

# THE LAST PHOTOGRAPH RAN TAL AFTER MICHA BAR-AM

מוזיאון תל אביב לאמנות



Tel Aviv Museum of Art

The archive of **Micha Bar-Am**, one of the fathers of photojournalism in Israel and the founder of the photography department at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, covers almost all the years of Israeli statehood, in its most beautiful and bleakest moments. From this vast archive of images, many of which are deeply etched in Israeli collective memory, **Ran Tal** has created a documentary from what is in effect a sequence of still photographs and a soundtrack of an ongoing conversation with Micha and his family



מה אתה חושב על התמונה הזו היום?  
What do you think of this picture today?

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שנמשכים למלחמה כמו פרפרים אל האש.  
We're attracted to war like moths to a flame.



נולדתי למצוקה.  
I was born into this situation.



מתברר שהוא יוצר משהו בסיוע של האור.  
seems to create something with the help of light.

In the exhibition, the film is taken apart and reassembled into a multi-channel installation that allows free movement among the chapters in the life of a camera. Like Tal's previous films (**67 Ben Zvi Road**, **Children of the Sun**, **The Garden of Eden**, and many others), the current work creates a significant gap between the documentary material we see and the conversations we hear. This gap—when the static evidence provided by the objective camera does not reconcile with the spoken memory of the witness—the photographer who was there—undermines the most basic consensus about documentation.







שנושכים למלחמה כמו פרפרים אל האש.  
We're attracted to war like moths to a flame.



מיה  
א abroad.



אני נהיית חולה.  
I am captivated by her smile.



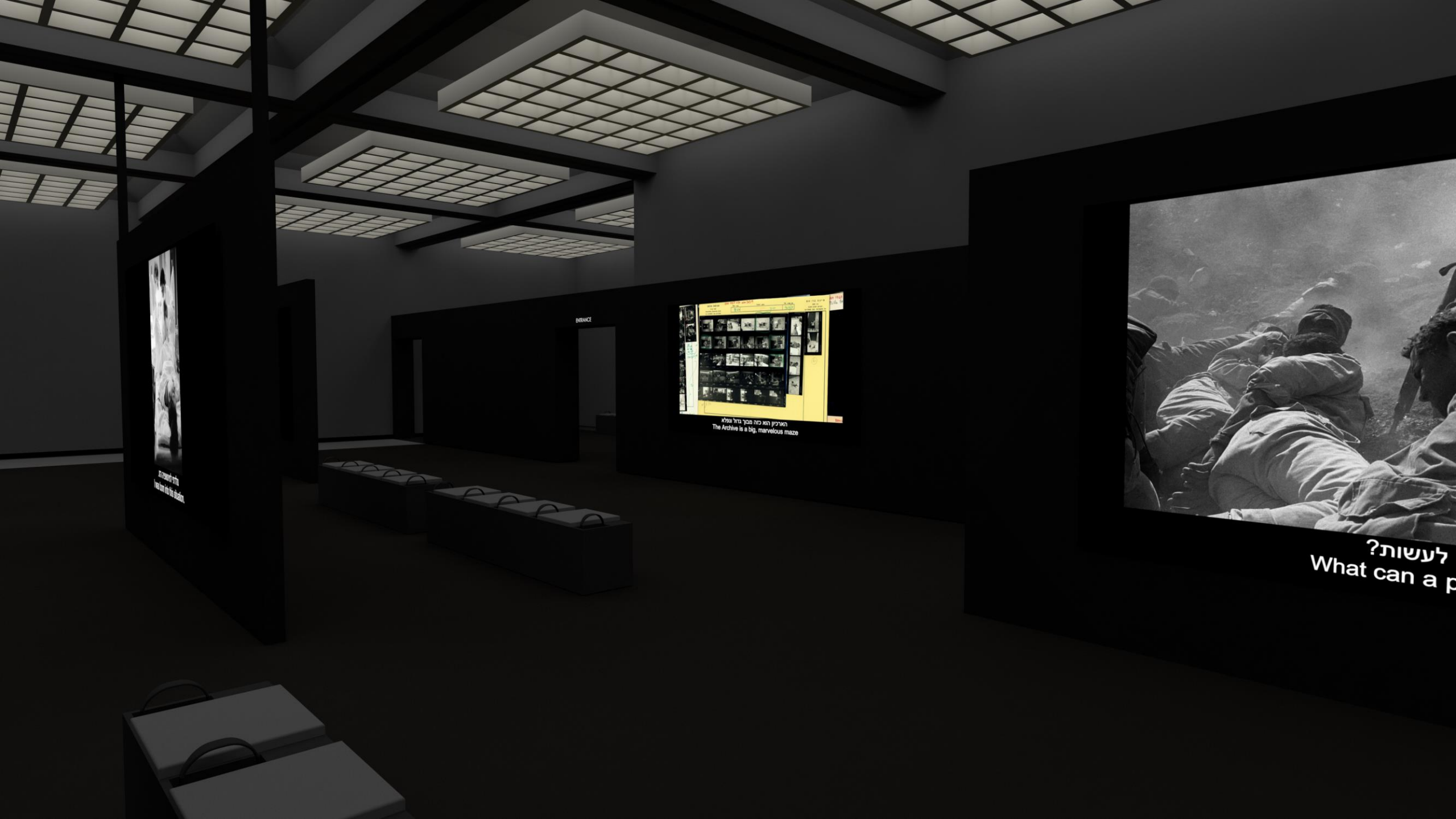
נולדתי לסיטואציה הזו.  
I was born into this situation.

