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קולנוע מסחרי
על השבוע
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זהר יצאה לדבר

5

נעמה ריבה

צילום: נועם לוינגר

לפני חמש שנים הטיל מור ואון הלובר על האמן ואן מישל אותוגיאל משימה מאתגרת במיוחד: לשוטט בין אנפי המוסר אדריי המדיום, ללקט דימויי פרחים מתוך 38 אלף היצירות שנמ' צאות בו ולבחור פרט אחד מייצג. האנן בחר בוויד אדום ורוד שמופיע בציור "נישואי מריה דה מדיצי לאנרי הרבי" עיי של המאסטר הפלמי פטר רובנס, לייצג את המחזיאון כפי ריו. הפירח אינו מופיע במיקום מרכזי בקומפוזיציה המקורית,

המשך בעמ' 2

חירית וינשטוק עברה ליפן כדי ללמוד לעומק טכניקה מסורתית של סידור פרחים. תערוכה חדשה במחזיאון ארץ ישראל, שבה היא מעניקה לצמחים חיי נצח באמצעות זהב ומתכת – מבטאת את ההתמודדות שלה עם כאב, אינטימיות ושאיפה ליופי

"פרחים הם חברינו הטובים. אנחנו לא מעיזים למות בלעדיהם"



Her Life in Flowers: Japan-based Israeli Artist Has an Unusual Way of Reflecting on Her Chronic Pain

In her first exhibition back home, Israeli artist and designer Mirit Weinstein combines delicate plants and nonperishable materials. In Japan, where she lives, people are surprised to hear she is a single mother

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Israeli artist Mirit Weinstein. "The works express personal moments in my life as they respond to nature." Credit: Ronan Leivinger



Naama Ribba

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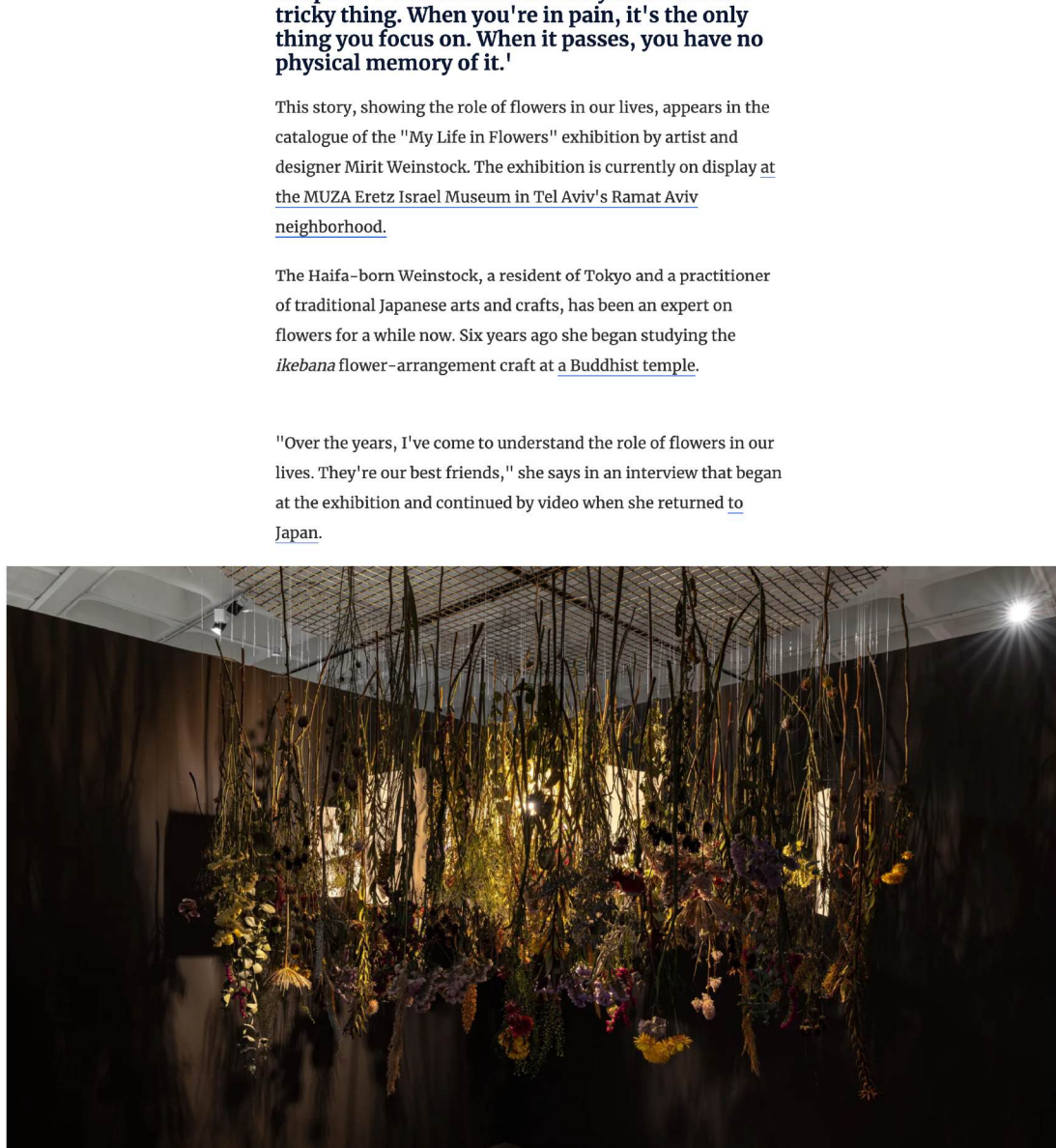
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Five years ago, the Louvre gave artist Jean Michel Othoniel a daunting task: Roam the halls in search of flower images among the institution's 38,000 works of art. Then select one flower to represent the museum.

