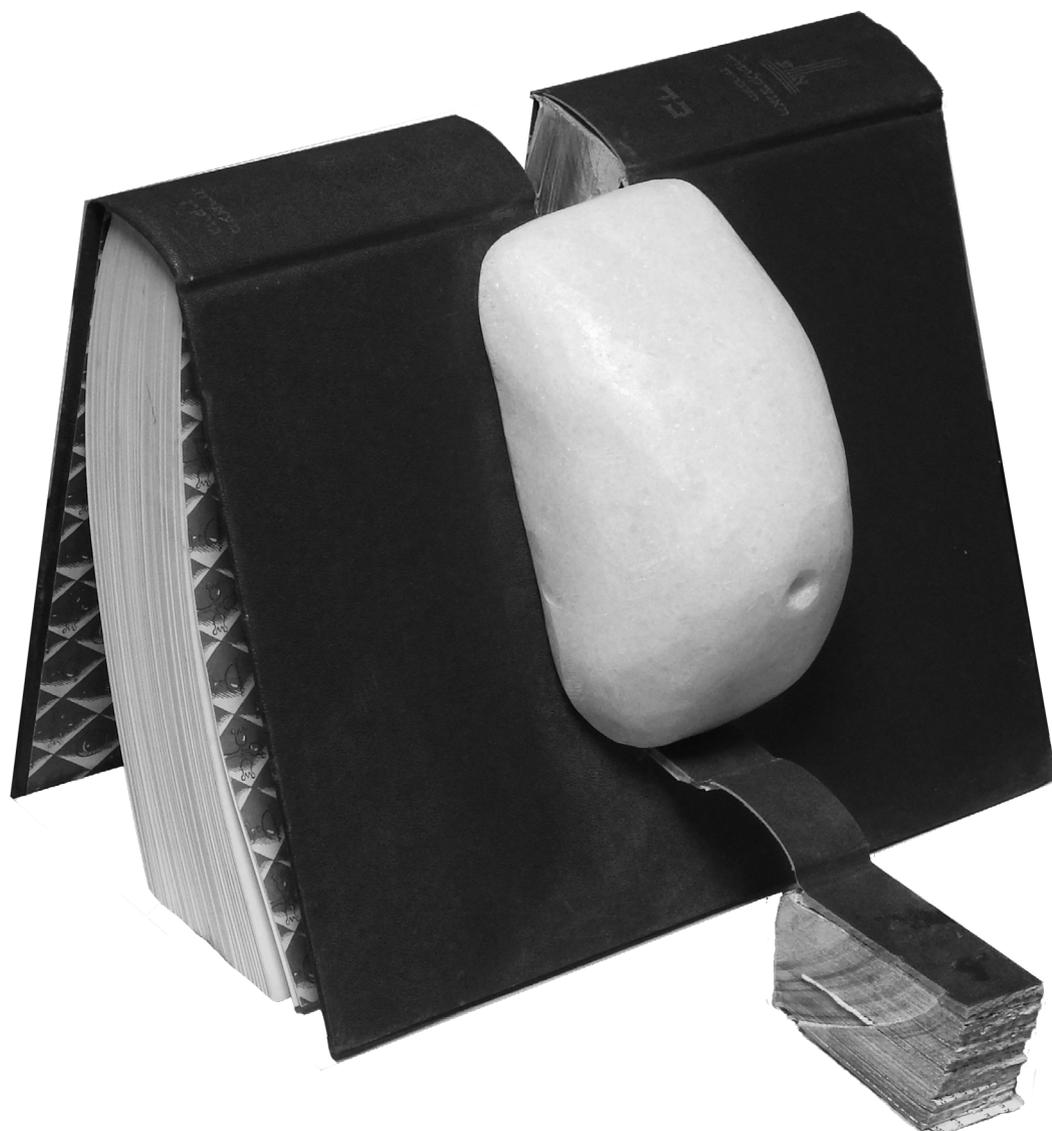


AVI SPERBER

*FROM NATURE
TO MYTH*

09.10
-06.11.2021



**MÉMOIRE
DE
L'AVENIR**

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**MÉMOIRE
DE
L'AVENIR**

Mémoire de l'Avenir is a non-profit organisation whose main mission is to rely on the arts and cultural heritage as a means to improve society.

