

ADI NES
A Rooted Wandering
18 May–24 June, 2017

Praz-Delavallade Los Angeles is honored to present the first exhibition with the gallery on the west coast of the renowned Israeli photographer Adi Nes. Nes stands out as one of the most important art photographers in Israel. Through 20 years of activity, his artwork has been groundbreaking while clearly presenting the multilayered complexities of Israeli identity. For his fourth show at Praz-Delavallade, a selection of various series will be unveiled.

Central themes in Adi Nes's photographs deal with the issues of Israeli identity and masculinity. His works wrestle with social and political questions revolving around gender, the center versus the periphery, Eastern versus Western cultures, ethnic issues, Judaism, local myths, militarism, humanism, and social justice.

As a photographer working in Israel, Nes makes meticulously crafted images that are both autobiographical and attest to living in a country in conflict. His photographs are reminiscent of Renaissance or Baroque paintings, often based on parables and collective cultural memory. Sexual tension is ever-present in Nes's work, as he delves into complex explorations of homoeroticism. His goal is to reveal a universal humanism in his dramatic portraits.

In one of his most well known images, Nes recreates Leonardo da Vinci's 'The Last Supper' but replaces the central figures with Israeli soldiers. This photograph appeared on the front page of the New York Times in 2008 and helped establish Nes as one of Israel's most acclaimed photographers. "My staged photographs are oversized and often recall well-known scenes from Art History and Western Civilization combined with personal experiences based on my life as a gay youth growing up in a small town on the periphery of Israeli society," says Nes in an interview at the Israeli Center in San Francisco.

Nes further explores these themes in his series *The Village*, which was shown concurrently in New York, Tel Aviv and Paris in 2012. In an interview with *The Jewish Chronicle*, Nes explained "When I created 'The Village' I thought to create an image like a dream. In many ways dreams are fantastic and pastoral but also full of fears and all the things that we deny." He described 'The Village' as a metaphor for Israel, "a small place that was built after a tragedy". There is an external beauty but at the same time "under the surface there is something dark and not quiet."

Adi Nes was born in Kiryat-Gat, Israel in 1966 and now works in Tel Aviv. He has had solo shows at the Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego. His work is in many public collections including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Canada; The Jewish Museum, New York; the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel and The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, as well as major Foundations and private collections.

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