

## Introduction

I am a painter. On October 7, as sirens wailed incessantly, we huddled around the television screen, our hearts gripped by shock and disbelief. The harrowing scenes unfolding before our eyes seemed surreal, a grotesque nightmare from which we couldn't awaken, leaving us to face an unbearable reality.

After a sleepless night, I went down to the studio and with trembling hands began to paint. I started painting Shiri Bibas, (who was an anonymous mother to me then) being led by Hamas terrorists, cradling her two ginger babies under a blanket amidst the chaos. A scared mother who just wants to protect her little ones. From that moment on, I started painting non-stop, day and night, trying to find some kind of order in the world that was falling apart around me and didn't make sense anymore.

I usually paint in oil. Slowly. Layer upon layer, with each painting taking a long time. During the first weeks I only created quick works. Monoprints, drawings, watercolours and small oil paintings. It was a combination of the torrent of images that flooded my mind with a sense of urgency and restlessness. I felt the need to hurry, I needed it **now**, because everything changes so quickly and the feeling that there is no more future, only the present. For me it was impossible to start long projects and it was impossible to think or plan ahead.

In the days that followed, what seemed at first to be the worst unimaginable reality had turned out to be even worse and surpassed our initial fears. I kept painting frantically, uploading the works to my Facebook wall with a short text that accompanied each post. Without my planning, those paintings and texts that are gathered here became a kind of "war diary". It is personal, yet many Israelis felt that they could identify with a lot of them.

I feel that we must find a new way to live full lives, to recalibrate our expectations, and to confront the harsh realities that have been thrust upon us. Perhaps we have to acknowledge evil as an inescapable element of humanity and as a constant threat that accompanies us by the very fact of being Jews. I still don't know how to live with it, how to settle for only moments of security and peace, or to appreciate the fact that it is always interesting here, so I continue to search my way through my art and paint those tiny moments of life within this great chaos.



watercolour on paper  
19 x 19 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 8**

Like all of us, I walk around with a broken heart in the face of the terrible reality and I want to share my deepest sympathy with the hundreds of families who found themselves part of an unimaginable tragedy.

So many pictures break my heart right now and my way of processing this whirlwind of emotions is to paint.

I also have a red-haired son and I was deeply touched by the photo of a mother who wraps her two little red-haired children in a hug and a blanket in the hope of protecting them somehow. I truly hope that they will safely return home soon





oil on canvas  
25 x 25 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 9**

The reality is very difficult to internalise. It is a real war.

So many lives are destroyed but there is no time right now to grieve and lick the wounds because there is still a long way ahead that will require a lot of strength.

Everything feels so weird. I am painting yesterday's destruction in the South of Israel and at the same time my studio is shaking from bombings and so many feelings emerge together.



oil on canvas  
35 x 50 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 10**

Agricultural fields have been a place of tranquillity for me, a space to nourish my soul while taking peaceful walks with my dogs. On my birthday two years ago, I took a bicycle ride with a friend and our dogs in the fields between Kibbuz Be'eri and Gasa and last year, we strolled with them just near the rave area.

I am sure that the festival participants felt just the same freedom right until they had to run for their lives like prey escaping hunters.

I don't know when I will be able to look at agricultural fields without thinking of those who ran for their lives in them, but I know that I want to remember them, the ones who were lost and those who were able to survive due to their determination and luck. Honoring their memory is a way to turn our pain into a tribute and keep struggling for peace and normal lives.





soft pastel on paper

28 x 21 cm

Israel, October 2023

### **October 12**

This young woman was last seen in a video taken by Hamas while being abducted to Gasa.

She looks there unconscious, half naked and her body is treated as an object.

I felt a need to draw and personalise her, to bring back an image of the human being she is. To shout that they can hurt the victims in so many ways but it will never degrade or indignity them.

\*two weeks later she was declared dead, after a bone that was found matched her DNA, a bone from the skull that one cannot live without. Her body is still kept by Hamas.





oil on canvas  
25 x 30 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 15**

In these days of insanity and pain, our dogs are a source of comfort and reassurance. They may not understand everything, but they sense our anxiety, hear the explosions and sirens, and learn to respond to the sound and run with us to the sheltered room. My two dogs, Tessa and Angie, keep bringing smiles to my face when they cuddle with me at every opportunity, expecting me to continue living as usual and take them for walks and playtime

In parallel to the disaster that befell us, a tragedy also occurred for the pets in the south of Israel. Many family dogs were shot and slaughtered in the area, and many of those who survived were injured and lost their families. After all the injured and survivors were evacuated, and even before all the bodies were removed, operations began to locate the traumatised dogs and rescue them from the fire-stricken areas. Some of the dogs were eagerly awaited by family members who were spared from the disaster, and some will never see their families again, as they were all murdered, but great efforts were made to find and rescue every one of them even under fire and unite them with their families or foster homes. The moments of compassion in the midst of darkness help us preserve our faith in humanity.

This painting is based on photographs that deeply moved me and were taken a few days ago in Kibbutz Kfar Aza by the photographer Haim Goldberg.

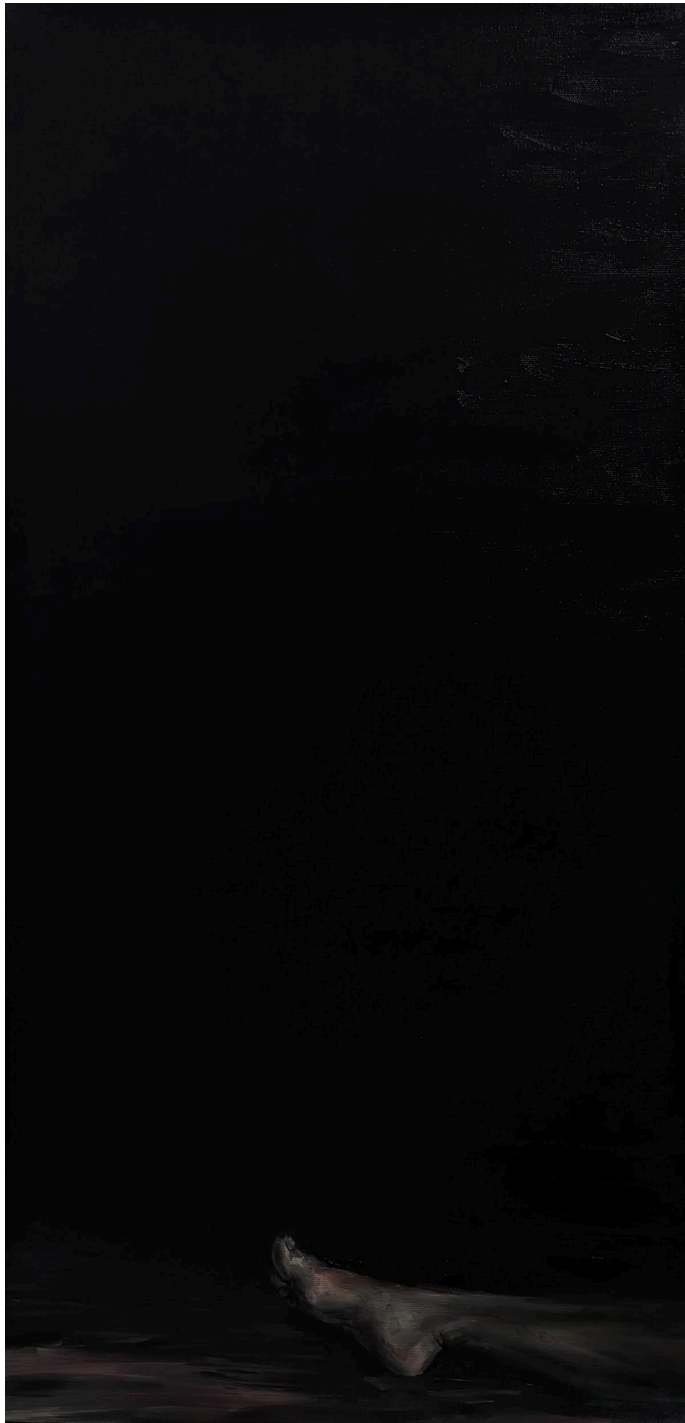


pastel on paper  
30 x 42 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 16**

IDF soldiers taking back control of the grounds. Still under fire, clearing the fields from explosives and searching for survivors, bodies, body parts or hiding terrorists.





oil on canvas  
80 x 40 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 17**

We are so overwhelmed with horrifying images, and I'm trying to maintain a certain distance in my paintings, as if to protect the tender souls of my viewers in a way, but the pictures, the testimonies, and the funerals don't offer solace.