The artist chose a red-pink rose from one of the paintings in the Marie de' Medici Cycle, the 24 paintings by Peter Paul Rubens commissioned by Marie de' Medici, widow of King Henry IV of France. The flower isn't prominent in this painting of a wedding; it's on the steps leading to the dais.

Following up on the Flemish master's early-17th-century piece, Othoniel created an installation of six ink-on-gold-leaf paintings commemorating the 30th anniversary of the construction of the Louvre's glass pyramid.

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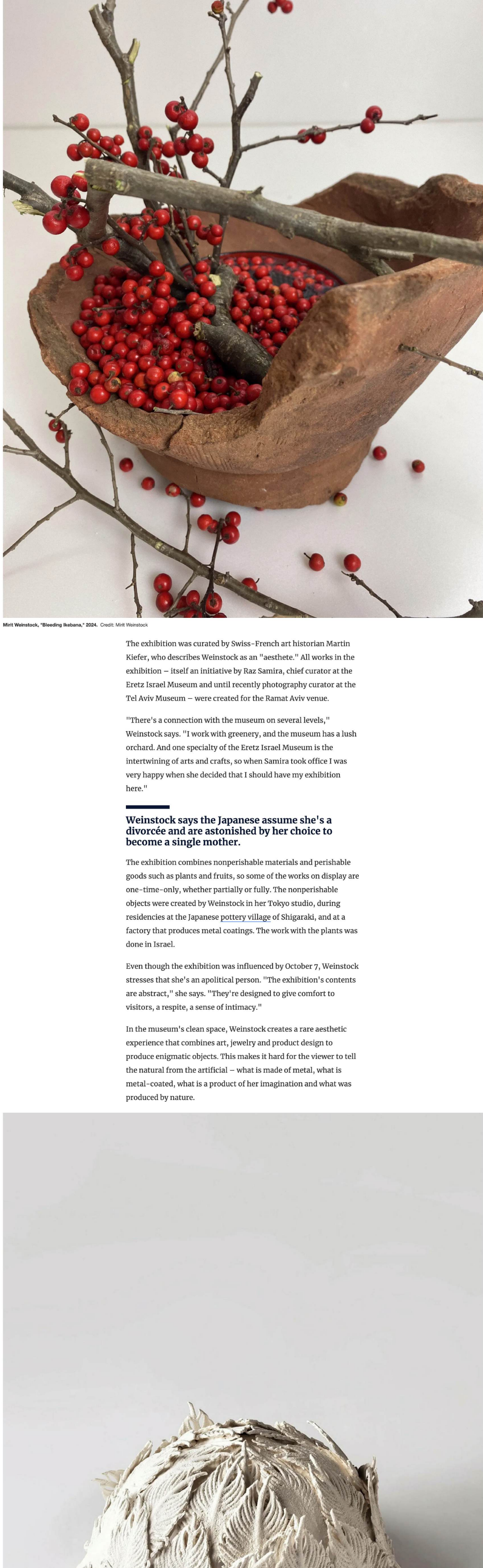
Mirit Weinstein, *Blow on a Blowing Wind / Out There*, 2024. Credit: Yotshiyuki Sano

"The exhibition delicately reveals my coping with the pains I've suffered over the years. Pain is a tricky thing. When you're in pain, it's the only thing you focus on. When it passes, you have no physical memory of it."

