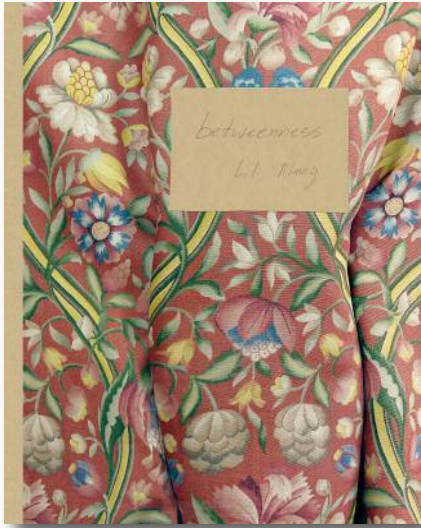


NEW RELEASE 2023



Lili Almog Betweenness

Text by Jean Dykstra, Vered Tohar

Designed by Lili Almog and Kehrer Design (Hannah Feldmeier)

Hardcover

22,1 x 27,9 cm

144 pages

102 color illustrations

English

ISBN 978-3-96900-058-8

Euro 48,00 / US\$ 56.00

Betweenness is a sketchbook of visual narratives exploring the veiling as an expression, the presentation of women and their depiction within mythology and religion intertwined with the global confusion of our era.

Betweenness, the fourth and most recent publication by Lili Almog, took its inspiration from the veiling practices of an extremist Jewish religious sect. By shifting the setting of the veil from its expected placement in Islamic traditions, Lili Almog's artistic rendering of veiled women highlights the commonality and complexity of the female condition. Delivering an unprecedented portrayal of the symbol of head covering, she raises questions about freedom and faith and how those truths can coexist in modernity. Without imposing judgment, Almog's illustration invites the viewer to interrogate how self-presentation affects their position and power.

Israeli born photo and mixed media artist **Lili Almog** (b. 1961, Tel Aviv) is renowned for her intimate spiritual portraits of women's cultural identities around the world.

Almog moved to New York in the mid 80's and began her career as a photojournalist for several international news publications centering primarily on fashion and portraiture. Her artistic focus is on revealing representations of the feminine body and psyche to portray the state of spiritual and cultural identity among women influenced by western culture.

She has been exhibited widely, with solo shows at international venues including the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; the Photographers' Place, UK; the Alternative Museum, New York; the Griffin Museum of Photography, Boston; the Museet for Fotokunst, Denmark; the Ffotogallery, UK; and the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Israel. Her photographs are included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; the Harvard Art Museums, MA; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel; Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI; the Musee de la Photographie in Belgium, and numerous private collections, among others.

Lili Almog's published monographs include *Bed Sequence* (2002); *Perfect Intimacy* (2006); *The Other Half of the Sky* (2009) and *Between Presence and Absence*, New York (2015).

Jean Dykstra is a photography critic and the editor of photograph magazine. She has contributed to *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Art in America*, and *Broadcast*, *Pioneer Works'* online magazine, among other publications.

Dykstra has written essays for numerous books, exhibition catalogues, and monographs, including *Vera Lutter: Fragments of Time Past*, *Running Falling Flying Floating Crawling* (Saint Lucy Books), *Jessica Backhaus: A Trilogy* (Kehrer Verlag), and *Albert Watson: Kaos* (Taschen).

Vered Tohar is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of the Literature of the Jewish People at Bar-Ilan University. Her research focuses on Jewish traditional narratives from a diachronic and comparative perspective.

She is the author of *Abraham in the Furnace: A Rebel in a Pagan World* (2010); *The Book of Tales, Sermons and Legends: An Anthology of Hebrew Stories from the Print Era* (2016). She is a co-editor of *Tell me about it: Aspects in narrative analysis* (2010); *Religious Stories in Transformation: Conflict, Revision and Reception* (2016), *Jerusalem and Other Holy Places as Foci as Multireligious and Ideological Confrontation* (2020). Tohar had published more than 40 articles in Israeli and international academic journals. She also writes poetry and short stories.

Women's Day / Women's History Month 2023

In the US, this book is published coinciding with International Women's Day on March 8th and National Women's History Month March 2023.

From the text *The Space Within: Lili Almog's Covered Women* by **Jean Dykstra:**

A sense of urgency radiates from Lili Almog's photographs, staged images of covered women that circle around female subjectivity and female bodies at a time when women's autonomy, globally, feels increasingly under threat. Then again, when has it ever been otherwise? When have women's bodies not been contested sites? Almog has assembled photographs, drawings, collages, still lifes of studio interiors, and reproductions of art-historical works to ponder the question, inscribed in her own handwriting in these pages: "Is modesty a prerequisite to faith?" Put another way: "Why does faith require women to cover their head, their body, their soul?" Almog leads with curiosity, not with judgment, responding with photographs that are thoughtful and a little provocative. Reflecting on her own reaction to seeing a woman who's covered, Almog has called it "a disturbance to the frame" that elicits a flicker of curiosity about who the woman is and why she's covered. Lest we assume we know, her layered images are intentionally open-ended.

