

Flash Art



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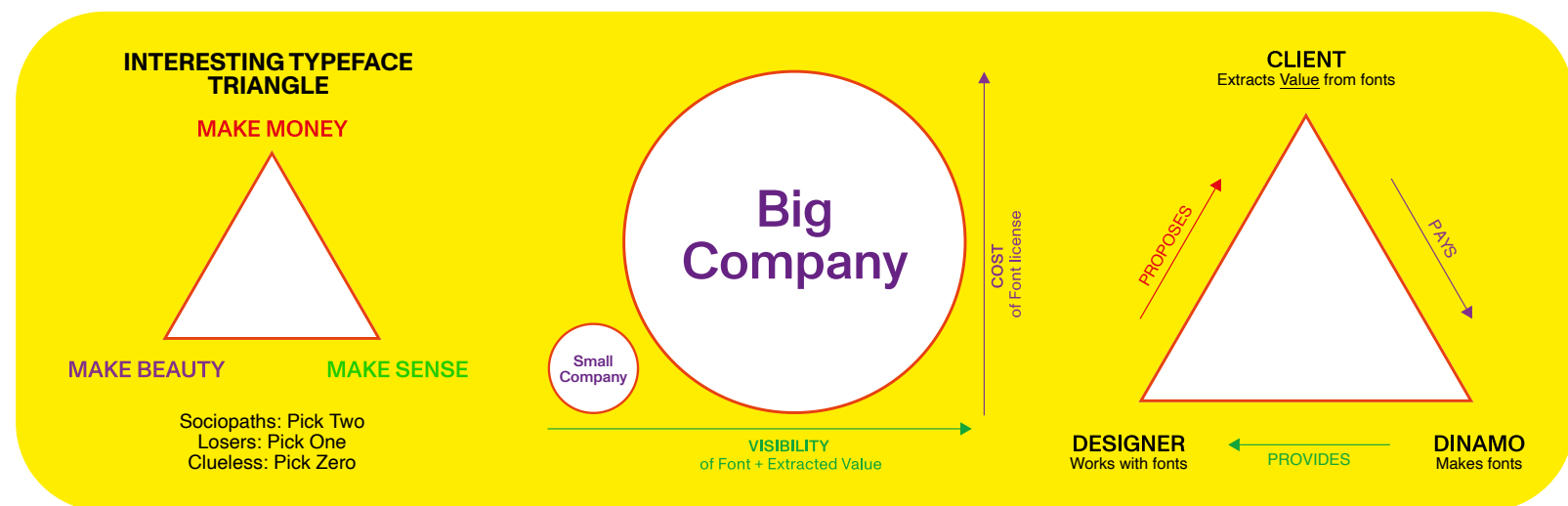
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The New Dinamo Website has arrived!!!



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And here are some diagrams for you:



www.abcdinamo.com

REVIEWS

- 1 “Don’t Let This Be Easy”
Walker Art Center,
Minneapolis
by Ariella Wolens
- 2 Rose Wylie
“where i am and was”
Aspen Art Museum,
Colorado
by Caroline Elbaor
- 3 Toyin Ojih Odutola
“A Countervailing Theory”
Barbican Centre, London
by Kareem Reid
- 4 Robert Morris
“The Perceiving Body”
MAMC+, Saint-Étienne
Métropole
by Sarah Moroz
- 5 “Shifting Proximities”
Nxt Museum, Amsterdam
by Andreas Schlaegel
- 6 Irma Blank
“Blank”
CCA - Center for
Contemporary Art and at
the Bauhaus Foundation,
Tel Aviv
by Joy Bernard
- 7 “Afterglow”
7th Yokohama Triennale 2020
by Tomoko Kuroiwa
- 8 Martin Kippenberger
“K”
Fondazione Prada, Milan
by Moritz Gaudlitz
- 9 “Untitled, 2020. Three
perspectives on the art of
the present”
Punta della Dogana, Venice
by Stefano Mudu

Rose Wylie, *Yellow Bathing Costume, Steps*, 2019. Oil, collage and graphite on canvas. 79 1/8 x 57 1/8 in. Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner, New York / London / Paris / Hong Kong. © Rose Wylie.