The days pass, and the fear only grows. The fear of everything that had happened, of what is happening right now, and mainly of what is yet to come.





oil on canvas  
25 x 30 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 18**

There are moments when words fall short and the objects speak, recounting what happened.

White residential door  
keys still inside  
yet the door is open  
not doing the only thing it's meant to do  
protect the family inside.

When you cannot be safe in your own home  
Your own bed

Where can you feel safe?



Ink on paper  
30/23 cm  
Israel October 2023

### **October 19**

How normal is it to walk around with a sign displaying large photos of your son and husband?  
Does it make sense to clutch the sign close to your body and heart rather than embracing your loved ones in the flesh?

What indescribable agony courses through your veins when you witness your husband bleeding in the living room after attempting to protect your family?

How do you find the strength to breathe after seeing your 12-year-old son abducted by terrorists in front of your eyes?

How strong you are to keep on taking care of your two precious daughters while fighting an unyielding battle to reclaim your son and husband.

\*update from November 27:

Eitan, the son, returned home.





oil on canvas  
20 x 20 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 20**

On the morning of October 7th, countless Israelis confronted unprecedented and harrowing circumstances. What were once the deepest fears and most horrifying nightmares had transformed into a reality. Thousands of partygoers found themselves racing for their lives. Some fortunate ones sought refuge behind or within large bushes, their bodies merging with the foliage. They endured agonising hours, frozen in silence, as gunshots reverberated all around, while hundreds of innocent lives were tragically extinguished.





Oil on MDF board  
30 x 30 cm  
Israel 2023

### **October 23**

As days go by we are exposed to more and more personal stories. The numbers become real people and the events of October 7 also killed plans and dreams.

This work is dedicated to the “brides to be” who lost their lives and future, and the brides to be who survived, but lost their future husbands.



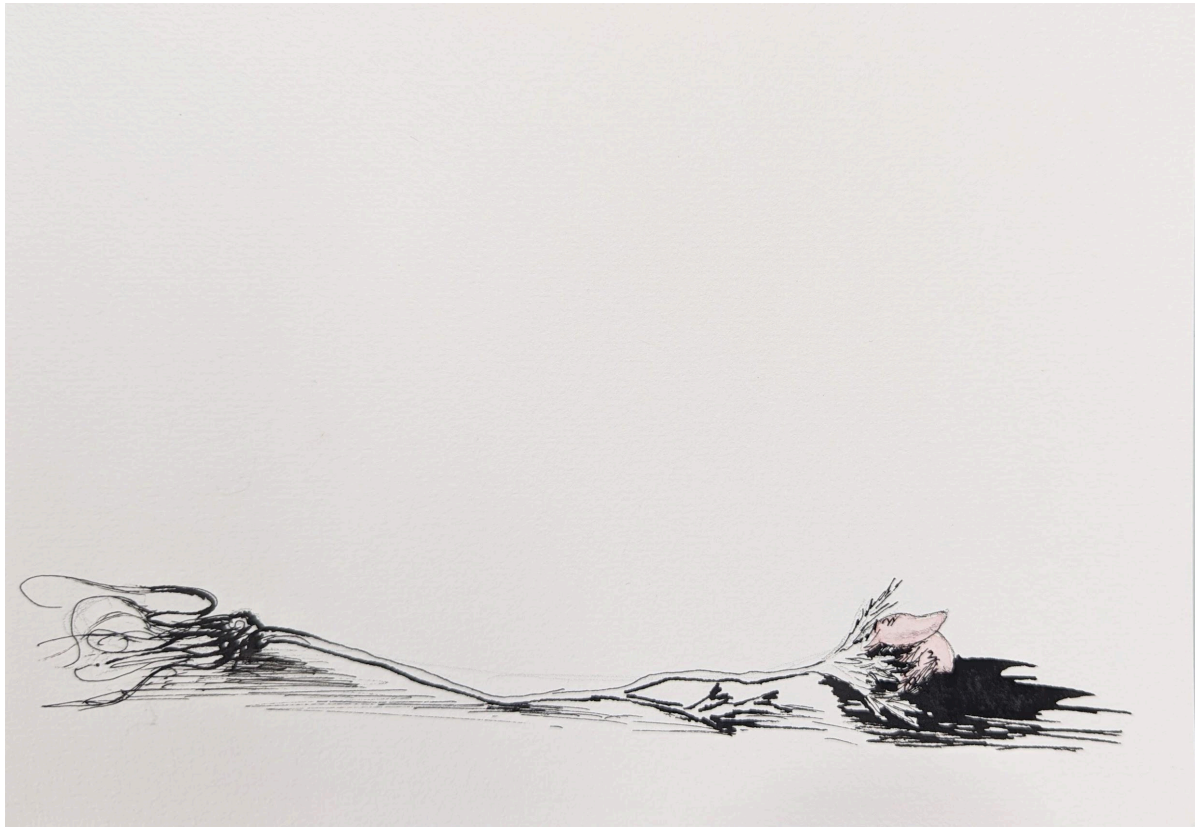
watercolour on paper  
18 x 12.5 cm

### October 24

Anemones. Every Israeli knows the touristic slogan *Red South* which was aimed to attract visitors to the beautiful fields of Anemones flowers during winter in the area of the tragedy. It was nature at its best.

Now the red colour of the fields is connected to blood and to the sirens alert (that are referred to in Hebrew "Red Colour Alert") and of the meaning of flowers seem so different





