



# TROPHIES

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YORAM WOLBERGER

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I am drawn to familiar objects: symbols of security and intimacy, known to us from ordinary domesticity. In my work, I am investigating the interaction between physical, mental, and social spaces.

In previous projects, objects such as furniture and toys were deconstructed and then reconstructed. Their interior was exposed, their functionality was questioned, and their intimacy was violated. Later, I digitally enlarged familiar dime-store figurines such as toy soldiers, Cowboys and Indians and plastic bride-and-groom that tops wedding cakes back to life size.

In this project I am again, interested in exposing that which we choose not to—or don't want to—see: The deformities, irregularities, and mass-production markings embedded in familiar objects. By enlarging miniatures to life-size, emphasizing their irregularities and odd proportions, I hope viewers will see the 'familiar' in a different light. Aspiring to uncover hidden, and sometimes uncanny, meanings within these icons, symbols, and stereotypes.

*Yoram Wolberger, 2009*





## SIMPLICITY MAKES WOLBERGER'S PIECE VERY INTRIGUING / MARC CHOQUETTE

"One may suddenly feel that they have been shrunk into the world of the film "Toy Story" upon first seeing San Franciscan Yoram Wolberger's piece entitled "Toy Soldier #3 (Crawling Soldier)."

This ability of a work to alter one's perception of reality was something Frederick Weisman saw as paramount to determining a piece of art's value. Wolberger certainly achieves this with this 2004 work, which is on display at the Weisman Museums latest contemporary art exhibit: "Made in California."

Wolberger has gained notoriety for his life-sized fiberglass sculptures of plastic toy figurines we remember as children. But it is not just the physical perspective that gets altered when you are staring face-to-face with the same GI Joe that you remember playing years ago.

What is most intriguing about observing this simple, fiberglass figure is the mental image one gets when seeing these figurines in life-sized proportions. All of the sudden, the gun he holds seems more real. The cowboy and Indian figures also done by Wolberger (but not on display at the Weisman) are no longer just toys on the living room carpet battlefield. They suddenly portray a real-life conflict that was a dark part of our history, one that was far from what many would consider "fun and games."

Wolberger has always been fascinated in giving a new lease on life to mundane and familiar objects, removing the numbness that we eventually. In molding these life-sized plastic toys, he has created a new perspective through which to view our childhood. Suddenly, we begin to see through the green resin coating how we can be indoctrinated at a young age to view the world in a certain way, where life is seen in black and white terms and you are either on our side or their side.

With so many children idolizing the perfect, obedient American soldier in GI Joe, the life-sized version of the same character emits a reaction decidedly different than one would have seeing a bunch of these miniature toy soldiers sprawled out on the floor. It indicates image manipulation at its finest.

Wolberger's work calls into question the whole idea of how figures such as these, in positions to kill with guns drawn, send a message to America's youth that violence is, in fact, the answer. His other figures provide the basis for which Indians are vilified in American society and cowboys are seen as heroes.

Despite the plasticity and sharp lines that circumvent the figure (showing the evidence plastic mold used to form them), the lack of detail in the figure is much more noticeable at its inflated size. It is intriguing to note that all of these toy soldiers are faceless, as if to disconnect their humanity from the task at hand.

The powerful message by Wolberger through simple, offbeat means is what makes this latest batch of contemporary art so intriguing. While the message maybe simple and clear, his desire to call into question parts of life that many overlook and take for granted is what makes "Toy Soldier #3" and other works at the Weisman's latest exhibit worth the trip."

