

Micha Bar-Am

Biography

Born in Berlin, Germany in **1930**, Bar-Am arrived with his family in Israel (then Palestine) in **1936**.

Active in the pre-state underground he worked at Haifa Port and was drafted in **1948** when the Jewish-Arab Conflict turned into an all out war.

In **1949** - co-founder of Kibbutz Malkiya in the Galilee and later member of Kibbutz Gesher-Haziv.

In the early **1950's** begins to record with borrowed cameras life on the kibbutz and joins archeological expeditions in the Judean Desert in search for ancient Dead Sea scrolls. After the **1956** Sinai Campaign, Bar-Am published his first book, *Across Sinai* and was offered to join the editorial staff of *Bamachane* as photographer-writer.

In **1961** was assigned to cover the Eichmann Trial.

In **1966** becomes independent, works as free-lancer and meets with Cornell Capa with whom he covers the **1967** Six Day War.

In **1968** - was invited to join Magnum and becomes the Contracted Middle East photographic correspondent for the *New York Times* until **1992**.

During the **1973** Yom Kippur War. Covers the scene from Suez to the Golan Heights.

1974 - Founding member of ICP, The International Center of Photography in New York and becomes active as Photographic Curator.

1977 - establishes the department of Photography at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art which he heads until **1992**.

1982 - covers the war in Lebanon, which results in an exhibition and book.

1985-1986 - Nieman fellow at Harvard University.

2000 - The Israel Prize for Visual Arts "for his lifelong recording of the social and cultural scene in Israel and its ongoing conflicts with a critical eye and an indelible style".

Married to Orna, artist. Their sons are Ahuvia, a professor of classics; Barak, an artist; and Nimrod, a doctor of philosophy.

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Notes

I've been photographing for nearly fifty years now, mostly in Israel, and often on assignment. The initiative for a story may be mine or an editor's, but it is usually prompted by events in the news or at the center of public debate. Within this professional framework, which offers me a platform and a pretext for being involved, I range widely. I keep my internal eye open for that other, metaphorical image that transcends illustration to achieve a wholeness of its own. I strive for the elusive entity that is both evidence and evocation, public record and personal vision.

I have adopted Robert Capa's saying: "If your photographs aren't good enough, you weren't close enough." But in retrospect I add a corollary: If you're too close, you lose perspective. It is not easy to be fair with the facts and keep your own convictions out of the picture. It is almost impossible to be both a participant in events and their observer, witness, interpreter. The effort brings great frustration, and equally great reward.

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Awards and Scholarships

- 1959** Capa-Chim award, First Prize, Tel Aviv
- 1985** IBM Fellowship, Aspen, Colorado
Golden Flamingo for Photographic Poster, Arles
Fullbright Grant
- 1985-86** Nieman Fellow, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
- 1993** Enrique Kavlin Prize, Israel Museum
- 2000** Israel Prize for Visual Arts

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Exhibitions: Solo Exhibitions (Selected)

- 1975** *Micha Bar-Am: Photographs* Israel Museum, Jerusalem
Curator: Marc Scheps
(Leaflet, Poster)
- 1979** *Jews in Egypt, Spring 1979* Diaspora Museum, Tel Aviv
- 1981** *Micha Bar-Am* G. Ray Hawkins Gallery,
Los Angeles
Curator: David Fahey
- 1982** *Israel Diary 1956-1982* International Center of Photography (ICP),
New York
Curator: Cornell Capa
- 1985** *Micha Bar-Am* International Museum of Photography at George
Eastman House, Rochester, NY
Curator: Marianne Fulton
- 1990** *Israel: The Stormy Years* (With Robert Capa)
Barbican Center, London
Curator: Rosalyn Wilder
- 1992** *Patterns of Jewish Life* Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin
- 1996** *The Last War* Tel Aviv Museum of Art
Curator: Michael Levin
- 1998** *Israel: A Photobiography* International Center of Photography (ICP),
New York (traveled to Los Angeles, Houston,
Memphis, Oklahoma City)
- 1998** *Israel: Die ersten 50 Jahre - Eine Fotobiographie* Berlin, Hamburg, Halle, Dresden
- 2000** *Micha Bar-Am : Fotografie* Stadthaus Ulm
Curator: Katharina Menzel
(Poster)

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Exhibitions: Group Exhibitions (Selected)

