

A Drop of the Sky, 2025

Esther Cohen

Curator: Raz Samira

Two-channel video installation, loop

Animation: Noam Debel

Esther Cohen's new video work **A Drop of the Sky** is based on drawing, and was especially created for the Glassblower's Room. The work features branches bearing white lilies, which are projected against the gate like fragile pillars of light, shining bright in shades of white and yellow as they ignite and rise up like white smoke to the dome of the gallery. In this manner, they touch upon the material elements of the glassblower's craft: fire, air and stone (sand).

The white lily is a symbolically charged motif associated with sacredness and purity. In Jewish culture, this motif served to ornament the copper pillars in the Temple in Jerusalem. In Christianity, the white lily is an attribute associated with the Virgin Mary

The delicate flower appears to be hovering in midair, without roots or a connection to the earth. It is incomplete and evanescent, yet still present – much like the mythological phoenix. The flower's pistils are set on fire and are transformed into smoke that rises upwards, towards the gallery's soot-covered dome. The dome resembles an architectural element known as an oculus (Latin for eye) – a rounded aperture at the top of a dome that is characteristic of ancient buildings, and which was designed in order to illuminate the interior while also exposing it to natural elements, rain and wind. Over the past decade, the term "oculus" has also been used to refer to VR glasses.

As the video unfolds, a New Israeli Shekel coin is tossed into the air. The coin, imprinted with the image of a lily, shoots through space, revealing its two sides, and falls into water. At the same time, water is projected onto the gallery ceiling, reflecting the sky. A radiant sky merges with a drop of water, forming a contrast between the water of the terrestrial sphere and that of the heavenly sphere.

In this work, Cohen pursues her interest in the connection between humans and nature, as well as in ancient traditions and rituals, while relating them to contemporary reality and to the yearning for light and compassion.