

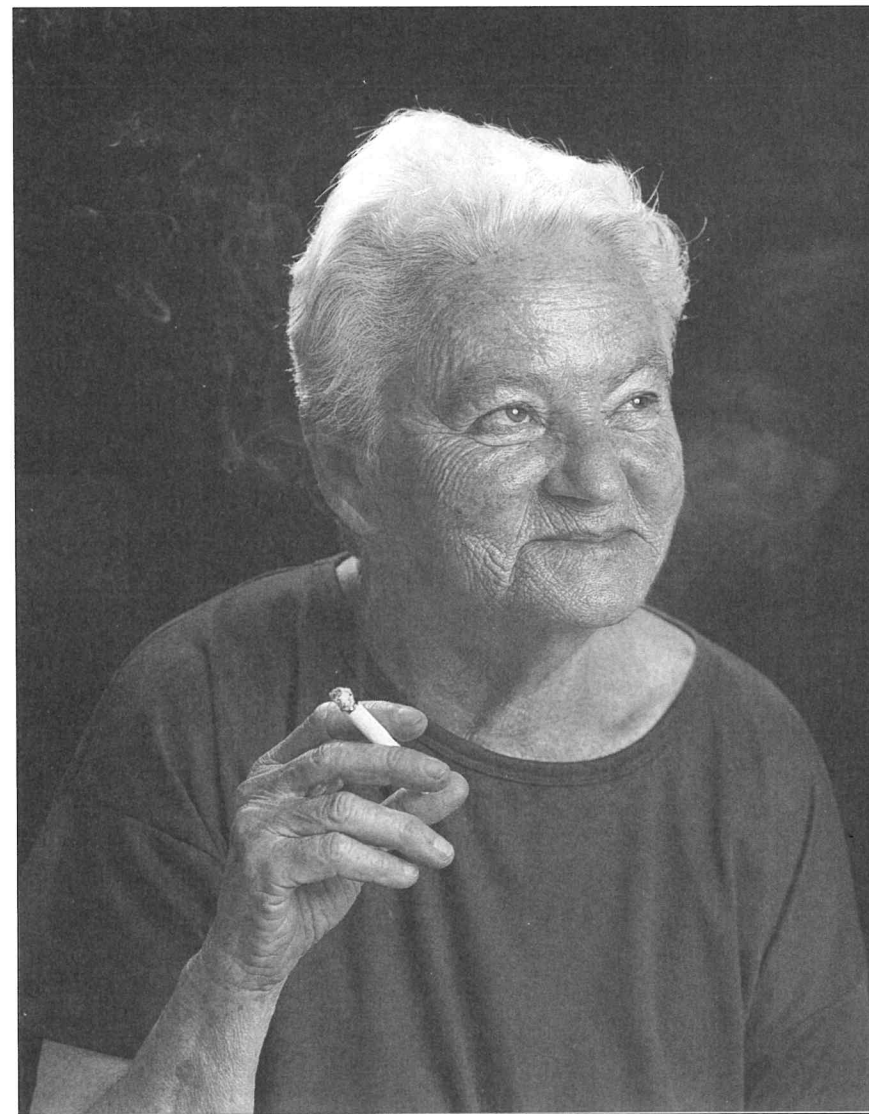
Faces and Facets

Shai Zakai

THE EXHIBITION “FACES AND FACETS: PORTRAITS OF ISRAELI WOMEN” DOCUMENTS WOMEN WHO ACT, WOMEN WHO VENTURE, WOMEN WHO CREATE. FROM THE GOAT SHEPHERDESS TO THE professor of English literature, I have looked for what I have coined to myself as the “magical point,” that little inner transformation that led them to break out and do different things, or at the least, to observe themselves in a different way. I chose women with a fascinating life story or an unusual lifestyle, an interesting occupation or career. By and large, I looked for women who are also mothers, having another whole world—or several worlds—existing side by side with that of the family...