ink and watercolour on paper  
14.7 x 21 cm

**October 24**





ink on paper  
21 x 14.7 cm

**October 24**



ink on paper  
14.7 x 21 cm

**October 24**

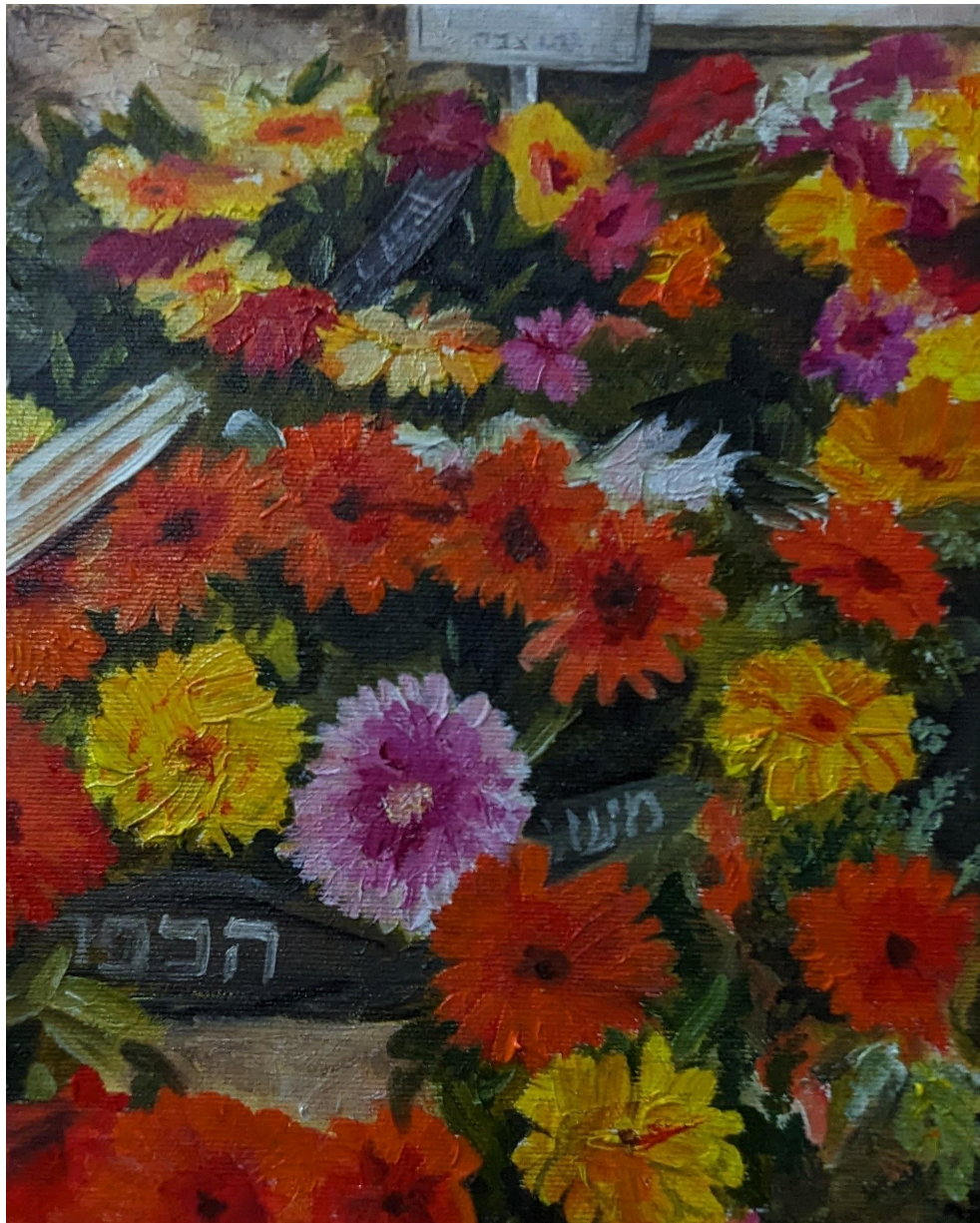




ink, watercolour and pastel on paper  
21 x 14.7 cm

**October 24**





oil on canvas  
25 x 20 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 25**

It takes a very long time to identify the dead but more and more funerals finally take place. Hundreds of them. In fact these are the flowers that are sold in Israel right now, no one wants to buy flowers to put in the vase on the dining room table.



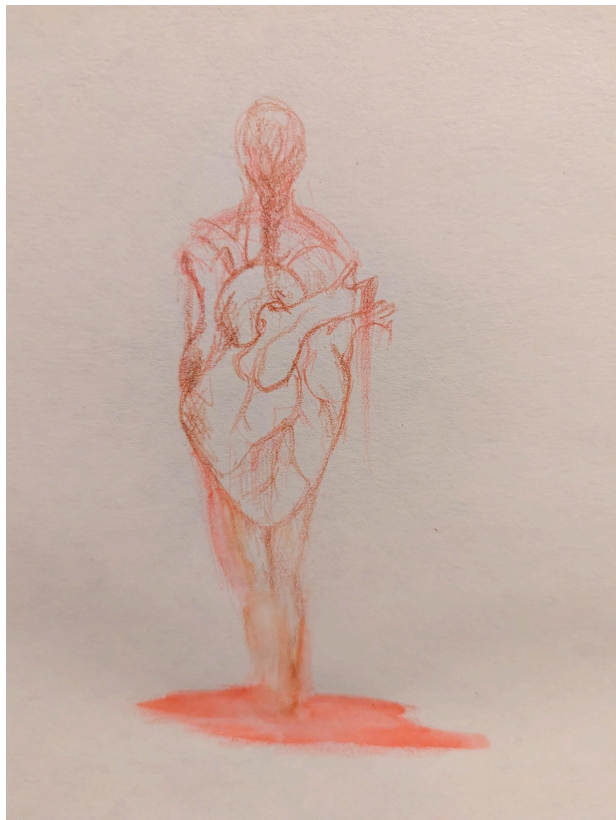
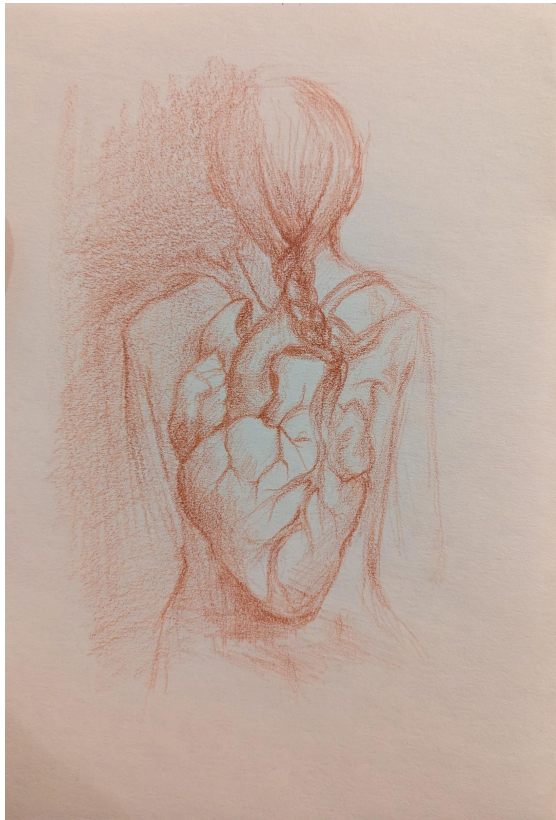


pastel on paper  
40 x 30 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 27**

Today's drawing was done in response to a post that a Facebook friend of mine shared. He was asking for help in finding one of the dogs because the other two were found shot in the family's burnt house. The level of cruelty we've been exposed to in the past three weeks and the incomprehensible quantities of human tragedies leave no room to mourn the deaths of the dogs.

However, it's important to know that they also killed dogs, with the same indifference to human life, and as another way to cause pain.



water soluble coloured pencils on paper  
Both 24 x 17 cm  
Israel, October 2023

### **October 31**

In the previous world, everyone lived with their own private hearts.

They were stored deep inside the bodies and were used in a variety of ways that suited their owners.

On October 7th we were changed.

I meet people

We talk

And it seems to me that everyone is dragging along a heavy, large and exposed heart with them.

and I wonder..

how long it will take, and if they will manage to shrink to a normal size for all of us, hearts that are not so difficult to carry





Monoprint on paper  
29 x 21 cm  
2023

### **November 1st**

All the days that have passed since October 7 have unfolded into one long and shadowy period. Life has come to a halt, and those who aren't enlisted are trying to piece together short fragments of routine, searching for meaning in things that lost their taste. The world seems as if its colours have not yet returned, life continues, but everything looks and sounds different. Before walking the dogs, who spend way too much time at home, I try to predict when the bombings start today. During the stroll in the park, I look at the surroundings and ponder where to go if a siren sound is heard, and wonder how so many people manage to get by for so long without a home, while I can barely make it out.