6 Irma Blank “Blank” CCA - Center for Contemporary Art and at the Bauhaus Foundation, Tel Aviv by Joy Bernard

In his 1966 collection of writings, titled *Écrits*, French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan laid the foundations of a long research that proved the irrefutable importance of language to the psychoanalytic process and the development of the individual. Lacan conceded that “saying it all is literally impossible: words fail.” Nonetheless, the psychiatrist asserted that “it’s through this very impossibility that the truth holds onto the real.”

This somewhat ambivalent and contradictory statement comes to mind when one faces the seemingly impenetrable oeuvres of German-born Italian painter Irma Blank, produced over decades of Sisyphean work. Intimately displayed and minimalistically curated, Blank’s works are presented simultaneously in two exhibition spaces in Tel Aviv, a city where her work has not been showcased before: At the CCA - Center for Contemporary Art and at the Bauhaus Foundation. The show, titled “Blank,” explores how she turned the canvas into a territory in which a battle is staged against muteness.

Blank is a creator whose art is deeply sutured in language. Ironically enough, it is challenging to surmise the words that would aptly define the painter’s work. Limited in palette to mostly blue, black, and pink (with the occasional use of mild pastels), Blank’s repetitively scrawled words in tiny handwriting look like desperate testimonies ripped from the pages of a personal journey. A person lived here once – works in ink on paper seem to communicate from behind their glass encasements – and she had a story to tell.

Born in the northern German town of Celle in 1934, Blank immigrated to Italy as a young woman. She first moved to Sicily before relocating to Milan, where she still lives and works today. The transition to a new country and the immersion in a new culture had stripped Blank of her mother tongue, triggering the first iteration of numerous projects through which she attempted to compose a new mental and creative dictionary. Thus, she invented *Eigenschriften*, a series of drawings that emulate writing and appear like calligraphy, but without words. The name of this group of works, which translates literally into “self-writings,” is somewhat emblematic of all the projects that succeeded them. Part asemic poetry and part conceptual drawing, they all appear like carefully carried out exercises in self-documentation.

