



Terminal Art

By Angela Levine

A feast of installation art, a medium still regarded locally with some suspicion, can be found in the unlikely setting of Tel Aviv's new central bus station. Here 23 artists, including a small, changing contingent from Britain, have set up projects in empty store spaces on the fifth floor of the huge shopping mall.

If the organizers had hoped to mobilize a new coterie of art lovers from among the 100,000 people passing through this terminal every week, they must be disappointed. According to some artists, passersby evince only minimal curiosity; their questions, if any, are the times and locations of buses.

The most effective installations are those which react in some way to the charged environment outside these neutral work spaces, like **Gabi Klasmer's** cleverly contrived "Drill Exercise" which has its source in a filmed performance which took place in the shop space some months ago. The final effect achieved by reversing and slowing up this film and then projecting it onto the inner surfaces of the display windows is of a dream sequence, in which automaton-like figures moving down endless corridors appear to reflect the ritualistic aspect of everyday life.

Seductive in its extreme simplicity is the mock dialysis machine devised by **Rafi Carasso**, a urologist by profession, which is apparently meant as a metaphor for the bus station, a mini-world in perpetual motion. Bordering a space which cleverly gives the illusion of a tilted geometric configuration are lengths of fine medical tubing which act as a conduit for a continuous flow of black ink which eventually drips into a plastic container before recirculating. **Galia Lahav** and **Shula Keshet** invite the public into a space furnished and decorated as if it was their real home. But from certain details – like an obsessive collection of photographs of buses on the wall; a continuous video clip on TV of Keshet making a public statement – it becomes clear that these women are trying to engage our sympathy for a neighborhood protest of the dirt and constant noise emanating from the new bus station.

Several artists, among them **Ram Samocha** and **Iris Ben Arie**, display their works as though they are sale goods. In this category, **Johanan Herson's** lavishly designed stage set promoting a line of kitchen furniture especially impresses, as do **Reuven Kuperman's** paintings of food, ranging from copies of classical still-lives to brash contemporary images of items sold at fast-food counters.

An installation by **Inga Fonar Cocas**, accompanied by the discordant beating of two metronomes, deals directly with the ever-present possibility of terrorist attacks. I liked this dramatic piece, with its



Tania Kovatz: sandworks (Central Bus Station, Tel Aviv)



Gabi Klasmer: 'Drill Exercise,' installation (Central Bus Station, Tel Aviv)

and viewed through a small aperture, consists of a large, glowing spinning top in constant motion. Although quite different, these two installations have a significant feature in common; each features objects of transient beauty. A single foot-step will destroy Kovatz's perfect sand pattern; similarly, the battery powering Ridley's glorious spinning top is also of finite duration.

This year-long project was initiated by **Rachel Sukman**, curator of the gallery-cum-workspace "Office in Tel Aviv," and received support from the management of the Mall, the British Council and the