*Dana Krikey*

Monoprint on paper

20 x 26 cm

2023

### **November 1st**

A new month and still the families who survived the horrors have no home to return to in the kibbutzim. Everything was burnt, or destroyed or looted.





Monoprints on paper  
20 x 12.5 cm - 21 x 16 cm  
2023

### November 1st

Three weeks after the black Saturday I hear a story about a girl who even now insists on sleeping under the bed. That day is not over.

It breaks every parent's heart to think about the children who had to hide quietly for many hours underneath the bed or in the closet, hearing the danger so close, some of them after seeing their parents or siblings murdered. It revives memories of holocaust stories that we hoped we'll never have to face again.



Oil on canvas  
30 x 30 cm  
2023

#### **November 4**

Today is Shabbat again, marking precisely four weeks since that fateful Saturday when the heavens descended, reshaping our reality. Over the past four weeks, we've been compelled to confront the darkest of forces and cruelty that we once believed couldn't exist in our here and now. These weeks have borne the weight of sorrow and loss, as the lives of many good and innocent people were violently cut short, homes were reduced to rubble, and our collective innocence shattered – the illusion that we could simply inhabit this world like other nations. The situation is far from over. More than 200 hostages are still in Gaza, thousands of soldiers continue to be recruited and engaged in combat. Hezbollah forces keep their threat from the north, while missiles are fired on all over the country. Thousands of families find themselves without homes or employment and universities and schools remain closed. On the news we watch Anti semitism rise up its head all over the world, but nevertheless, life goes on. In the face of the human evil we've been exposed to, we've also encountered countless tales of extraordinary courage, compassion, unity, assistance, and generosity – remarkable human attributes that offer hope for our recovery.

The painting I completed today conveys the power of love and embrace – a force of healing that each of us requires now. Libby and her cat Remi, found themselves locked together in the sheltered room for 14 harrowing hours at Kibbutz Be'eri

The whatsapp group of the kibbutz was filled with messages crying for help and describing the killings and Libby and Remi could only cuddle together and provide each other with comfort amidst the sounds of gunfire and explosions.

After 14 hours, IDF soldiers finally arrived to rescue Libby under the ongoing gunfire. She was relocated to another part of the kibbutz where they began assembling survivors until they could evacuate them all, a few hours later.

It took another 10 days for volunteers to find Remi and bring him back to Libby's arms where they can be inseparable once more .





Monoprint and marker drawing on paper

### **November 5**

Images of mothers running away from the fire keep haunting my mind.



pencil on paper  
22 x 22 cm  
2023

### **November 7**

One month had passed.

The dogs and people of Israel who were targeted as victims a month ago are now fighting back. It feels like the world likes us more as victims so we now feel the hardship of war in Israel as well as the rising of anti semitism elsewhere .





oil on canvas  
20 x 20 cm  
2023

### **November 9**

A month has passed.

I am slowly finding my way back to a semblance of normalcy.

Throughout the day, I make an effort to detach myself at times from the constant updates on the situation. I try to live in the moment, to breathe normally, to reclaim a sense of peace that existed before everything fell apart and to repress the fact that so many people in the world want me dead.

But then the thoughts creep back in, and my heart tightens again:

What about them?

What about the children, mothers, elders, young women or fathers?

Those who were kidnapped over a month ago, their fate shrouded in silence.

And what of their loved ones, their families who were torn apart?

Are they expected to simply carry on, to prepare lunches as they always have?

I cannot fathom how anyone can find solace knowing that a loved one is at the mercy of Hamas in Gaza. The relentless worry deprives them of moving forward and their absence is constantly present.

I tried to envision and paint the impossible picture of a family enjoying a peaceful meal, while two of their members are abducted yet present at the table. Despite their physical absence, their presence lingers, impossible to ignore. We must not ignore it. We must acknowledge their absence, refuse to become desensitised, and continue to demand their safe return. I interlaced in the painting elements from Norman Rockwell's painting "Freedom from Want" that was created in 1942, as part of a series of four paintings that was created to illustrate Franklin D. Roosevelt's Four Freedoms.



Markers on glass of old window  
93 x 52 cm  
Israel 2023

### **November 10**

A few days following the October 7 attack, photographers entered the kibbutzim that had been seized and started documenting. They documented bullet holes, bloodstains, broken and burnt remains of everyday family items. The extensive array of images bore witness to lives once brimming with normalcy and optimism that had flourished there, as well as the devastating calamity that befell these families.

On that fateful day, private lives abruptly transitioned into the public eye, and entire neighbourhoods lay in ruins. We found ourselves, almost arbitrarily, as outsiders peering through windows into the lives of other families, shocked, pained, angry and striving to provide assistance, aware that it was mere chance that led some to suffer and not others, for our destinies are intertwined.

The black Saturday attack struck when people were at their most serene moments of the week, and in what should have been their safest haven—their homes.

These homes failed to shield their inhabitants and it will take time for these individuals to reclaim homes of their own, and even longer to reestablish a sense of security within them.





watercolour on paper  
19 x 19 cm  
Israel 2023

### **November 12**

Some people escape into sleep in times of hardship.

Some people cannot find sleep in times of hardship.

Some children woke up to a nightmare the last time they went to sleep peacefully, but it wasn't a nightmare. It was reality.

So how will they go to sleep

If the nightmare might wake them up again



monoprint and acrylics on paper.

19x13.5 cm

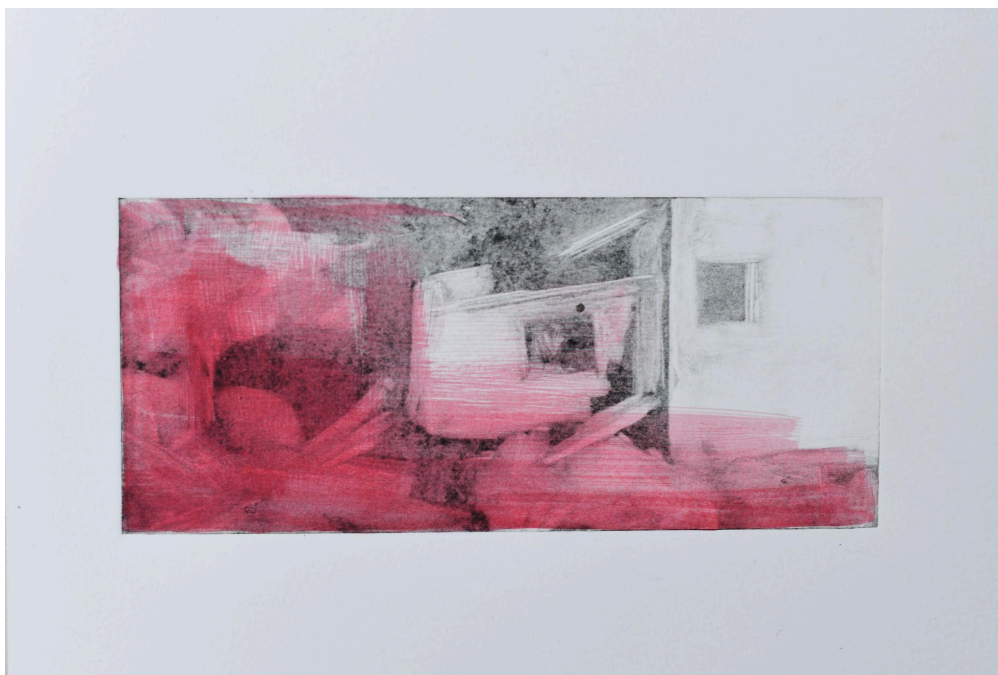
Israel 2023

### **November 13**

In the news, they emphasise the need for strength and optimism to bolster our collective resilience, yet we are still adapting to life in dense and dark air.

