

## **WaterEdge / Avital Cnaani**

The exhibition **WaterEdge** centers on the tension generated at the encounter between water and land, and the physical and mental states it represents. The juxtaposition of a vibrant blue etching polyptych with skeletal or husk-like sculptures conjures a space that is a wild and unruly liminal area. A nebulous edge where different types of mediums cross paths, mixing with one another and challenging conventions.

A multipanel etching comprising dozens of separate pieces of paper is mounted on the wall. Cnaani's etchings are created in a method that echoes her sculptural practice. She collects used etching plates that accumulated a history of previous use, and manually cuts them into raw and organic shapes. This action shares similarities with her sculptural practice, where she hand-cuts and tears sheets of Formica, wood, and paper. The blue image that takes shape on the wall forms an underwater landscape where massive amorphous shapes oscillate between sinking and floating. They bring to mind sunken rocks, heavy body organs, or huge marine animals, like whales that were pulled out of the sea and abandoned on the shore. With that they formulate a physical and existential state that wavers between the living and the inanimate or between life and death.

These shapes resonate throughout Cnaani's sculptural practice, which always sets the body as its point of departure. Her sculptures resemble slender skeletons or empty husks, alluding both to the existential extremes of the body as well as the drawing action. The objects in the space shift between limp elements, heavily sprawled on the ground, and energetic lines that stretch upward. The slender tree branches that delineate a linear, upright, dynamic and animated drawing are contrasted with the indistinct lumps at their feet, slumped and emptied, imploding like still rocks or lifeless bodies. While seemingly heavy, the objects are in fact made out of lightweight and wrinkled paper husks, blackened with graphite. Together, the lines of the branches and paper sculptures add up to a three-dimensional spatial drawing; lines and shapes that respond to one another and trace a mental landscape of a passage area, moving between growth and collapse, between vitality and lethargy, movement, and emptiness, and perhaps between life and death.

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