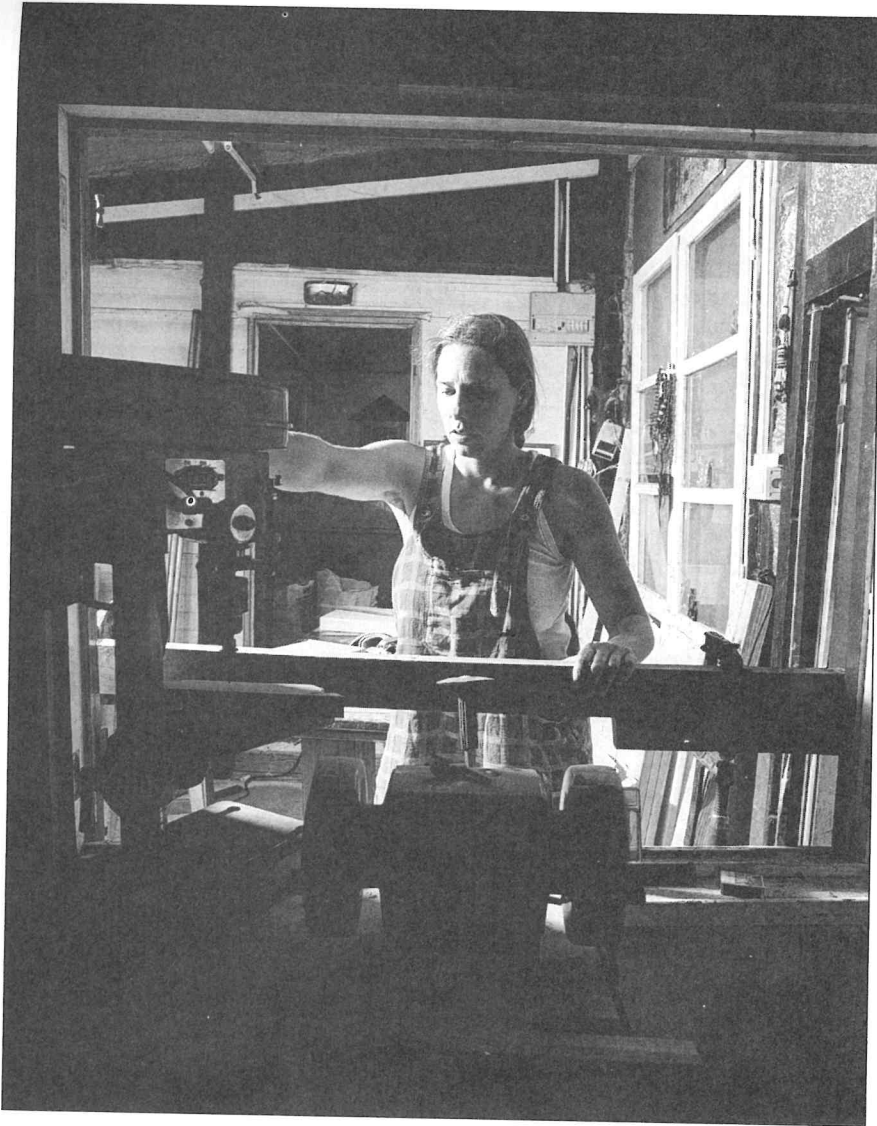
When I photograph, I usually search for the meeting point between fantasy and reality. This is perhaps the point where documentary work, which captures reality, converges with staged photography, primarily from the viewpoint of the picture’s creator. It is this perceived meeting point that engenders within me the illusion that I am reorganizing reality...For the most part, the photographs linger on the individual’s being—the body language, visage, countenance. By “countenance” I refer to that something that breaks through from the soul to the body, which sometimes can be captured on film with the aid of a camera.

Shai Zakai is an Israeli photographer who has spent several years photographing and interviewing Israeli women engaged in a variety of professions and lifestyles. Her exhibit, Faces and Facets (in Hebrew, Temunat Ishah), appeared at the B'nai B'rith Klutznick National Jewish Museum in Washington, D.C. All photographs © Shai Zakai.



Sorika Braverman Shpachner

...one of the paratroopers sent from the Yishuv to Europe in 1944, a founder of Kibbutz Shamir, and a founder of the Women’s Army in the Israeli Defense Forces.



Tal Bashan
...from Sataf, carpenter.



Rachel Bader
...from Nahalal, a member of the moshav, engaged in agriculture and poultry farming.



Olga Kirsh Giles

*...from Rehovot, emigrated from South Africa.
Her poetry deals with relations between blacks and whites.*



Nazime Avraham

...from Kiryat Shmuel, emigrated from Baghdad, mother of ten children.



Aisha Nagar

*...one of the founders of the first bilingual Jewish-Arab kindergarten in Israel,
and an original settler of Neve Shalom-Wachat Al'Salaam.*



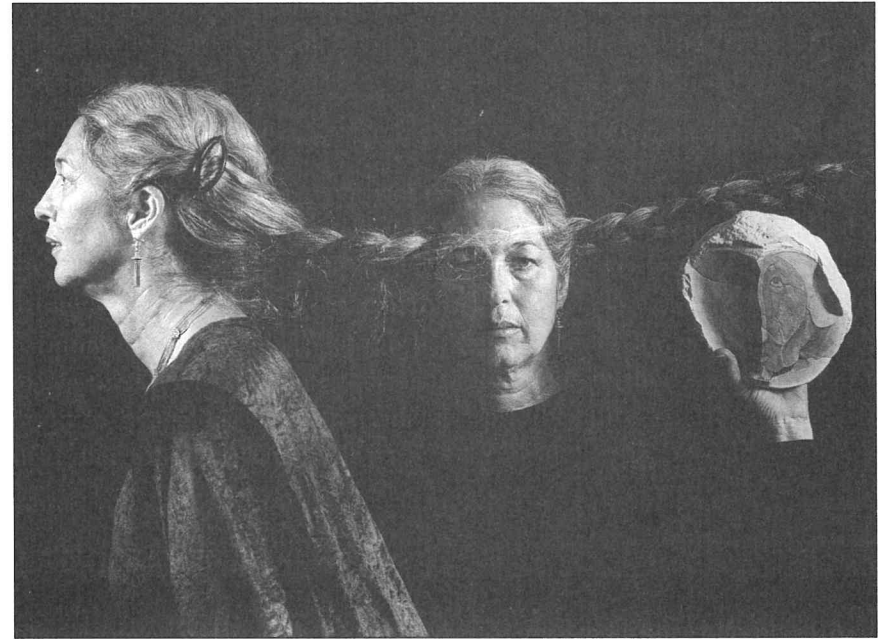
Yada'a Bat Yisrael

...from Dimona, spokesperson for the Community of Black Hebrews.



Phoebe Azran

...from Kiryat Shemonah, works for the local burial society, takes in homeless and new immigrants, serves as a marriage counselor, and is the mother of the city's mayor.



Haya Yaniv

...nurse and painter.