Forty days into the war, but the darkness is still here.





monoprint and acrylics on paper  
21x27 cm  
Israel 2023

**November 14**



monoprint and acrylic on paper.

24.5x16 cm

Israel 2023

**November 15**





oil on canvas  
130 x 110 cm  
2023

### **November 17**

Six weeks have passed, and it feels like we're still in the same unending day. In the centre of Israel it's relatively quiet, with only rare sirens piercing the air. Moments of seeming normalcy are shattered by the harsh remembrance that it truly happened, everything did happen. The indescribable evil was really there, hovering above us, and we were defenceless.

Now we're trying to rebuild ourselves, to fight where we couldn't before, to save whoever we can, and to support one another. In the vastness of these events, we appear minuscule, clinging to the threads of humanity's goodness beneath those fractured skies, hoping that gradually, the clouds will disperse, revealing a return of vibrant colours.

Some words from Primo Levi's poems about ravens: "I've come from very far away

To bring bad news..... To find your window, To find your ear, To bring you the sad news,

To take the joy from your sleep, To spoil your bread and wine, To sit in your heart each evening...



Monoprint and Pencil  
16 x 17 cm  
2023

### **November 19**

One of the things we had to face in the past six weeks is how fragile our lives are, and how delicate threads bind us together in a way that pulling on one can unravel parts of the other person.

Today's work was made by covering printing ink on delicate fabric and threads, and printing the image on a paper under a press, after they were carefully arranged.





Pencil on watercoloured paper  
17 x 12 cm  
2023

### **November 20**

It's been a month and a half. I'm trying to stay optimistic, but it's challenging because I can't see scenarios where we can have peaceful and secure lives, the kind that should be accessible to everyone worldwide. I understand that the focus should be on the many good things happening here and now, rather than worrying about the future, however, it's still not that simple.

The images of abandoned baby strollers on the roads and pathways in the kibbutzim are still vivid in my mind. October isn't over yet, and it seems that it will take time



Ink and watercolour on paper  
cm  
2023

November 21





oil on canvas  
40 x 30 cm  
2023

### **November 24**

Moriya Swissa was only 24 when murdered. She participated in the party on October 7 and was shot to death.

We are trying to rearrange the pieces within us to go back and live full lives, but for the families directly affected, it's so much harder to find the way to go on, with the huge void left in their hearts. Moriya was a young woman who spread light, joy and love to everyone around her. I hope she remains that way forever in the memory of those who loved her, helping them to find the strength to continue living similarly despite their terrible pain.



Watercolor Pencils on paper  
21 x 30 cm  
2023

### November 25

After seven long weeks, an air of suspense hangs heavy in the air, akin to the opening scene of a captivating reality soap opera. We've grown intimately familiar with the cast of characters, some of whom have captured our hearts and prayers. Our eyes remain glued to the television screens, eagerly awaiting the names of our beloved heroes scheduled for release today. Throughout the day, we follow the agonisingly slow progress of the daily releases, as Hamas interweaves melodramatic twists and turns into the narrative. They deliberately disrupt the anticipated script, conjuring up images of an enraged mob threatening to annihilate the hostages at the eleventh hour, just before the pivotal moment that will liberate them from their infernal captivity.

We hold our breath as we witness each photograph and every unfolding event, culminating in an outburst of liberating tears as the first embraces are exchanged on home soil. They walk. They smile. They are alive.

While we can only imagine the horrors they endured and the unspoken scars they carry, one thing is certain: they have emerged from the depths of hell, and they are here.

I made a drawing of the family hug of Yoni Asher with his wife and daughters, Aviv, Raz, and Doron, who came back to his waiting arms after so long, as that was a moment of pure happiness, a sensation we've long forgotten.

Some of the others came back orphans or with a close family member still in captivity, so just as in any enthralling suspense series, our minds immediately race towards the next episode, anticipating tomorrow's releases, as we yearn for more family reunions, more moments of triumph and liberation.





Charcoal and Pastel on Toned Paper

24 x 24 cm

2023

### **November 27**

I no longer have any grandmothers. If I had one, I would want her to be a little bit like 85 year old 'Grandma Yafa', Yafa Adar, who was kidnapped to Gasa on October 7th with her chin up and a smile on her face.

She seems to me to be one of those women that life toughened her and taught her to be strong and resilient and to believe in her inner strength, all the while maintaining her vitality and human warmth.

The recent period in which we were suddenly exposed to human evil here next to us, alongside demonstrations of antisemitism in the world, has brought me emotionally closer to my grandmothers, to their mothers, and grandmothers, to the Jewish women who lived full lives in a reality that was always threatening. We will still have to discover how we find our place in the world again, in a reality that suddenly seems so different, even if it is actually not so different and we just closed our eyes before.

In recent weeks, the abducted Israelis have become part of our family, people we think of during the day, worry about before we go to sleep, and follow their fate with suspense. I think we all like to hug them when they return, and so when Grandma Yafa returned from capture yesterday, I gave her a small virtual hug in my heart.

Our war against the extreme evil to which we have been exposed is not only with the army and the soldiers on the front line, but also with the hugs, love, community, and mutual aid.

Like everyone else, I am happy and excited about the return of each and every one of the kidnapped people, and I hope that they will be able to return as quickly as possible to live good and meaningful lives.



oil on canvas  
70 x 50 cm  
2023

### **December 3**

Approximately a week after October 7, we convened for our first poetry reading group gathering. The weight of the recent atrocities still pressed heavily upon us, making it difficult to focus on anything else. I heard words that were read from a page while I filled my notebook with a variety of sketches for future works. Each verse, each word, resonated deeply only within the context of our traumatised experience.

This painting emerged from that gathering, inspired by Kobayashi Issa's haiku depicting the sky's beauty as glimpsed through a torn paper screen (or in the Hebrew translation: a hole in the door). While I couldn't think then about the beauty of the sky or the river of stars, as nature had lost its taste, I was drawn to the imagery of the door.

My mind wandered to families huddled within shelters, desperately holding their doors for protection, and to the bullet holes that punctured these barriers, bringing losses and sufferings rather than gateways to light. I was also thinking that we all felt trapped in a situation with no escape, confined behind an invisible, impenetrable door that separated us from the free world beyond. I was wondering then, if and when we would be able to see glimpses of light, sky and hope through this door, just like in the poem. I couldn't paint it then but when the negotiations to liberate the abducted children and mothers seemed real, I started it. Suddenly, I could see a little of the light beyond the closed gate. It's still only a crack through the door, but it's there.





