Exhibition Announcement

Nira Pereg: Abraham Abraham / Sarah Sarah
June 15 – September 15, 2013

The Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro announces the exhibition Nira Pereg: Abraham Abraham / Sarah Sarah (June 15 – September 5, 2013).

The Weatherspoon is proud to present two films by Nira Pereg, Abraham Abraham and Sarah Sarah (both 2012), which are shown one after the other in a continuous loop in the exhibition. These films follow the temporary "changing of hands" at an ancient and sacred burial site in Hebron on the West Bank that, historically, has been a place of worship for both Jews and Muslims. Today, 80% of the cave's area is used as a mosque and 20% as a synagogue. However, ten times a year, in accordance with special holidays and under close Israeli military supervision, each side is given full use for 24 hours of the entire cave.

Pereg's film, Abraham Abraham documents such a switch on the occasion of a Muslim holiday in July 2012. We see how, within a matter of hours, the Jewish area is cleared out of all Jewish artifacts, inspected by the army for security, and, then, stands vacant for a few short moments before the Muslims enter with their own artifacts and turn the empty rooms into a mosque for the next 24 hours.

In Sarah Sarah, Pereg filmed a similar switch, this time on the occasion of a Jewish holiday in November 2012 celebrating the parsha, “the life of Sarah.” This unique occasion is celebrated specifically at the cave in remembrance of its purchase as a burial site by Abraham on the
occasion of Sarah’s death. Pereg’s film shows the Muslim areas being cleared of Islamic artifacts, again inspected by the army for security, and then, after a few short moments, the Jews enter with their artifacts to turn the empty space into a synagogue for the next 24 hours.

Pereg’s films document a process that has never been depicted publicly before, and each was shot under supervision of the Israel Defense Forces. The works continue the artist’s focus on events that help shed light on the complex manner in which belief systems, social rituals, and politics intertwine.

This exhibition is organized by Xandra Eden, Curator of Exhibitions.

Artist Bio

Nira Pereg (b. 1969, Tel Aviv, Israel) received a B.F.A from Cooper Union, New York and an M.F.A. from the Bezalel studio program, Jerusalem. Her work has been included in exhibitions at P.S. 1, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; KW Institute, Berlin; the Israeli Museum of Art, Jerusalem; Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf; the Tel Aviv Museum of Art; and the Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, as well as many other museums and galleries internationally. Her work was also presented at the Shanghai and Sao Paolo Biennials and she is a recipient of the Nathan Gottesdiener Foundation Israeli Art Prize for Young Artists.

Image (at top): Nina Pereg, Abraham Abraham (Hebron, West Bank), 2012, single channel HD video with stereo sound.

For a complete, updated list of museum programs, visit http://weatherspoon.uncg.edu.

About the Weatherspoon Art Museum

Mission
The Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro acquires, preserves, exhibits, and interprets modern and contemporary art for the benefit of its multiple audiences, including university, community, regional, and beyond. Through these activities, the museum recognizes its paramount role of public service, and enriches the lives of diverse individuals by fostering an informed appreciation and understanding of the visual arts and their relationship to the world in which we live.

History
The Weatherspoon Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro was founded by Gregory Ivy in 1941 and is the earliest of any art facilities within the UNC system. The museum was founded as a resource for the campus, community, and region and its early leadership developed an emphasis—maintained to this day—on presenting and acquiring modern and contemporary works of art. A 1950 bequest from the renowned collection of Claribel and Etta Cone, which included prints and bronzes by Henri Matisse and other works on paper by American and European modernists, helped to establish the Weatherspoon’s permanent collection. Other prescient acquisitions during Ivy’s tenure included a 1951 suspended mobile by Alexander Calder, Woman by Willem de Kooning, a pivotal work in the artist’s career that was purchased in 1954, and the first drawings by Eva Hesse and Robert Smithson to enter a museum collection. In 1989, the museum moved into its present location in The Anne and Benjamin Cone building designed by the architectural firm Mitchell Giurgula. The museum has six galleries and a sculpture courtyard with over 17,000 square feet of exhibition space.

**Collections + Exhibitions**
The permanent collection of the Weatherspoon Art Museum is considered to be one of the foremost of its kind in the Southeast. It represents all major art movements from the beginning of the 20th century to the present. Of the nearly 6,000 works in the collection are pieces by such prominent figures as Sol LeWitt, Robert Mangold, Cindy Sherman, Al Held, Alex Katz, Henry Tanner, Louise Nevelson, Mark di Suvero, Deborah Butterfield, and Robert Rauschenberg. The museum regularly lends to major exhibitions nationally and internationally.

The Weatherspoon also is known for its adventurous and innovative exhibition program. Through a dynamic annual calendar of fifteen to eighteen exhibitions and a multi-disciplinary educational program for audiences of all ages, the museum provides an opportunity for audiences to consider artistic, cultural, and social issues of our time and enriches the life of our university, community, and region.

**Weatherspoon Art Museum**
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