*(Marc Choquette , Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA, Nov. 26, 2007)*

















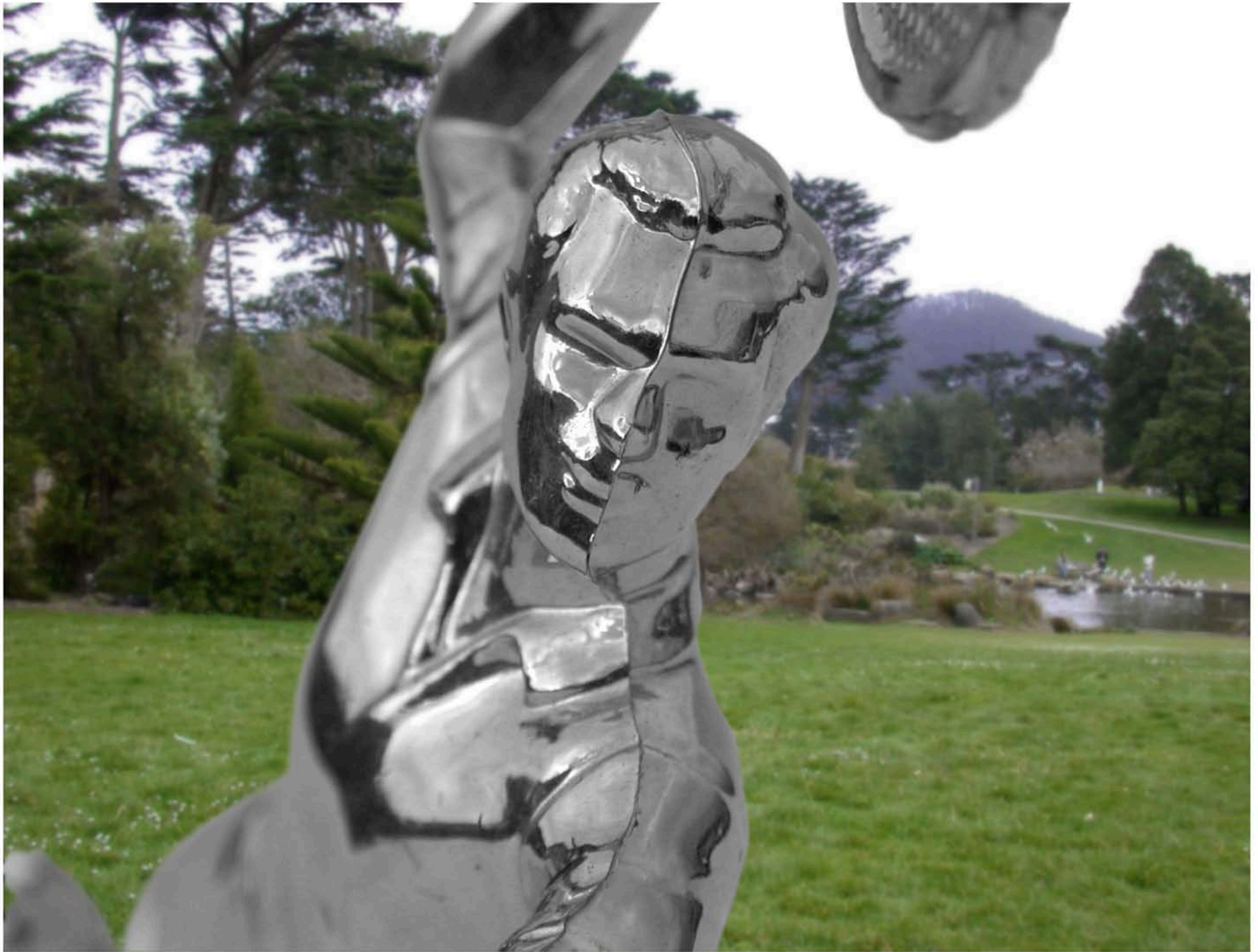


*Male Football #1 ; 3-D Digital Scanning, Digital Enlargement, Bronze, Chrome; Aprox. 90 in x 70 in x 24 in*







