

PRESS RELEASE

Adi Nes 'Biblical Stories'

23rd May – 10th June 2018

The Ben Uri Gallery & Museum is both honoured and excited to launch an exhibition of Israeli born artist Adi Nes's world renowned works, featuring 12 of 14 photographic pieces from his seminal 'Biblical Stories' series.



Ben Uri Gallery and Museum is honoured to launch an exhibition of Israeli born artist Adi Nes's seminal 'Biblical Stories' series from 2006.

Born of Iranian parents, he was raised in Kiryat Gat, Israel. Nes has become internationally recognized for the bold and emotive way in which his photography has confronted controversial issues. Nes's inspiration comes from a wide variety of sources, from his own memories and experiences, to current events and the world around him. In 2000, Nes took as his work's subject young men in the Israeli army in order to explore, and simultaneously challenge, notions of masculinity and homosexuality. While changing his subject of focus from young Israel soldiers to the destitute and economically marginalized, Nes has kept Israel, and Tel Aviv especially, as both the historical and environmental backdrop for his 'Biblical Stories' series. Nes draws upon classical and religious stories in his 'Biblical Stories' to launch critical examinations of contemporary society, the nation state, and

identity, as he has in past works, including his 1999 Untitled (The Last Supper), which has become an iconic image in contemporary photography.

Nes has stated that his decision to name his works as Untitled stems from a desire to enable the viewer to form their own understandings of the works; however, by invoking the famous figures and moral narratives of well-known Old Testament stories, he imbues his work with deeply symbolic connotations recognizable to a wide audience: the story of Cain and Abel – of rivalry, familial relationships, and loss; the tale of Abraham and Isaac – of faith and sacrifice. However, by dressing these figures in contemporary garb and transposing them into scenes of modern squalor and urban suffering, Nes leaves little doubt as to the timeless nature of such stories, and the failure of modern society to adequately recognize and address the issues they raise.

The deeply emotive realism of many of Nes's images belies the painstaking work with which he has planned, staged, and produced each piece, employing and directing costumed actors within carefully chosen areas to realize his vision.

The full range of Nes's artistic skill is evidenced in the varying nature of the photographic compositions in this series. In a number of Nes's works, his technique is not only commensurate with old master painters' adaptations of classical and religious stories, but is reminiscent of the artistic techniques of those including Caravaggio and Rubens in his theatrical use of light and shadow; this is perhaps best exemplified in Nes's (Untitled) Cain and Abel, where a deep sense of rage emanates from the exaggerated musculature defining Cain's body as he prepares to strike the prostrate Abel.

Articles and Interviews:

<http://bigredandshiny.org/4083/an-interview-with-adi-nes/#prettyPhoto>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/04/arts/art-in-review-adi-nes.html>
<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2012/dec/12/adi-nes-best-photograph>
<https://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/07/17/underpinnings-of-greek-tragedy-in-israel/>

Exhibition opens to the public 23rd May – 10 June 2018 - Admission FREE.

Press welcome from 2pm and at the opening reception 22nd May from 6:30pm at Ben Uri, [108a Boundary Road, London NW8 0RH](#).

For high-res images and further information: please contact Alix Smith on alixs@benuri.org

Image credits:

Cain and Abel © courtesy of the artist

[Ben Uri Gallery & Museum, 108a Boundary Road, off Abbey Road, London, NW8 0RH.](#)

Opening times: Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat-Sun 11am-5pm

FREE ENTRY | 020 7604 3991 | www.benuri.org.uk

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