Marker on an old map  
26 X 34 cm  
2023

**December 7**

Exactly two months after the horrific massacre it feels more and more as if birds of prey from all over the world are circling overhead, just waiting for an opportunity to exploit any sign of weakness.



marker and watercolour on a printed paper  
24 X 16.5 cm  
2023

## December 8

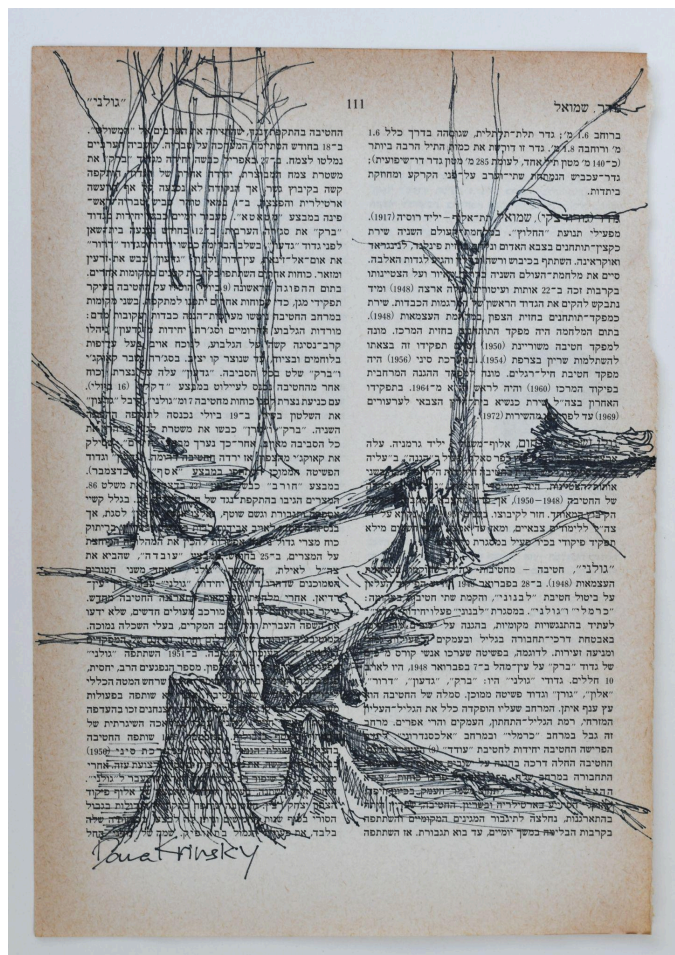
While walking with my dogs yesterday, I stumbled upon an unexpected treasure: a 1976 lexicon titled "Israel, Army and Defence."

As I began flipping through its pages, the scent of the past unfolded, carrying me through a labyrinth of terms, pictures, and diagrams. It was a stark reminder of how much has changed and yet, in a haunting echo, how much has stayed the same, repeating in a tragic cycle. The pages unfolded wars, battles, military units, weapons and agreements. These were the echoes of a reality that had always existed, but in my generation, it remained in the background, when life itself was different. Normal.

But now, that normalcy has been shattered. We have been flung, abruptly and unexpectedly, into a different reality, devoid of any semblance of the familiar. Even if we ourselves haven't been directly thrust into the heart of the combat, we likely have loved ones - children, spouses, friends, or nephews - who are currently fighting on the frontlines. They left their jobs and families two months ago, with no clear end in sight and we can only pray that they will return safe and sound.

I still struggle to believe that this is actually happening.





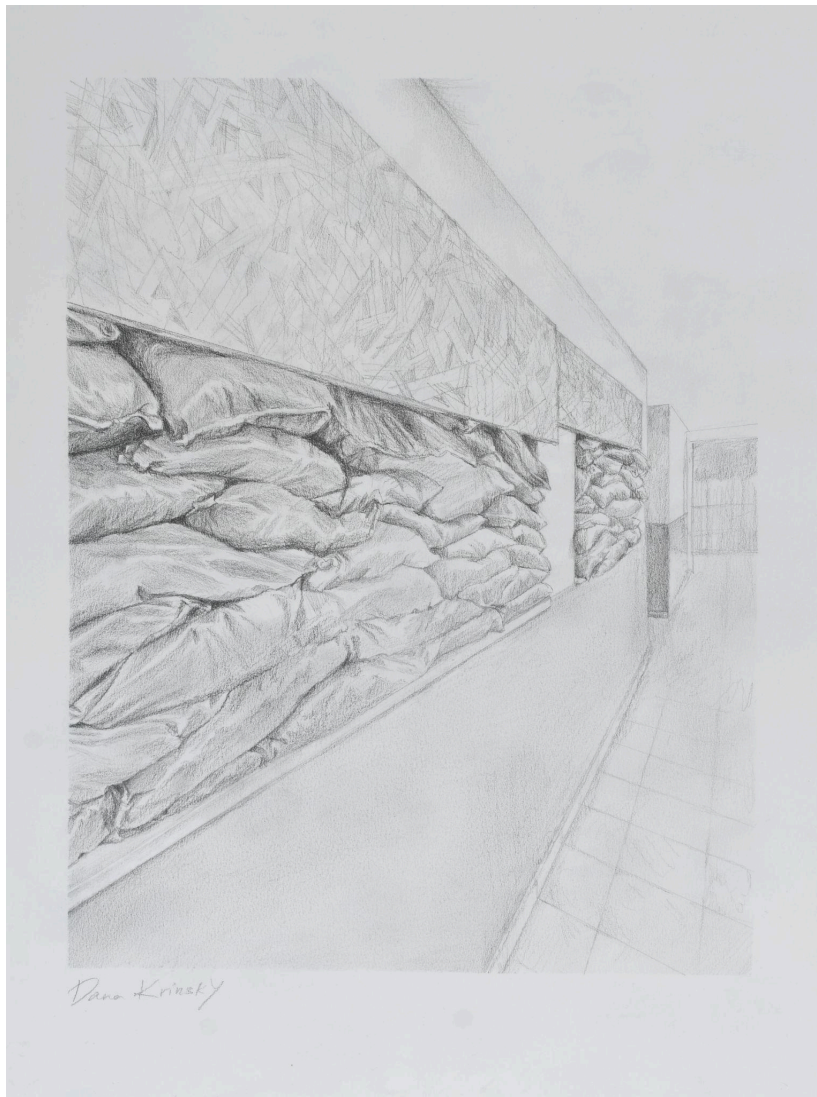
marker on a printed paper  
24 X 16.5 cm  
2023

## December 14

The past two months have made it clear to me that I don't really like humanity, yet I really love some people. I hate the human-nature with its need to define borders and fueling division, extremism, hatred and wars, while simultaneously I love the small lives that illuminate the world with kindness, caring, compassion, and mutual help.

The harsh reality forced me to choose sides. While the sufferings of those in Gaza who want peaceful lives over war deeply saddens me, my unwavering support lies with our soldiers. Each morning since July 10th, I turn on the television with trepidation, dreading news of another tragedy, yet hoping for a miracle, for a sight of our soldiers returning alongside dozens of freed captives.

Yesterday was a tough morning. Too many young lives, full of promise, were cut short and some of them were soldiers of the same battalion who already suffered terrible losses on October 7. So I tore the page with the value of 'Golani Brigade' from my old lexicon of the Army and Defence of Israel, and painted on it those cut down trees, which are the devastating human toll of war. Despite all the atrocities around us I try to keep my mind on the rest of the forest, and continue to wait for a miracle.



Pencil on paper  
40 X 30 cm  
2023

### **December 20**

Visiting my son's old school in Tel Aviv, I stumbled upon a scene both surreal and chillingly familiar: a sandbagged classroom, windows sealed shut, transformed into a missiles' shelter.

Beyond the grim necessity of defending our children's lives, I saw a deeper tragedy in this image. I felt as if the sealing of all the windows, which functions as the connection between the inside and outside, and the blocked light, mirrored our own isolation from a world, suddenly alien, incapable of comprehending our reality.

It also made me wonder whether we should filter the news and build an 'emotional sandbags', in order to keep on living in this harsh reality, yet is it possible to shut out the world without shutting ourselves in?