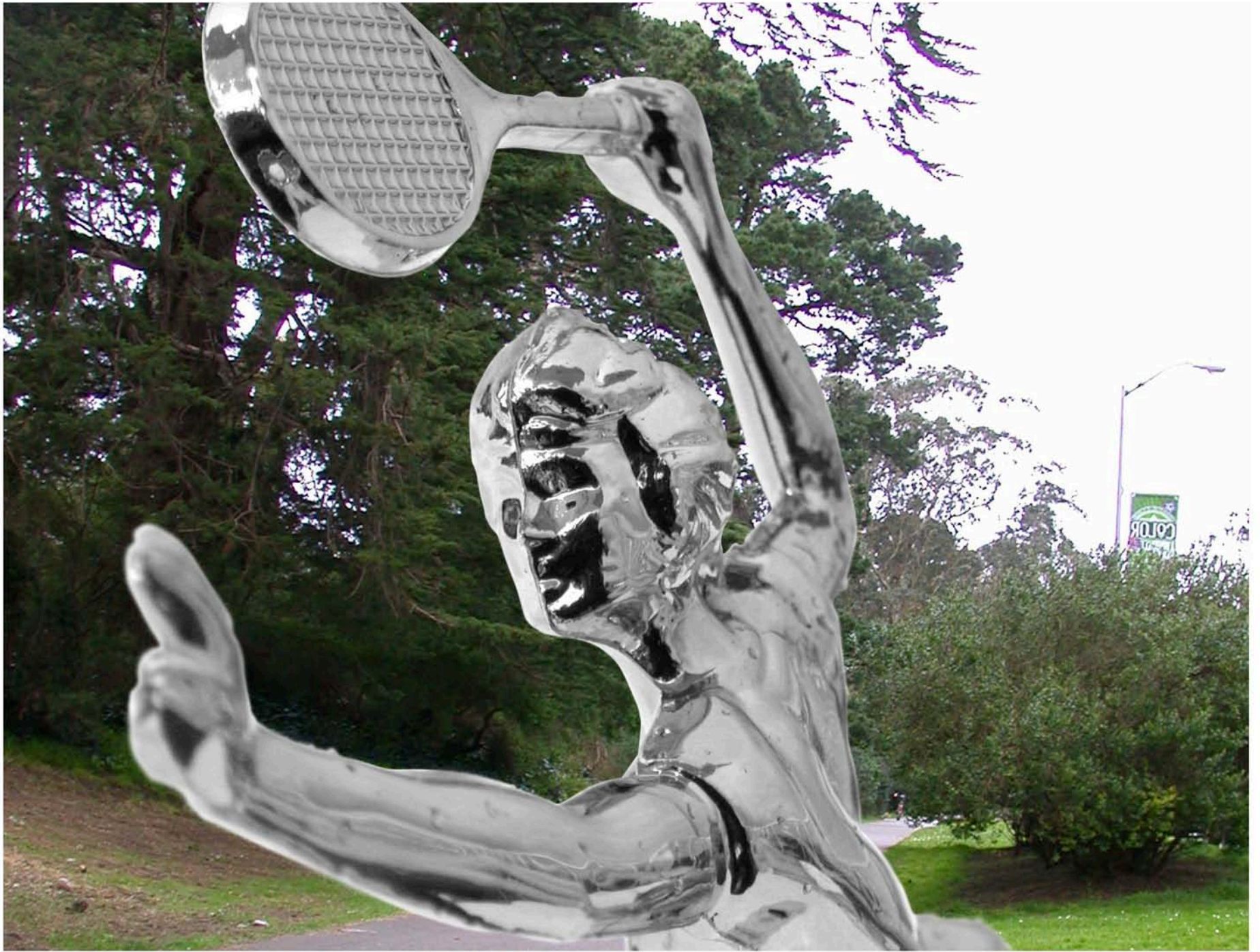






*Male Tennis #1*; 3-D Digital Scanning, Digital Enlargement, Bronze, Chrome; Aprox. 96 in x 60 in x 11 in









*Female Tennis #1; 3-D Digital Scanning, Digital Enlargement, Bronze, Chrome; Aprox. 96 in x 60 in x 11 in*





