Two Elements // Gily Bella Sofia Ilan & Nadav Rauchwerger (Studio Davka)
Curator: Nitza Cohen Mohr

This is an exhibition by two ceramic artists who share their lives, their work, and their artistic journey. They share the space between them. Gili Ilan and Nadav Rauchwerger create within this meeting point a convergence of the two of them and of their encounter with the material: the clay. Drawing upon the knowledge, traditions, and shared and personal histories they have acquired over the years, they explore the new together While combining materials, techniques, and forms. She stands firm, keeps together, he is in motion, experimenting and exploring.

The works in the exhibition are the product of their encounter, a meeting of materials, creators, and temperaments. The titles of the works are drawn from Zelda's poem "Two Elements." Zelda brings together the cypress and the fire who represent opposite poles of existence. The cypress strikes deep roots and stands its ground, upright, bearing within its landscape, memory, and history. Its growth is a continuous movement both deep into the earth and toward the sky. Fire, by contrast, is dynamic, consuming, burning. It transforms reality. The image of the cypress recurs throughout the exhibition, accompanied by fire as an integral part of the process.

In the work *He Knows There Is Madness Within Him*, the cypress forms were created using a variety of techniques and methods: wheel-throwing, coil-building, and hollowing out a solid block of clay. The same basic shape recurs in different sizes and material qualities. The series is defined by great freedom, experimentation, and playfulness. Each technique leaves its own distinct mark. sometimes the construction is gradual, while at other times it emerges from a single solid mass. Alongside the cypresses, the series includes pieces titled *Something Inside Me Goes Wild*, sculptural objects that appear to be attempting to contain wild, bubbling matter .The layers, the fragments, are part of their voice. They reveal the inner essence and the very material that constitutes them. In the series *And Imagination*, the void, the nothingness, becomes an integral part of the work. It is the encounter, the space between the shells, that creates the image - the cypress. In the series *Thet Cypress Does Not Answer*, material is compressed into a complete, perfect mold, generating identical forms that repeat in varying sizes creating a forest gathered and held together. Finally, the work *With Ancient Pride* carries a historical memory. it is a "replica" of a classical Greek vase, a monument to days gone by. Yet, it is an imprecise, resonant replica, adorned with those same cypress trees that recur throughout the exhibition like an ancient yet new melody.

Zelda places the cypress and the fire side by side. She seeks to remain within them, not to choose between these extremes, but to inhabit the space created between them. The cypress represents matter, the fire represents the moment of release yet also the point of no return. That moment when the process becomes less predictable and less predetermined, while simultaneously fixing the form and the future. The collaborative work of Ilan and Rauchwerger emerges from this very tension: what they choose to carry with them, what they hold on to and what they allow to undergo transformation. It explores where the fire lies and where the stability resides, and, more importantly, where the connection - the space between - is found.

TWO ELEMENTS // Zelda

The flame says to the cypress:
“When I see how calm,
how full of pride you are,
something inside me goes wild –
How can one live this awesome life
without a touch of madness,
of spirit,
of imagination,
of freedom,
with only a grim, ancient pride?
If I could, I would burn down
the establishment
that we call the seasons,
along with your cursed dependence
on earth and air and sun,
on rain and dew.”

The cypress does not answer.
He knows there is madness in him,
and freedom,
and imagination,
and spirit.
But the flame will not understand,
the flame will not believe.

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