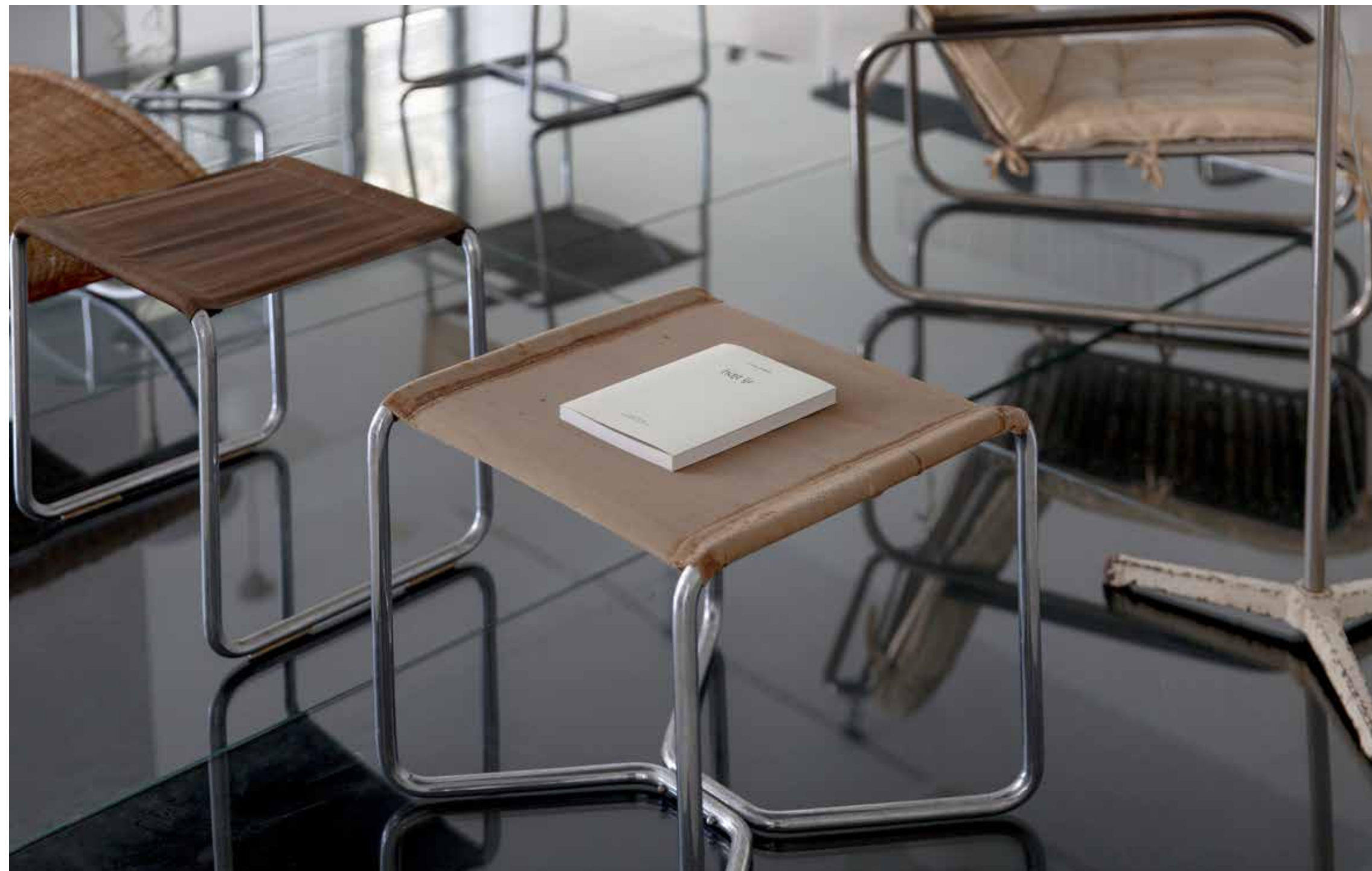
But it would be unjust to describe Blank’s output as having been triggered by the silence that immigration imposed on her, or as stemming solely from a self-focused narrative. Blank yearns to find freedom in language by undoing its stern grammatical-logical structure, and she wants to give others the liberation she finds in the process. This motivation is apparent in Blank’s decision to publish multiple-edition books, such as *Hdjt Ljr*, which makes use of an eight-consonant alphabet she invented. Circulated as part of a broader series of works called *Global Writings*, the dismembered book hangs from the ceiling of the CCA, its pages flapping like the leaves of a tree. The installation is a tribute to a similar gesture

Blank carried out at a bookstore in Prato, Italy, in 2000. Craning one’s head to watch the unbound volume at the Center’s ground floor, one is confronted with the notion that the attempt to communicate through written language is futile. Whether we read it from left to right, or upside down as Blank’s manner of presentation dictates, is suddenly rendered meaningless. The unintelligible, miniature sentences scribbled by Blank on small, framed prints actually make the viewer confront a sensation that she is probably all too familiar with: that of utter semantic disorientation.

The most emotionally compelling works in the show are from the series “Gehen, Second Life,” three of which are on view at the Bauhaus Foundation. Created with her left hand after her right side was temporarily paralyzed due to a health impediment, these works are comprised of straight lines in felt pens that shoot across the tracing paper like graphs indicating the pace of a heartbeat. Through them Blank seems to suggest that when the physical self has faltered, language, albeit fragmented and reduced, can still provide solace.

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Irma Blank, *Hdjt Ljr*, 2000. Mixed media. Variable dimensions. Installation view at CCA – Center for Contemporary Art Tel Aviv. Courtesy of the artist and P420, Bologna. © Irma Blank.



Irma Blank, *Hdjt Ljr*, 2001. Artist book published by Libri d’artista – centro studi e documentazione, Turin. 144 bound pages. 15 × 21 cm. Installation view at the Bauhaus Foundation, Tel Aviv. Courtesy of the artist and P420, Bologna. © Irma Blank.