*Female Runner #1; 3-D Digital Scanning, Digital Enlargement, Bronze, Chrome; Aprox. 96 in x 60 in x 20 in*









*Male Achievement Award #1 ; 3-D Digital Scanning, Digital Enlargement, Bronze, Chrome; 100 in x 72 in x 11 in*

## BIOGRAPHY

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### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 Benrison Contemporary, New York, NY
- 2006 *A Survey of work from 1998 - 2005*, Center for Contemporary Art, Sacramento, CA
- 2004 Mark Moore Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 2002 *Parting Lines*, New Langton Arts, San Francisco, CA
- 2001 *Introductions 2001*, Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco, CA

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *New Art for a New Century: Contemporary Acquisitions 2000-2010*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA
- Child's Play*, Institute of Art, Design and Interactive Media CCBC, Baltimore, MD
- 2009 *American Identities*, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY
- DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA
- Syzygy*, The Lab, San Francisco, CA
- NY Pulse*, with Mark Moore Gallery, New York, NY
- 2008 *Group Exhibition*, Scott White Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA
- From the Permanent Collection*, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY
- 2007 *California Art: Selection from the Fredrick R. Weisman Art Foundation*, American Jewish University, Bel Air, CA
- Made in California: Contemporary California Art from the Fredric R. Weisman Foundation*, Fredric R. Weisman Museum of Art, Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA
- Model Behavior*, organisms, Portland, OR
- 2006 *No Reservations*, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT
- Through the Rabbit Hole*, 21C Museum, Louisville, Kentucky
- See Jane Run*, The Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, CA
- 2005 *Summer Pleasure*, Mark Moore Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- Social Insecurity: The Future Ain't What It Used to Be*, Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2004 *Overt/Covert*, Aidekman Arts Center, Tufts University Gallery, Medford, MA
- Domestic Odyssey*, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA



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- The Armory Show* with Henry Urbach Architecture, New York, NY  
*Hard Candy*, the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), San Jose, CA  
*Just One Word: Plastics*, Square Blue Gallery, Costa Mesa, CA  
 2003 *Art on Site 2: officespace*, Tel Aviv, Israel  
*Sprout*, Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*realUNREAL*, Sheppard Fine Arts Gallery, University of Reno, NV  
*War (What Is It Good For?)*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL  
*A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, Sun Valley Center for the Arts, Sun Valley, ID  
 2002 *2002 California Biennial*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA  
*Portrait Obscured*, the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), San Jose, CA  
*Pro Arts' Juried Annual 2001-2002*, Pro Arts Gallery, Oakland, CA  
 2001 *Present/Tense*, University Art Gallery, Sonoma State University, Sonoma, CA  
*Introductions South 2001*, the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), San Jose, CA  
*By Appointment*, Refusalon, San Francisco, CA  
 Jernigan Wicker Fine Arts Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*About Body and Space*, Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*Installation, Annual Mystery Ball*, Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA  
 2000 *OpenHouse; Art on Site 1*, San Francisco, CA  
*Bay Area Student Sculpture Biennial*, San Francisco, CA  
*Limited Situations*, curated by "Los Carpenteros" and Toni Labat, San Francisco, CA  
 1993 *The Week of the Young Artist*, The Schrieber Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel  
 1992 Gallery 13, Jaffa, Israel  
*The Week of the Young Artist*, The Israeli Museum of Modern Art, Ramat Gan, Israel  
 1991 Tel Aviv Museum of Modern Art, Tel Aviv, Israel

#### EDUCATION

- 2001 MFA, New Genres Department, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA  
 1992 BA in Design, Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem, Israel