**What do we believe more—the image or the spoken word?**

Furthermore, what can we learn from this gap regarding how we construct the stories about our identity and the place to which we seek to belong? From Tal's artistic resolve to make a film without movement arose the question of how to inspire the viewers' movement within the fixed structure of the single-channel cinematic narrative. How to offer an alternative space for the display of photojournalism today that emphasizes the power of photographic composition rather than the material source of the analog photograph. The response is three perspectives on the State and the camera's place within it, which merge in a string of retrospective tributes. Bar-Am engages in a reckoning with himself, his photographs, and the Israeliness that is seen in them. Tal's documentary film looks at Bar-Am's pioneering act and at the crisis of consciousness that is building in it. The curatorial act considers Tal's documentary action as a form of expression that exceeds the parameters of the conventional movie theater.



[Click to watch Opening chapter](#)



הארכיון הוא כזה מבוך גדול ועמוק  
The Archive is a big, marvelous maze



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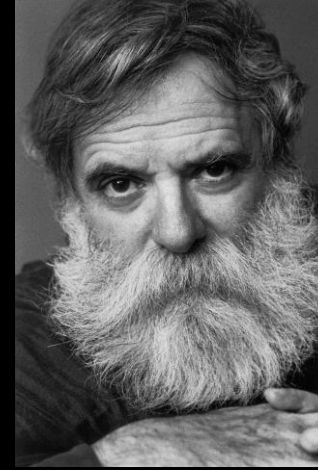


לעשות?  
What can a p





**Ran Tal** is an independent director whose documentaries deal with the Israeli reality through a social-historical perspective. Tal graduated from the Department of Film and Television at Tel Aviv University in 1994. His works have won many awards, including the Ophir Prize, the Wolgin Prize at the Jerusalem Festival, the DocAviv Festival Prize, and the Documentary Forum Prize. Tal also won the Ministry of Culture Cinema Art Award and the Mifal HaPais – National Lottery Landau Award for Stage Arts. Tal heads the International Documentary Filmmaking Program at the Tisch School of Film and Television, Tel Aviv University, and teaches in the Film Department at Sapir College. He is the founder and editor of Takriv [Close Up], the online magazine for discussion and critique of documentary film. Among his films: **1341 Frames of Love and War** (2022), **What If? Ehud Barak on War and Peace** (2020), **The Museum** (2017), **The Garden of Eden** (2012), **Gitay in Search of the Carmel** (2009), **Children of the Sun** (2007), **My Dream House** (2005), **67 Ben Zvi Road** (1999), and **Skin Deep**, with the Etgar Keret (1996).



**Micha Bar-Am** is widely considered the father of photojournalism in Israel and his iconic works enjoy an international reputation. He was born in Berlin in 1930, and at the age of six, he immigrated to Mandatory Palestine with his family. Bar-Am served in the Palmach and the IDF, and participated in opening the road to Jerusalem during Israel's War of Independence. The archive of his works is a multifaceted photographic biography of Israel and the Jewish people, from which he has presented many solo exhibitions in Israel and around the world. Bar-Am is one of the principal members of Magnum Photos. In 1977, he established the photography department at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art and served as Senior Curator of Photography until 1992. In 1993, he won the Enrique Kavlin Lifetime Achievement Award in Photography from the Israel Museum, and in 2000, he was awarded the Israel Prize for Photography. Bar-Am's works are included in the world's major art collections, such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Pompidou Center in Paris, and the International Center of Photography in New York.





**Dr. Noam Gal** is a researcher and curator, and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Art History, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. From 2013 to 2021, as the Chief Curator of Photography at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, he organized exhibitions of such acclaimed artists as Richard Avedon, Berenice Abbott, Ron Amir, Illit Azoulay, Tomoko Sawada, Roi Kuper, Micha Bar-Am, and Chen Cohen. Gal is the curator and author of **A Modern Love**, the first review of modernism in Western photography to be published in Hebrew. Gal's articles have appeared in local and international publications such as **Critical Arts**, **African Identities**, **Theory and Criticism**, **Photographies**, and **The Art Journal**. His latest work explores the oeuvre of American artist Alison Rossiter. His book **Compressions: Israeli Art in the Third Millennium** is due to be published in 2023.

**The Last Photograph: Ran Tal after Micha Bar-Am**

**Curator: Dr. Noam Gal**

**Assistant curator: Naama Bar Or**

**Exhibition concept design: Oren Sagiv**

**Exhibition production design: Ariel Armoni**

**Graphic design: Noa Segal**

**Audio visual installation: Pro-Av**



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