This story, showing the role of flowers in our lives, appears in the catalogue of the "My Life in Flowers" exhibition by artist and designer Mirit Weinstein. The exhibition is currently on display at the MUZA Eretz Israel Museum in Tel Aviv's Ramat Aviv neighborhood.

The Haifa-born Weinstein, a resident of Tokyo and a practitioner of traditional Japanese arts and crafts, has been an expert on flowers for a while now. Six years ago she began studying the *Ikebana* flower-arrangement craft at a Buddhist temple.

"Over the years, I've come to understand the role of flowers in our lives. They're our best friends," she says in an interview that began at the exhibition and continued by video when she returned to Japan.



Mirit Weinstein, *Untitled*, 2025. Credit: Daniel Haron

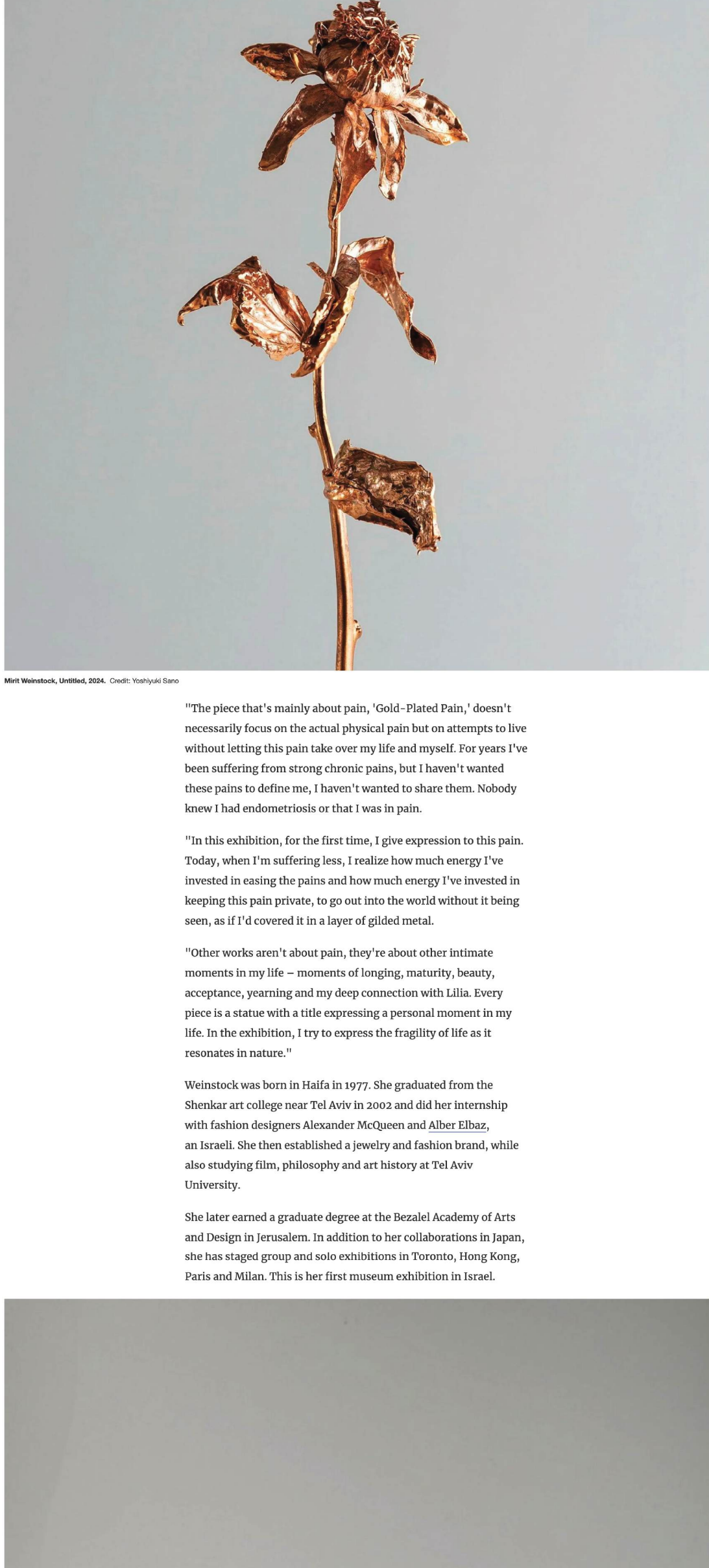
"Without flowers, our lives are poorer, and they keep us company in our happiest moments – at births, weddings and birthdays – and at our toughest moments, when we're mourning. We don't dare die without them.