Through the development of four interconnected poles - exhibitions, educational actions, research and Humanities, Arts and Society - Mémoire de l'Avenir places creativity and dialogue at the centre of its actions, tools and methods in order to promote reflection and education, active and creative participation as well as the crossing of disciplines.

Mémoire de l'Avenir is located in Belleville - Paris. Its space is conceived as a meeting place for artists, thinkers and the public from all cultural and disciplinary backgrounds, with a major interest in the role and impact of art in contemporary society.

Since 2016 Mémoire de l'Avenir has been developing the Humanities, Arts and Society project in partnership with UNESCO MOST, and Conseil International de la Philosophie et des Sciences Humaines

memoire-a-venir.org

PRESENTATION OF THE EXHIBITION

FROM NATURE TO MYTH - AVI SPERBER

Born in 1943, graduate of the Technion- Haifa in Civil Engineering, MSc. from Northwestern University in Transportation engineering - Evanston Illinois U.S.A. and study at AVNI institute of Art and Design- Tel Aviv, Avi Sperber has been developing a sculptural work for more than 30 years, oscillating between monumentality and reduced formats, which he regularly puts into dialogue. His work unfolds around a powerful symbolism that feeds on the cultural contexts that the artist invests.

The exhibition From Nature to Myth presents a series of 12 works, between sculpture and ready-made, of curved stones entangled with books, through which the artist proposes a reflection on what have constituted our cultural principles as well as on the role of nature in their foundation, by analysing the story told in chapter 3 of Genesis. It is indeed through the observation of nature, through the fear and wonders it provokes, through the infinite mysteries it contains, that myths, ancestral stories or religions have emerged in all cultures.

Chapter 3 of Genesis, the origin story for monotheistic religions, relates the temptation of knowledge by Eve and Adam and their eviction from Paradise. For Avi Sperber, «it describes the birth of the human being driven by a relentless desire for knowledge. The story is an allegorical fusion of characters and processes that represent various components of human life, which have been interpreted over the generations by many people in different ways and have led to the beliefs that affect our lives to this day”.

From this chapter the artist transports out various themes in his works, such as domination, suffering, identity, the birth of language, work and finitude.

As much as the final works, the materials used carry symbols. The use of stones in these sculptures is a metaphor for the first attempts of human beings to inscribe their thoughts, the materialization of communication, languages and of writing. Stones are also associated with the celestial sphere or evoke the idea of eternity. They often symbolise the passage from this life to the next. For the artist they are also a language within a language. Through them he tries to translate concepts from his

interpretation of the story into our contemporary and future histories. The book, a civilizational symbol, is confronted today with its dematerialization. In this work, Avi Sperber used volumes from the Hebrew Encyclopaedia, a complete encyclopaedia in Hebrew, which was published at the time of the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. «Today, with the development of technology and the enormous amount of information available on the Internet, it has almost no use, and its volumes are sent for recycling, so it represents the ephemeral object - man.» AS

By associating stones with books, Avi Sperber invites us to connect the present with the past, and seeks to produce an image of the continuity of events in the history of human civilization.

Margalit Berriet - Marie-Cécile Berdaguer - curators of the exhibition
In collaboration with Doron Polak curator of - Avi Sperber : *From Eternal Life to Life and Death* - Septembre 2021 at Artist Museum, Givatayim - Israël

Chapter 3

By Avi Sperber

Man, like every living thing, will die. Death is unavoidable. Man, like an animal that is terrified by every danger and especially by one that threatens its life, tries to escape. But man is an intelligent animal. He thinks, understands, investigates, is not satisfied by merely knowing about the existence of death and never stops looking for ways to overcome it, in an attempt to escape it and fulfill his yearning for eternal life.

The story of the creation of the world and man runs through the myths and legends of other peoples in different forms. In the monotheistic religions, following the creation of the world, the beginning of human civilization is found in the Garden of Eden, where man was created by God, the eternal force that controls everything.

