

reviews: new york

Sharon Lockhart/ Noa Eshkol

Jewish Museum

Sharon Lockhart has built her career on close, anthropological studies of ostensibly unremarkable subjects. Her meticulously focused photographs and films feature workmen on lunch break, children with sports equipment, musicians tuning instruments—functioning at once as documents and as living portraits that bring to life the quotidian moments they record. Her latest body of work, which debuted at the Israel Museum and then traveled to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art before arriving in New York, engaged and revived the legacy of the late Israeli choreographer, theorist, and artist Noa Eshkol, posthumously casting her as the work's coauthor as well as its subject.

Supported by a host of supplementary materials including Eshkol's drawings, notebooks, and textiles, known as "wall carpets," Lockhart's multichannel film installation *Five Dances and Nine Wall Carpets by Noa Eshkol* (2011) anchored the show. Projected onto five freestanding boxes arranged throughout a darkened gallery, several seemingly life-size figures performed the choreographer's dances to the mechanical ticking of a metronome. Eshkol is best known for a system she created in the 1950s with architect Avraham Wachman, the Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation, which breaks down the body into a series of spatial relationships that can be charted through symbols and numbers. Lockhart drew the

tightly synched, modestly scaled movements in her film from Eshkol's "scores," and staged the dances in spare, gray rooms amid a selection of wall carpets mounted on vertical stands, like a silent audience. Reviving archival material, the work translated Eshkol's history into a new, active present.

In an upstairs gallery, Lockhart displayed three of the textiles on horizontal plinths, as though they were Minimalist sculptures. Stitched together by Eshkol's friends, according to her designs, from pieces of common material—army blankets, umbrellas, linens—they weave happenstance and artistic intention into eclectic, timeless composites, culled from the most basic, universal stuff of human life. —*Emily Nathan*



Sharon Lockhart, *Five Dances and Nine Wall Carpets by Noa Eshkol*, 2011, production still, dimensions variable. Jewish Museum.