An anonymous woman Almog spotted in Jerusalem some years ago was the inspiration for this body of work, this line of visual inquiry. She noticed a woman in the Jewish quarter of the city who was covered, head to toe, in black. Initially, she thought that the woman, being covered, must be Muslim, but in fact she was a member of an ultra-Orthodox sect of Hasidic Judaism. Almog began to reflect on her own assumptions about women who cover themselves, and why.

(...)

Almog here alludes to a countervailing view of women, one which demands that they bare their bodies for a male gaze. Her photographs and collages engage in conversation with these male artists, whose paintings submit the female body to scrutiny. Echoing the precise lighting and formal poses of a Titian or Goya, her images are at once homages to those classic artworks and a sly challenge. The hand of her covered model echoes the hand of Titian's nude Venus of Urbino. The model's bare legs seem to complete the nude torso of Manet's Olympia. There are threads that connect these women across centuries and cultures having to do with their status as objects without agency, symbols rather than individuals. In a period when masks and face coverings have taken on an entirely new meaning, Almog's portraits are acts of appreciation for the diversity of women's sense of themselves and their place in society, and of their own spirituality and autonomy.

Please note:

These photographs have been copyright cleared for worldwide print and electronic reproduction in the context of reviews of the books only. Print media: No more than THREE photographs plus the cover image from the selection can be used in total – they are not to be used on the cover or cropped. Online media may use a total of TWELVE images in a gallery.

From the text *Lili Almog's Language of the Gaze* by **Vered Tohar:**

What is the meaning of covering and revealing a woman's body? Which body parts does a culture worry about covering? How does covering affect those who look at the covered body? What role do imagination and reality play in the practices of covering and revealing?

In his essay, "The Look," the French philosopher Jean-Claude Sartre (1905–1980) discusses the relationship between the observer and the observed object. Sartre's essay follows the argument of Czech-German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) on the relationship between the self and the other, in his essay, "Philosophy as a Strict Science." Husserl argues that the subject's gaze negates the other who is in front of him, denies him his identity and thus makes him an object. Sartre argues the opposite, that it is the observer who becomes an object by virtue of his own gaze. The act of looking negates the self. Thus, at the heart of the drama of the gaze is the other, the person being observed.

The images of women created by photographer and artist Lili Almog lie precisely along this seam, between observer and observed, between object and subject, between self and other, between what is and what is not. These photographed images depict the barriers that exist between the female body and the world. These barriers are sometimes a product of choice and sometimes a product of compulsion. In either case, these barriers change the landscape, affect it, and evoke a wide range of emotions in the viewer. The covered body is simultaneously an aesthetic accessory, a prison or obstacle, and a statement to the world.

(...)

Today, the Western world is increasingly exposed to covered women, especially migrants from Western Asia and North Africa to Europe and the United States. Covered women are increasingly seen in public spaces, often attracting attention, curiosity, and sometimes anger. A covered woman protects her privacy in the public sphere, but she is also highly prominent in this space, to the point of expropriating her privacy. The covering is designed to protect her from being seen, but it actually exposes her to people's gaze. A contemporary woman who is fully covered must deal with this contradictory situation in the public sphere.

(...)

On the other side of this crossroads stands the surprising shift in the year 2020, when the global Coronavirus pandemic created a new kind of covering — facial coverings that are a medical necessity, not a religious, cultural, or ethnic obligation.

For further details, press images, permissions and review copies, please contact the publisher's press office:

Barbara Karpf, barbara.karpf@kehrerverlag.com or pr.assistance@kehrerverlag.com
 Kehrer Verlag, Mannheimer Str. 175, 69123 Heidelberg, Germany
 Phone+49 (0)6221/649 20-18 | Fax +49 (0)6221/64920-20
www.kehrerverlag.com

Press images



01_Jewish Girl (detail)
© Lili Almog



02_Drawing Room # 7
© Lili Almog



03_Seasons # 9
© Lili Almog



04_Mother with Her Children # 1
© Lili Almog



05_Mother and Child
(with drawing by Lili Almog on opposite page)
© Lili Almog



06_Drawing Room # 33
© Lili Almog



07_Seasons # 24
© Lili Almog



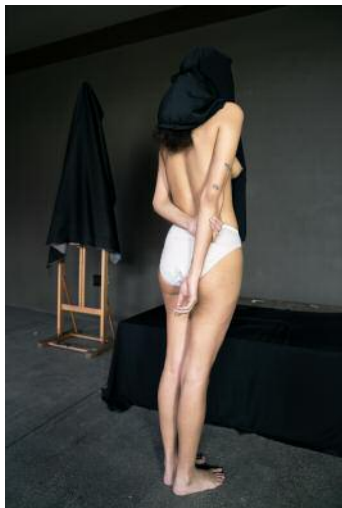
08_Composite # 8
© Lili Almog



09_Composite # 18
© Lili Almog



10_Composite # 14
(with drawing by Lili Almog on opposite page)
© Lili Almog



11_Drawing Room # 42
© Lili Almog



12_Drawing Room # 4
© Lili Almog