"After October 7, something else clicked. I couldn't find words to express the pain, and I realized that there was another layer to flowers, when they allowed me to express emotions."

For years, Weinstein has been suffering from the pain associated with endometriosis, a chronic condition of the female reproductive system for which diagnosis and treatment fall notoriously short.

At that moment she found red-currant branches for sale, bought them and went back to the studio. Weinstein formed a flower arrangement by cutting and bending the branches in the best *Ikebana* tradition. She put the branches and berries in an ancient, broken ceramic jug she found at a flea market.

A few days later, her arrangement was placed on a white table at the Israeli Embassy in Tokyo, alongside the two countries' flags. The arrangement stood out from the huge array of wreaths and photos commemorating the October 7 massacre. Weinstein's work offered a minimalist, heartrending look.



Mirit Weinstein, *Bleeding Nature*, 2024. Credit: Mirit Weinstein

The exhibition was curated by Swiss-French art historian Martin Kiefer, who describes Weinstein as an "aesthete." All works in the exhibition – itself an initiative by Raz Samira, chief curator at the Eretz Israel Museum and until recently photography curator at the Tel Aviv Museum – were created for the Ramat Aviv venue.

"There's a connection with the museum on several levels," Weinstein says. "I work with greenery, and the museum has a lush orchard. And one specialty of the Eretz Israel Museum is the intertwining of arts and crafts, so when Samira took office I was very happy when she decided that I should have my exhibition here."

Weinstein says the Japanese assume she's a divorcee and are astonished by her choice to become a single mother.

The exhibition combines nonperishable materials and displayable goods such as plants and fruits, so some of the works on display are one-time-only, whether partially or fully. The nonperishable objects were created by Weinstein in her Tokyo studio, during residencies at the Japanese pottery village of Shigaraki, and at a factory that produces metal coatings. The work with the plants was done in Israel.

Even though the exhibition was influenced by October 7, Weinstein stresses that she's an apolitical person. "The exhibition's contents are abstract," she says. "They're designed to give comfort to visitors, a respite, a sense of intimacy."

In the museum's clean space, Weinstein creates a rare aesthetic experience that combines art, jewelry and product design to tell the natural from the artificial – what is made of metal, what is metal-coated, what is a product of her imagination and what was produced by nature.



Mirit Weinstein, *Gold-Plated Palm / Tokyo*, 2024. Credit: Yotshiyuki Sano

Weinstein arrived in Japan seven years ago to study traditional crafts. She discovered the *washi* paper craft that she studied at the Ozu Washi center, which was established in the 1600s. Her connection with the center secured her a visa awarded only to people seeking a deep knowledge of Japanese culture. In recent years, she has fully transferred her jewelry business to Japan.

Does your brand fit into the Japanese fashion world?

"My brand was established in 2010 and has enjoyed success in the international market with dozens of stores selling it all over the world and articles in magazines like *Vogue*. My brand has also successfully entered the Japanese market and is being sold here to this day. Every piece of jewelry is handmade, and Japanese women appreciate the precision and details.

"I create my jewelry from materials not commonly associated with the world of jewelry, like an origami heart or bow ties tied with raffia. In recent years I've been creating jewelry inspired by Japanese crafts such as origami paper-folding and *mizuhiki* knot-tying, a kind of string used in Japanese packaging and decorations. When customers recognize my jewelry's connection to the local culture, they're full of appreciation and enthusiasm."

Weinstein says the Japanese assume she's a divorcee and are astonished by her choice to become a single mother.

Because of the war, have you experienced any boycotts against Israel?

"The Japanese media leans toward the Palestinian side, but there are also a lot of efforts to show the Israeli side. In general, the Japanese have had a strong pacifist sentiment since World War II and are against any kind of violence.

"After October 7, there has been sympathy for Israel, and Japanese people were deeply shocked by Hamas' violence. But this was eventually replaced by opposition to and shock about Israel's violence in Gaza. On a personal level, most reactions I've encountered have tried to be empathic."

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