

Professor Joanna Regulska introducing Ariane Littman during her lecture as a Lebowitz Visiting Artist-in-Residence at the Rutgers University, NJ

What is the meaning of borders?

Can borders become 'less visible' or 'less important' and how does a border *change* through the act (or action) of crossing it?

Can we eradicate/erase borders?

Does the cross-border process involve the deletion or maybe the negation of that border?

Or maybe *crossing* of a border or the attempt to eradicate it involves in fact the *reinforcement* of that border's existence and draws greater attention to it; increasing its significance materially, symbolically, emotionally or politically.

By asking these and other questions Ariane Littman draws our attention not only to border as a 'product' to be studied and observed, but also to seeing border as a 'process', with its history, significance, disruptions and pains, divisions and joy of reconnecting.

Understanding this process involves understanding the 'border' and its sociopolitical and spatial constitution, but also understanding what constitutes that boundary or border; who is engaged and why; what material, emotional, symbolic resources and power are used to create it, reinforce it or dissolve it?

Is an unwanted segment of the population by crossing a boundary making a claim to a territorial identity and space? Can crossing such border erase the history of divisions, the scars of existence, the embodiment of the experience, and of the everyday struggle?

And what actually happens when one crosses a border or peeks across the border to see the "other" side? "Which side you are on?" asks Littman.

Does such an encounter brings the two sides closer together or separates them even further? Is knowing about its history and experiencing the crossing reinforces the border?

There are both the 'limiting' and 'delimiting' aspects of borders and boundaries.

What are then the conditions under which border emerge? A border often is seen as a line, for those crossing it is often a point, an entry or a departure. *De facto* it is as a space where certain circumstances exist or ceases to exist and are replaced by other.

These conditions are “official” – political and legal; an international borders in many places require a document, a stamp, a name, but maybe even more profound are the ‘unofficial’ the social, the experiential, the emotional aspect of boundaries and borders meanings.

Ariane Littman through her thoughtful and insightful, reflective and extremely intense and engaging art make us think about such questions.

Born in Switzerland, she has lived and worked in Jerusalem since 1981.

An interdisciplinary artist, she has extensively exhibited in solo shows in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and in group shows across Israel, Switzerland, Mexico, the United States and UK.

Her work can be found in numerous galleries including: Israel Museum in Jerusalem; The Jewish Museum in New York as well as in private collections in New York, Tel Aviv and Finland.

She has engaged wide-ranging audiences of artists, geographers, cartographers, writers and many others.

Littman’s installations, videos projects and photographs focus on: silent memories, mobile borders, refugee city, bodies and souls,

But she also explores: the surface fractures, borders walls, stillness and captured moments.

Her art is provoking, questioning and disturbing.

It is a feast for mind and soul even though a painful one.

Please join me in welcoming Ariane Littman.

**Joanna Regulska is Professor of Women’s and Genders Studies, and Geography
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