

# Ha Aretz newspaper, Venice art Biennale 2017, Italy



## Avner Sher

Jerusalem, 950sqm

Palazzo Bembo, Riva del Carbon  
# 4793, 30124 Venezia, Italy



**Jerusalem, 950sqm**, is Avner Sher's interpretation of the tension reflected in the city's complex past, embodied in its spiritual and urban geography, and its present turmoil.

Over the past few years, Sher has been studying maps and including them in his artistic practice, with his main focus on maps of Jerusalem's Old City. Sher is especially attracted to a tiny area in the heart of the city, just 950 square meters packed with endless history, emotions, holiness, and sadly, bloodshed. This small area is clustered with holy sites sacred to the three major monotheistic religions, drawing millions of pilgrims from around the world. It is this area that has driven to many nations, religions, empires, tribes and kingdoms to fight against one another for thousands of years. So many peoples have returned over the years, to fight for control of this tiny compound, again and again: Jews, Egyptians, Romans, Christians, Muslims, Byzantines, Persians, Crusaders,

Turks, and others.

Avner Sher's installation is an attempt to merge the emotional and religious significance of this area with the devastation it has caused. The large scale works are made out of cork, bark of the cork tree peeled off the trunk once every nine years like a repeated trauma. Sher is creating an archaeology and history from the material by scratching and scouring its surface to recreate the maps he studied, embellished by the artist with tiny symbols and pictograms inspired by history, mythology, and even current politics.

Avner Sher's installation will be shown as part of the 'Personal Structures', exhibition - an initiative of the European Cultural Center, throughout the 57th edition of the biennial exhibition in Venice

May 13 until  
November 26, 2017  
10:00- 18:00  
(closed Tuesdays)

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