Oil on canvas  
70 X 70 cm  
2023

## December 22

A few weeks ago, I was reached out by a woman who works in the Mental Health Center in Be'er Sheva, to tell me more about Rinat. Rinat Segev-Even, a social worker of radiant empathy, who worked with them until October 7 and left a void that so many people find challenging to bear. She spoke of Rinat's extraordinary ability to weave deep connections with everyone she encountered, while possessing inner strength, boundless generosity, and a wellspring of sensitivity and compassion.

Rinat was murdered just outside her home in Kibbutz Be'eri along with her husband Chen, and their older sons, Alon and Ido. Yet, in their final moments, cuddled together, the four of them managed to shield their bodies and convey their love for the two young children who survived.

The staff at the centre asked me to commemorate Rinat in a manner befitting the way she loved to live – lying peacefully on the shores of Sinai, a place she cherished deeply. It was important to them that the painting would reflect Rinat as she lived – a woman who knew all the pain in the world but was still full of optimism, always finding a way to see the goodness in the world and in every person. May her memory be blessed.

(on the sides of the canvas I painted the words that were tattooed on Rinat's forearms: "Breathing" on one and "Good Enough" on the other)



pencil and watercolour on papers  
 3 papers of 42 x 30 cm  
 2024

## January 2nd

I started this work a few weeks ago, pencil drawings of about ninety pairs of eyes, drawn from photos of each one of the women and girls abducted to Gaza. I tried not to draw them sequentially but to pause in each one and let their story absorb and hope for their safe return.

After being exposed to the testimonies of the vicious attacks and specific abuse towards women on October 7 it is unbearable to think that these men are the ones responsible for their safety. These women and girls, robbed of their lives, existing under the shadow of fear, lost their basic safety and right to the next breath. Each eye, a universe contained, held a woman or girl whose freedom was stolen, whose privacy shattered, whose control vanished.

Thankfully, most women were released in those weeks, and upon their homecoming, I breathed colour into their eyes, an echo of reclaiming it into their lives. I hoped the new year would find the papers soaked in watercolours, no eyes left in stark pencil, but despite agreements, Hamas refused to release fourteen of them.

2024 arrived, eighty-eight days had passed, and the world's women's rights voices, those who battle sexist remarks at work, stand silent as fourteen young women are still kept as objects by Hamas' male terrorists.

Though women are this work's focus, I know that men in captivity share a similar hell.

133 lives snatched from homes remain captive, and numbering them feels like an injustice, a brutal reduction of vibrant lives, friendships, families, loves, travels, routines and everyday balcony moments...

Three months is a cruel eternity and is far too long.





Watercolour on Paper  
31 x 23 cm

### January 3

A few days ago, my son, who is currently a soldier, had to go South to the Gaza Brigade. Before he took off I asked him to take a picture for me of something along the way.

Soon, a picture arrived. Not the stark landscape of war I might have expected, but a pastoral symphony of green fields and gentle hills. In the distance, however, a plume of black smoke rose into the sky. The smoke from Gaza.

I stared at the photo, struck by how perfectly it captured our current situation. Here, in the centre we are returning to a semblance of normalcy. Children's laughter echoes in parks, shops bustle with life again and the fields are filled with new green growths. Yet, the black smoke is present, a constant murmur in the back of our minds, a reminder of the violence and destruction that is never far away.

We live here where the threat of war is always present, we go about our daily lives, but there is always an undercurrent of anxiety and we know that the calm could be shattered at any moment.



oil on canvas  
50 x 60 cm  
2023

### January 6

A quarter of a year has passed since that terrible day, and more than 200,000 people still live in temporary places while hundreds of them have no home to return to.

The Sabbath of October 7 took such a heavy toll in blood that it pushed aside the attention to what is called 'property', a loss that can supposedly be quantified in money and is really marginal compared to physical or emotional injuries. We expect anyone who was in the area or lived there and survived that Saturday to feel grateful simply for being alive and free.

But what does it mean to lose a home?

How do you manage without this place where you remove all your defences and relax?

Where do you find solace without those walls that held whispered secrets and laughter-soaked memories for so many years?

How do you untangle your heart from the threads woven into every brick, every floor tile, all the objects that you have collected over the years?

Even the familiar smell of coffee on the balcony, the ritual sunrises and sunsets witnessed from that vantage point, become a phantom limb, aching for what's gone.

This painting was made for one of the many families who lost their homes on October 7.

I was asked to make a painting of one specific home that belonged to a family who raised three generations in Kibbutz Be'eri. The house was destroyed in the crossfire and I was asked to paint it as it was before the destruction.



The yearning for home is getting harder as time passes. It is a yearning for the family home but also for the broader home that is the kibbutz itself and for its people. A quarter of a year later, and the kibbutz community finds itself dispersed. Some still live in hotels, some rented apartments in various places in the country and some, mainly adults, have returned to the destructured kibbutz to begin rebuilding and reclaiming their place.

The house that crumbled, like the memories, will remain in the hearts of those who grew up in it. From the photos that were shared with me, I chose to make a painting where the gaze turns from the house outward, to the landscape. The new house to be rebuilt will not be the same, but the landscape - most likely, will renew in a similar way to what it was and perhaps help connect to the new structure.

Last Friday, three daughters gave the painting to their mother for her birthday, and I sincerely hope, with all my heart, that the family will soon return to a place that will be a home in its fullest sense, a place where one can feel belonging and that provides a sense of security and tranquility.



A photo of the house as it looks now.



AP Dana Krinsky

Drypoint  
24 x 21 cm

**January 7**

The thoughts of the hostages still locked in small spaces without seeing daylight do not leave my mind.





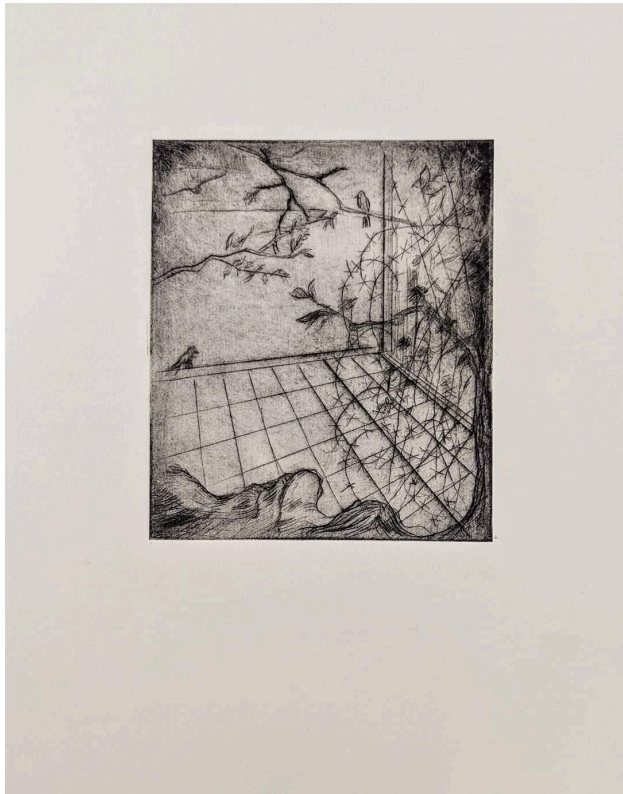
AP

Dana Krinsky

Drypoint  
24 x 21 cm

### January 8

It's currently the bird migration season here in Israel, a time I used to relish for hiking and riding. However, it's challenging to fully embrace these activities when over a hundred innocent beings are enduring prolonged captivity, subjected to torture and despair. Why aren't they entitled to fly, "free as a bird"?



