

Tel Tsuba is a small Arab village that was abandoned after it was captured in 1948. The paintings were done from photographs the artist took with a telescopic lens. The process involved pressing a page from a left-wing Hebrew newspaper on the wet painting and peeling it off, removing the upper layer of paint. Does the "damage" thus done to the painting suggest the damage done to the Palestinian village and its Palestinian citizens? Or is the artist discussing the legitimate ownership of an abandoned village that has become just a reminder of a once vivid place?

In a catalogue for this group of paintings, Tsuba: Abstraction and Blindness, Tali Tamir wrote: "The central question that **Larry Abramson** raises, a question that challenges the tradition of painting from nature in general, is whether there can be a pure seeing, one that is free of any semantics of the consciousness. In a country where politics penetrates the landscape, seeing turns into a political question. Time, consciousness and the field of vision determine what is visible and what is invisible, what is permitted to enter the field of cultural vision and what remains sheltered in darkness, repressed from consciousness."

Abramson's other work in this exhibition is composed of four canvases, each representing a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which together comprise the word "shalom." The letters were executed with strong lighting on floral motifs to cast dramatic shadows on the word, which has a number of meanings: hello, goodbye and peace, so that saying "shalom, shalom" has ambiguity and can be perceived as being ironic.

Yemima Ergas-Vroman's huge panoramic landscape painting of Jerusalem shows the secular modern part of the city that was built at the turn of the century. She picked a view from the second floor of the Supreme Court Building and worked there for more than a year. In Ergas-Vroman's paintings of Jerusalem there are references to 18th- and 19th- century depictions of the Old City gates and various panoramic landscapes of the city. This work is composed of three canvases done in a realistic manner, yet it is not photorealism, since traces of brush strokes are noticeable. Some parts have looser brush strokes, almost impressionistic, done with a hot pallet.

From the artist's diary: "To decide on the view I would paint I looked through a window cut out of cardboard. Everything looked so good I decided to paint a panorama and divide it into sections. I started going to the Supreme Court with a tape measure, binoculars, pocket calculator, and compass to measure the sun's directions and look for ways to measure the landscape outside the window. I made decisions from day to day, my palette changed from minute to minute, and the mood and weather were equally variable. But one thing was clear: I was in the midst of a real process of learning about color, the limitations of vision and how to translate that into action. And I was developing my skill with brush and knife, things I would have to forget to work outside the window. My detachment from the noise, dirt, wind and traffic influenced the nature of the painting. When I realized that, I knew the painting was no longer a cityscape, but a view from the Supreme Court, with all the implications of that place."

"Home is the sailor, home from sea, and the hunter is home from the hill." Those lines, written by Robert Louis Stevenson the year he died, became the title of this series because **Moshe Gershuni** had them in his head while working on the series and because they speak of returning and not departing. What does Gershuni mean by returning? Coming back from where? The series in this exhibition is one of five that uses the motif of a flag on a hill. In four of them the flag is white; in the last group the flag is black. The image seems to be obvious: It is a gold hill with a flag on top. However, a closer look reveals deeper meanings.

This series follows another that depicts boats with flags on masts, sailing in rough water. Did the boat make it to the shore? Was the flag on the golden mount a sign of peace? Was it a victory sign? If so, what victory? Since the white flag is torn, is it a sign of surrender? Or is it a funny face with an open mouth, or the face of the wolf on the way to catch Red Riding Hood or long underwear hanging on a pole? There are many options. As for his technique, Gershuni kneels and paints with his hands, using his fingers and fingernails. We can always see his fingerprints in the big gestures he makes in the gold, silver, yellow, white, and black paint that he uses so thickly on his canvases.

Yehoshua Glotman's work *A Blow* incorporates The Border Line, a book by the artist containing Xerox photographs of the northern border of Israel with Lebanon, as seen on a misty winter day, along with a video clip. The photographs are accompanied by the text of Glotman's conversation with Katia Kloppfer, who read his palm and spoke to him of his parents, both Holocaust survivors. They discussed relationships within the family and the personalities and behavior of Glotman's parents. The palmist asks "Who is stubborn? Who is balanced? Who is intolerant? Who forms connections with people?" Those questions can be read as metaphors for the relations among nations and peoples.

In *A Blow* the artist takes those relations farther, to a cynical point where his young Palestinian neighbor cuts a tree to make batons that are used by the Israeli police in the Palestinian occupied territories. Juxtaposed with it, we can see the artist at a Palestinian barbershop having his hair shaved off.

The third part of this installation consists of a few flower pots containing batons. Glotman thinks separation and hatred are based on ignorance, and the only way to live together in peace is to learn about the differences and accept the other side's culture and faith.

Alon Porat's oils on canvas are based on photographs and sketches he makes in West Galilee. He knows each tree, rock, and path from the time he walked his goats and acquainted himself with the landscape where he settled. That landscape became the vocabulary for his painting; Porat seems to have abandoned sculpture. His major study, *Foggy Morning*, started when Porat returned from London, approached his house at 4 a.m., and saw low, heavy, white clouds moving east to the hillside. Lightning in the clouds made such an impression on him that he knew it would be his next painting.

Natural effects stimulate Porat's imagination and drive him to bring tree branches, clouds creeping down hillsides, and wild fires on the slopes to his canvases. Porat focuses on the juncture of the wilderness with cultivated nature. His recreation of nature with brush strokes illustrates mankind's existence. His philosophy of painting is to ally himself with nature while exploring the tension between man and his surroundings. Typically Porat makes a series of at least three paintings of the same landscape in different scales. He says the slight variations of the same painting, due to time and mood, achieve an ideal expression.

Ilana Zuckerman recorded the sound and video for *Il Dolcé Suono 2* in various locations around Jerusalem and in a studio. Internal and external landscapes are revealed. Images touch textures of memory, time, fear, and secrets in an effort to expose the enigma of the city. Zuckerman built an installation of audio and video art, a unique language that offers viewers and listeners a wide spectrum of messages and codes, conscious and unconscious, rational and sensual. This art form creates an intimate dialogue with the viewers and listeners in which they are active creative partners.

From Ilana Zuckerman's writings: "The installation *Il Dolcé Suono* is based on a sound composition and a video that evolved out of drama, music, and documentation. The process is an adventurous journey, full of surprising experiences and discoveries with often unpredictable results. It is an attempt to build an alternative language simultaneously expressing different sources of knowledge and information. There is an interaction between different facets of reality, the freedom of movement on time's arrow, the use of quotation as part of our cultural arsenal. The audio collage offers listeners a limitless landscape of sound images, metaphors, memory flashes, concrete sounds, and snippets of documentation. They are surreal materials that incessantly confront each other, relate to each other, articulate voices of performers versus natural human conversation, noise versus music, music versus music, Hebrew versus other languages. In all, a vast texture of senses and associations, traumatic events, emotions, and dreams."