

**(translation from German)**

**Well Framed - But Nowhere at Home**



**Dwora Fried artistically reduces her experiences into the smallest of spaces.**  
By Marta S. Halpert

She lives in the big wide world, and still her small inner world doesn't let go. As an artist, Dwora Fried is trying to catch, hold on to and visualize much of her personal life by framing and boxing it. The result of this artistic endeavor has been successfully presented for years in her photographs, collages and especially her boxes.

In the Jewish Museum of Venice (Museo Ebraico di Venezia) you can see the works of this native Viennese in an exhibit entitled "Outsider In A Box," from the beginning of June to the middle of September, 2013. Fried is showing a glimpse into a tumultuous life in a most narrow space: the boxes are 31 cm wide, 21 cm high and 8 cm deep. Even so, a piano, a dancing girl, a doll and the head of a child in a hanging cage, find plenty of room.

“I use old photographs, toys from the 40’s and 50’s. They are all symbolic objects and colors that reflect my life as a Jew, Austrian and Lesbian,” says Dwora Fried during her most recent visit to Vienna. She lives in Los Angeles and came to the city of her birth for her mother’s funeral. “Even after the Shiva’ I stayed a little longer in her apartment, because I feel artistically enriched by the familiar surroundings.”

But what lead to this art in small format?



“Repressed anxieties, isolation and claustrophobia are best expressed in such a small space,” muses Fried, who still feels provoked by the word ‘homeland’, “because I really don’t feel at home anywhere. In the meantime, I have been living in Los Angeles for over 30 years. Surprisingly, my Austrian past penetrates almost every one of my works.”

Already, at 18 years old, Dwora Fried knew that she would like to do something artistic, but after graduating from the Lycee Francais de Vienne, she studied Philosophy and French Literature at Tel Aviv University. But she soon changed to the reknowned Avni School of Fine Arts, where she first focused on landscape photography. Under the influence of her famous professor, Absalom Okshi, Fried began with her work of photo collages. “I was looking for my own way of expression and felt that I wanted to create spaces or rooms.” Of all places, she

found the boxes with glass fronts, where she could display her collected objects, at IKEA.



### **The life partner.**

The big turning point in Fried's private and artistic life came when she moved with her Israeli architect husband to Los Angeles. "We visited the couple he was working for in their home that he was about to remodel. I instantly fell in love with Jehan, an Egyptian Moslem woman." Clearly, the love was mutual, because both women divorced their respective spouses, and have been living together happily for the last 32 years. "We got married under a Huppah, in the Jewish tradition," laughs Dwora Fried. "My Jewish identity has become even stronger through this relationship," says the mother of two grown children from her first marriage and who had two additional younger children with her life partner.

Before Fried could establish herself as an artist in Los Angeles, she worked at Jewish Family Service, a social aid agency for senior citizens. "I learned so much from these old people. They would give me old newspaper articles and photos which inspired me to work on my collages and boxes at night." The success was not long in coming: Dwora Fried's works have been exhibited many times in Los Angeles, New York, London and

Cape Town. In September of 2009, she was part of project in Lithuania entitled 'Surviving History: Portraits from Vilna'. In Austria, the works of the Viennese artist could be seen twice, so far: in 2000 in Kosmos Gallery in Vienna and February 13, 2013 in the Kunsthalle Krems as part of a 'Pecha Kucha' night. With her exhibit in the Jewish Museum of Venice, Dwora Fried is finishing a line of thought: The museum lies in the Campo Ghetto Novo, a spiritual place, that is not unlike the artist's work.