Drypoint  
24 x 21 cm  
2024

### **January 10**

Almost a hundred days have elapsed and I don't know how one can survive so long in captivity. I really hope that they are able to close their eyes, shut out the current harsh situation and live in a different reality where they are free, outside the walls and beyond all confines.





Oil on Canvas  
35 X 50 cm  
2024

## January 11

Sometimes I reflect on the time before October 7th when we seemed more like individuals carving our paths in the world, each seeking our own self-actualization. Then, the world changed abruptly, collapsing around us and we now strive to climb slowly upward, and as we ascend, we reach out to those beside us and to those who have fallen deeper, offering a helping hand, with the hope to find a glimmer of hope, together.

This war has forged countless new connections among us. Whether on the battlefield, in volunteer work, in sharing shelters during missile attacks, or simply by exposure to people in various media who touched our hearts, and suddenly their pain brings tears to our eyes or their strength fortifies us with power and hope.

In late November, Ruth Percik, a physician at Sheba Hospital whom I had not known, approached me and shared the story of **Tal Grushka** and his grieving parents. I'm not even sure if Ruth knew them before the tragedy, but they were already etched in her heart. She sought a way to bring them a little comfort and that's when she contacted me.

Major Tal Grushka was an officer in the Nahal Brigade, who fell on October 7 in a battle against terrorists while he and his soldiers were on their way to defend kibbutz Kfar Aza.

Ruth sent me videos and pictures of Tal, which both amused and moved me. I found myself captivated, delving deeper to learn more about him.

No person is really "ordinary," but Tal somehow possessed qualities that made him truly exceptional— unique combinations of depth and strength, sensitivity and humour, and a multitude of talents across various fields.

One painting cannot capture the full depth and complexity of a person, but it can attempt to encapsulate a little of their essence. When I watched and listened to a video of Tal playing the

piano, my gaze was drawn to the reflection of his focused face on the shiny black piano. His music immediately moved me and I felt that there laid the essence I was seeking. Something in his complexity led me to commemorate him in a similar way, and not as the posed traditional portrait. I felt that the reflection of his figure on the piano would convey the elusive nature of living with someone who is no longer present. Longing for someone who is absent means living with their presence and absence simultaneously, unable to physically embrace them but feeling their continued presence. Tal lives in the hearts of all the people who had the privilege of knowing him in his lifetime, but also in those who fell for him only after his death. He touched the hearts of so many, and will stay with them forever.

May his memory be a blessing.





Drypoint , Intaglio Print  
24 x 18 cm  
2024

### January 13

99 days. 136 hostages are still in Gaza. Life goes on, the wheat is growing again, but no growth will cover the pain. It's impossible to continue and leave them there.



Watercolour on paper

25 x 40 cm

2024

### January 23

We are easing into a routine that resembles normal life, but our nerves are constantly on edge, dreading what the news will bring. On October 7th, we woke up to the sound of sirens, and since then, we unintentionally hold our breath when we connect to the world in the morning. Today was one of those mornings—when you wake up, turn on the phone or TV, and immediately receive the agonising report: 21 pairs of military boots that no one will ever walk in again, forever remaining empty.





oil on canvas  
60 x 40 cm  
2024

## February 28

Yaeli is finally finding some rest in a hospital bed.

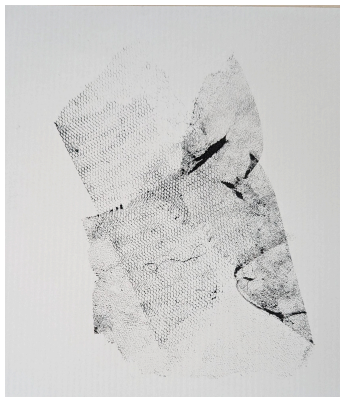
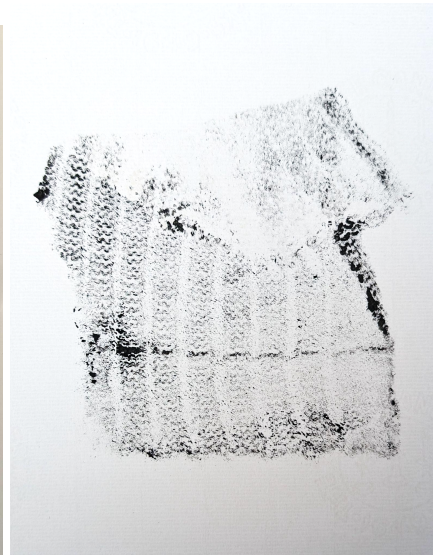
She didn't experience a lot of really restful moments since the explosions that forced her to run barefoot in her Pyjama into a shelter with her friends in Nahal Oz Base, in the morning of October 7.

She was a trained runner and when the Hamas terrorists started to shoot and throw grenades at the girls in the shelter Yaeli instinctively ran for her life out of there. Despite being wounded by bullet and grenade shrapnel, she ran on. For seven hours, she hid in silence and fear in a room while hearing dozens of terrorists around her.

She was evacuated under fire when the IDF regained control of the place and on her way out saw the violated bodies of her shelter companions and other close friends and the destruction of what had been her home. She was evacuated from the battlefield wounded, and with the pain of her injuries she also took the memories of the last few hours, when she experienced things that no one should endure in a lifetime.

In the past weeks, she has been slowly recovering, but persistent pain led to another surgery to remove shrapnel. This moment, of true rest in the hospital, almost 4 months after the tragedy and just before her twentieth birthday, is the moment I captured in my painting.

I have known Yaeli since she was born. She has an incredible family supporting her and she possesses true inner strength, helping her survive an unimaginable nightmare. This moment, that I was asked to seize, just after the surgery, signifies hope for Yaeli and her family. Hope of ending the pain of the last year and starting the new decade of her life with optimism, self-belief, and faith in life and the goodness of people, despite everything.



## **Monoprints on papers 2024**

### **February 28**

After October 7th, when the world seemed to tremble and I didn't know how to breathe anymore, I threw myself into work without pause, focusing on quick projects with a sense of urgency. It felt as if the future had vanished, making it impossible to create lasting artworks or even plan ahead. In those moments, there was only the present.

As time passed, I began to notice myself taking longer breaths, slowly returning to being me again. I returned to the intricate process of oil painting, where layers upon layers of paint slowly build up to create the desired image. Immersed in this process, I start to believe that perhaps tomorrow will come.

Yet, the weight of our collective trauma and loss remains heavy on my heart. I continue to search for a way to live with a sense of security, knowing all too well that true security is elusive. The plight of displaced individuals without homes, and hostages held captive for an indefinite period, doesn't help.

I created these delicate and transparent monoprints using textures from various objects. These prints aim to capture the essence of objects that once existed but are no longer present, leaving behind only their imprints, as testimonies of their past existence.





132 Yellow Flowers  
56 x 76 cm  
Watercolour on paper  
2024

## May 12

The saddest Memorial Day is beginning now.

132 individuals are currently held captive by Hamas, 132 human beings. Some of them are already declared dead while others strive to survive day after day facing an uncertain fate in an inhuman reality.

The struggle to bring them home is accompanied by yellow ribbons.

I look at the yellow flowers by the side of the road and instead of thinking about blossoms in springtime, I think about the yellow ribbons, and then about the people they represent. People who were violently detached from the ground on which they lived.

As we see these flowers, let's remember the people they represent and do everything we can to bring them back home, still alive, ensuring they are not forgotten or added as more names for the next Memorial Day