The Garden of Eden is the place of the beginning of all things and the eternal source of the patterns of life. It is the object of longing, yearning, and the hope of reward manifested in eternal life. In the words of Walter Benjamin: "Paradise is the origin of man, but also a utopian vision of his future redemption."

The third chapter of the Book of Genesis describes the birth of civilized man, the man with a tireless urge to know. The story is an allegorical fusion of characters and processes that represent various components of human life, which have been interpreted over the generations by many people in different ways and led to the beliefs that affect our lives to this day.

When their eyes were opened, Adam and Eve experienced shame for the first time. They understood that they were similar yet different; their organs defined their identity – man and woman. By covering their private parts with fig leaves they expressed their recognition of their differences and their desire to maintain privacy and intimacy. The determination of gender becomes more powerful as the story proceeds, particularly in the punishments imposed on them by God: the woman will bear children in sorrow and the man will live by the sweat of his brow and will rule over the woman. This patriarchal definition of the relationship between man and woman has determined relations between the sexes for many generations.

Adam and Eve discovered fear, too, when their eyes were opened, and they hid from God when they heard his voice in the Garden. This fear also explains man's relationship with God. God asks, "Where art thou?" although he knows where Adam is. "Big Brother" represents the relationship between ruler and ruled, between the one who transgresses and the one who punishes.

The Garden of Eden was nature, the home of the animals. Man, too, was part of nature. He ate, drank, did not understand and did not know. The serpent in the story is a wild creature of the field – it represents nature, but it is craftier than any of the other animals, and was therefore chosen as mediator between nature and civilization. It tempts Eve, and through her it transfers knowledge, wisdom and civilization, removing him from nature. Some say that language was born at the moment when Adam gave warning of the serpent's presence. Later, people developed written communication, first in the form of shapes carved in stone, and later with letters and fonts. The serpent brought language and culture to man, petroglyphs evolved into books and, as human society spread throughout the world, human culture took on many different shades.

There is an interpretation that the serpent tempted Eve because there was love between them (in parentheses, Aphrodite also offered an apple as a promise of love). Other interpretations, mainly Christian ones, are fed by the idea of celibacy and the patriarchal approach. Eve is presented as the one who tempted Adam and thus caused him to commit the sin of lust. And for that reason, all her daughters, that is, all women, are guilty of the sin.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is called "the tree upon which death depends." It is the origin of the start of human civilization and human fate. Eating its fruit brought understanding, consciousness and knowledge, but also brought the sentence of death.

Eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge set everything in motion. Man, who was part of nature, had his eyes opened to understand the world around him. He began to see the questions raised by knowledge, moral questions of good and evil, of what is forbidden and what is permitted, questions about the relationship between men and women, questions about the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, and the relationship between man and God. Man learned about shame, guilt and fear, about commands and prohibitions, about sins and punishments, and the difference between the eternal and the ephemeral.

The third chapter ends with man's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, that is, from nature to the space of knowledge and culture.

Adam, at the moment when the gates of the Garden of Eden closed behind him, suddenly faced an unknown world. He knew he had to go on, to move forward, but to where? In fact, this is the beginning of the odyssey towards an unknown, unclear civilization, a never-ending journey. Today, as throughout history, we stand in that same spot, facing social, technological and economic developments leading to an uncharted civilization.

Ever since man's expulsion from the Garden, he has been troubled by that question of finality – death. In his attempt to escape his fate, he has developed various beliefs in the resurrection of the dead and reincarnation. In Judaism there is the expectation and belief that the Messiah will come, bringing with him the resurrection of the dead. The ancient Egyptians believed that the dead pass over to the world of the dead where they continue a kind of life and, when the time comes, will return to life on earth. In Kabbalah there is a belief that man is reborn and rises through the spheres on the basis of his good deeds in life, with the goal of reaching God and uniting with him. The Indians, the Druze and many others all believe in reincarnation.

All these are man's attempts to return to the Garden of Eden, but this object of yearning poses a dilemma for man, between eternal life – which means a desire to return to the past, to nature, to live as one of the animals – and the lust for strength, to develop abilities and knowledge while looking to the future – to become like God.

The exhibition presents the text of the third chapter by means of symbols that represent the words and actions in it, thus presenting a picture of the continuity of events in the creation of human civilization.