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|---------|---|--|
| 1968 | <i>Israel: The Reality</i> □ | Jewish Museum, New York
Curator: Cornell Capa
(Book) |
| 1973-74 | <i>Jerusalem:</i> □
<i>City of Mankind</i> □ | Israel Museum, Jerusalem □
Jewish Museum, New York
Curator: Cornell Capa
(Book) |
| 1982 | <i>Terre de Guerre</i> □ | Galerie Magnum, Paris
Curator: René Burri
(Book) |
| 1986 | <i>The Indelible Image</i> □ | Photographs of war, 1846 to the present
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Curator: Frances Fralin
(Book) |
| 1987 | <i>Eyes of Time</i> □ | Photojournalism in America
International Museum of Photography at
George Eastman House, Rochester, NY
Curator: Marianne Fulton
(Book) |
| 1988 | <i>Warm Light</i> □ | Photographs from Israel
The Photographic Museum of Finland, Helsinki
Traveled through Finland, Romania and Poland
Curator: Nils Andersen
(Catalogue) □ |
| | <i>In Our Time</i> □ | The world as seen by Magnum
photographers International tour
(Book) |
| 1996 | <i>Jews in Arab Lands Today</i> □ | Diaspora Museum, Tel Aviv
Curator: Ruth Porter
(Book) |

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Exhibitions: Group Exhibitions (Selected)

- 1997** ***Und sie haben Deutschland verlassen müssen***
Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn
Curator: Prof. Klaus Honnef
(Book)
- 1998** ***Magnum Photographs: Israel 1948-1998***
International tour
(Book)[]
- To the East***[]
Orientalism in the arts in Israel
Israel Museum, Jerusalem
Curators: Yigal Zalmona and
Tamar Manor-Friedman
(Book)
- 2000** ***From Mirror to Memory***[]
A century of photography
in the Land of Israel
Mané-Katz Museum, Haifa (traveling)
Curator: Vivienne Silver-Brody
(Catalogue)[]
- Time Frame***[]
A century of photography in the Land of
Israel, Israel Museum, Jerusalem
Curator: Nissan N. Perez
(Catalogue)[]
- Open Ends***[]
Art at MoMA since 1980
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2001** ***Magnum - A Community of Thought***
Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York
- 2002** ***Magna Brava***[]
Beurs van Berlage Museum, Amsterdam
Traveling Magnum group exhibition

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Exhibitions: As Curator (Selected)

- 1968** ***Israel: The Reality***□ Jewish Museum, New York
Assistant curator to Cornell Capa
(Book)
- 1974** ***Situation***□ Israeli photographers
Israel Museum, Jerusalem
With Marc Scheps
(Catalogue)
- 1977** ***Yossaif Kohain*** Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Brochure, Poster)
- 1978** ***Egypt: First Encounter***□ Israeli Photographers, December 1978
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Poster)
- 1984** ***Hans H. Pinn - A Photographer and His Time***
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)
- 1982** ***Tel Aviv: First Photographs***□ Shimon Korbman and Avraham Soskin
Tel Aviv Museum of Art□□
- Micha Kirschner - Photographs***
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)
- 1984** ***Yulla - Photographic Works*** Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)
- 1985** ***Avi Ganor***□ Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)□
- Simcha Shirman - Photographic Works***
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)

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Exhibitions: As Curator (Selected)

- 1987** ***W. Eugene Smith - Rebel Photographer***
From the Michael Solomon Sachs
Collection , Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)
- 1988** ***Skyline***☐ Israeli photographers contemplate the landscape
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)
- 1998** ***Robert Capa***☐ Photographs from Israel 1948-1950
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)
- 1990** ***Painting with Light***☐ The photographic aspect in the work of
E.M. Lilien, Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Book)
- 1991** ***Outside - Michal Rovner***☐ Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)
- 1992** ***Morel Derfler Heads*** Photographic Works, 1988-1991
Tel Aviv Museum of Art
(Catalogue)

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Collections

Israel Museum, Jerusalem

Tel Aviv Museum of Art

Haifa Museum

Diaspora Museum, Tel Aviv

The Museum of Photography at Tel Hai

International Center of Photography (ICP), New York

Museum of Modern Art, New York

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, NY

Skirball Museum, Los Angeles

Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Henry Buhl Collection, New York

Ludwig Museum, Köln

Folkwang Museum, Essen

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Musée d'Art et d'Histoire du Judaïsme, Paris

Collection Fnac, Paris

Fundacion "Le Caixa," Barcelona

National Maritime Museum, London

Private collections

Micha Bar-Am

Contact

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