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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Choquette, Marc, "Simplicity Makes Wolberger's Piece Very Intriguing", Pepperdine University The Graphic, November 26, 2007
- Genocchio, Ben, "Visions of Native Americans in Today's World", The New York Times, December 3, 2006
- Cowan, Alison L., "A Pile of Blankets, With Personal History Woven Into the Fabric", The New York Times, August 25, 2006
- Dalkey, Victoria, "Out of the ordinary", The Sacramento Bee, April 2, 2006
- Joanne Silver, "'Overt' forces look at aggression", Boston Herald, October 22, 2004
- Sapina-Kerkhove, Mari, "Domestic Pains And Gains On Display", Spartan Daily, April 19, 2004
- Sullivan, James, "A Love Affair with Appliances Only Keeps Us in the Kitchen", San Francisco Chronicle, March 25, 2004
- Gant, Michael S., "House Unbound", Silicon Valley Metro, March 17-24, 2004
- Hayes, Holly, "Domesticity goes for a spin" San Jose Mercury News, Mar. 13, 2004
- Gordon, A.L., "Out and About", The New York Sun, March 15, 2004
- Hayes, Holly, "What's in the fridge? Art", San Jose Mercury News, Mar. 05, 2004
- Fischer, Jack, "Twisted Visions of Youth", San Jose Mercury News, February 1, 2004
- Baker, Kenneth, "California Artists Take the Traditional Still-Life in Wild New Directions," San Francisco Chronicle, January 31, 2004
- Woods, Casey, "Alternative to Exhibit Space", Miami Herald (Neighbors), December 7, 2003
- McCarthy, David, "Fantasy and Force: A Brief Consideration of Artists and War in the American Century", Art Journal, December 2003
- Shafi, Smadar, "Executives Games", Haaretz, May 27, 2003
- Director, Ruth, "Velvet Underground", Ha-ir, May 15, 2003
- Kantor, Sharon, "Another Day at The Office", Ha-ir, May 15, 2003
- Gilerman, Dana, "New Life to a Deserted Office", Haaretz, May 8, 2003
- Hiegelke, Brian, "When Hawks Cry" NewCityChicago Online Magazine, March 26, 2003
- Hawkins, Margaret, "WAR, Exhibit Cry Out for Peace," Chicago Sun-Times, January 24, 2003
- Tanous, Adam, "Center Exhibit Examines the Concepts of Home," Express, December 18, 2002
- Frank, Peter, "2002 California Biennial," LA Weekly, August 30-September 5, 2002
- Chang, Young, "Strange Beauty," Daily Pilot, May 25, 2002
- Pincus, Robert L., "Ordinary Strangeness," The San Diego Union -Tribune, June 20, 2002
- Walsh, Daniella, "Exhibition Two Years Young," The Orange County Register, June 2, 2002
- Mendenhall, Lauri, "A Multi-layered Debut," Coast, June 2002



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Goldner, Liz, "Provocative Summer Shows, from Warhol to Edge of the World, Post-pop, Multimedia Extremism," OC Metro, 2002  
Walsh, Danielle, "Avant Art," Riviera Magazine, May-June 2002  
Fisher, Jack, "About Face," The Mercury News, March 28, 2002  
Baker, Kenneth, "Yoram Wolberger," San Francisco Chronicle, January 12, 2002  
Baker, Kenneth, "Toying with the Human Form," San Francisco Chronicle, July 28, 2001  
Betsky, Aaron, "Tangerine Dream," Interiors, May 2001  
Novakov, Anna, "Open House: Art on Site 1," Vistaview Journal of Contemporary and New Media Art, March 25, 2001  
Baker, Kenneth, "Rooms with a View," The San Francisco Chronicle, June 10, 2000

#### CATALOGUES

2007 Klien, Richard, No Reservations, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT  
2004 Northrup, JoAnne, Domestic Odyssey, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA  
2002 Armstrong, Elizabeth and Hofman, Irene, 2002 California Biennial, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA

#### RELATED ACTIVITIES

2003 Co-curator of group show installation in a vacant office space: *Art on Site 2: officespace*, Tel Aviv, Israel  
2000 Co-curator of group show installation in a vacant Victorian house, *Art on Site 1: OpenHouse*, San Francisco, CA





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