The materials used in the sculptures, stone and book (ready-made), represent the same idea. Stone is a natural material, and the book is language, the material of civilization. The books are volumes of the Hebrew Encyclopedia, a comprehensive Hebrew-language encyclopedia, which was published with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Today, with the development of technology and the enormous range of information on the internet, there is hardly any use for it, and its volumes are sent for recycling, so it represents the ephemeral object – man.

Avi Sperber, June 2021

avisperber.com

VISUALS

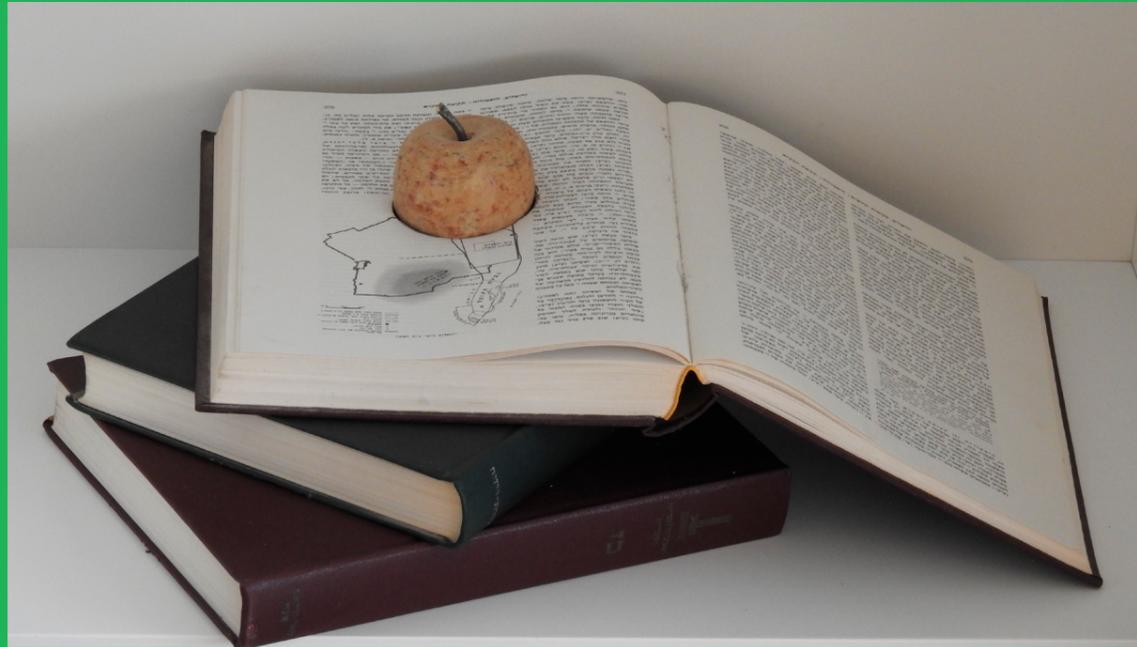
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And they realized they were naked Genesis 3:7 - porcelaingres, book- 60x40x3 cm - 2020



By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food Genesis 3:19 - greek marble, iron, hammer, book 25x40x50 cm - 2020



Tree of knowledge Genesis 3:5 - ramon stone ,iron , books - 17x50x40 cm - 2020



Have you eaten ? Genesis 3:11 - athmon stone, iron, book - 30x23x10 cm - 2020



Sound of lord god as he was walking in the garden Genèse 3:8 - Ceasar stone and book - 30x46x30 cm - 2020



The serpent was more crafty than any of wild animal Genesis 3:1 - ramon stone, ceasar stone, iron, book - 33x30x30 cm - 2020



You will crawl on your belly Genesis 3:14 - ceasar stone, book - 3x65x30 cm - 2020

PERFORMANCE

*The evening of the opening
Friday 8 October at 8pm*

Initium

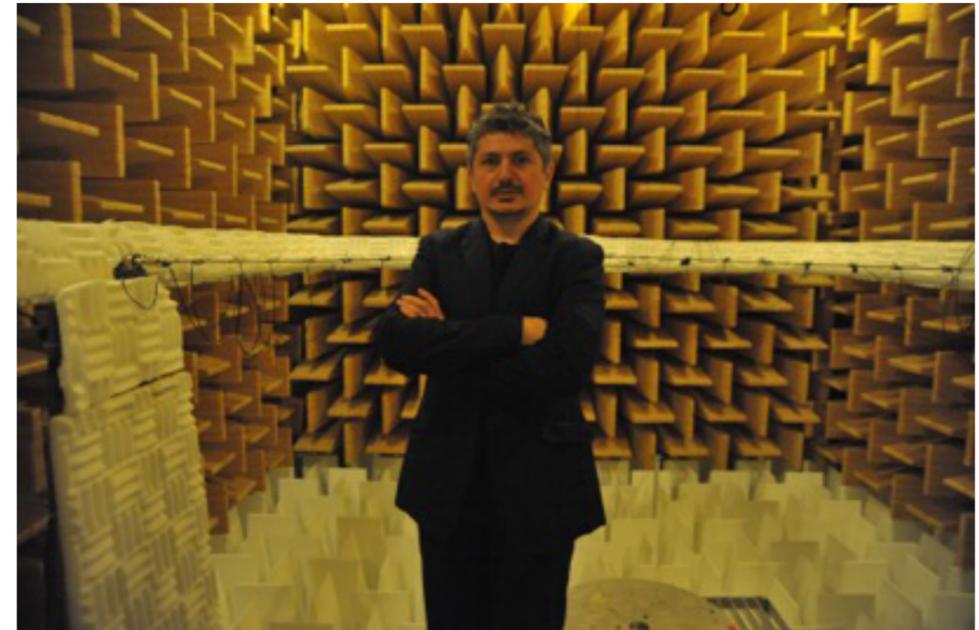
Creation for electronic device and dancer

Daniel Cabanzo x Jennifer Gold

This sound and performance piece is a double beginning: a collaboration between the composer and visual artist Daniel Cabanzo and the performer and visual artist Jennifer Gold, and the starting point for the creation of a series of sound pieces that will compose Daniel Cabanzo's next album. The artists propose a dialogue in sound and movement around the work of Avi Sperber.



After training as a dancer and actress, **JENNIFER GOLD** decided to study philosophy. In 2015, she joined a theatre company that evolves within the Parisian underground scene. In 2017, together with two other artists, she created an independent production called «Sans Raison» which specialises in fiction, experimental film and performance. From Kant to Genet, through expressionist dance, butoh and cabaret, Jennifer practices the alliance, even the symbiosis, of concepts supposedly in contradiction.



DANIEL CABANZO (Colombia, born in 1979) is a multidisciplinary artist who is interested in different forms of art expression. He studied music at the University of Valle in Cali, Colombia, and composition in France since 2006. He holds a master's degree in Music applied to visual arts from the University of Lyon 2 and a master's degree in Acousmatics and sound arts from the Ina-GRM and the University of Paris-Est.

In 2013, he studied at the HEM of Geneva, a school that influenced him towards new musical technologies. He received the DNSPM diploma in Composition from the PSPBB in 2014. He is laureate of the Cergy-Pontoise composition prize and of the Roux et Tronchet prize of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, also laureate of a SACEM grant to study in the Coursus d'Informatique Musicale at IRCAM in 2014.

He participated in the Manifeste academy organised by IRCAM as part of the In Vivo Electro 2015 workshop, and collaborated with Le Fresnoy - Studio National des arts contemporains for the Panorama 2016 edition. Winner of the Ibermusicas 2018 prize with the DME institution in Portugal, the same year he is resident at the Villecroze Academy. In 2019 his piece for piano and electronic device «Electronic introspections 1» was performed at Radio France for the programme Alla Breve. In 2021 he is doing a residency at the Royaumont Foundation with the XAMP microtonal accordion project Pulse and the ARCO residency with the TANA quartet at GMEM in Marseille. He is currently doing his PhD in musicology at the University of Paris-Sorbonne and IRCAM. He has been played by several ensembles in France and in other countries.

PRESS VISIT

THURSDAY OCTOBER 7 - 4PM

PUBLIC VERNISSAGE

FRIDAY OCTOBER 8 - 6 TO 9PM

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