

Intimate Oils by Israel Hershberg at His First Show at Marlborough in Eight Years

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Israel Hershberg, Todi from Afar, 2009, oil on linen mounted on wood, 8.75 x 15.75 in, NON 49 511. All images © Israel Hershberg, courtesy Marlborough Gallery, New York.

NEW YORK, NY.- [Marlborough Chelsea](#) presents an exhibition of paintings by Israel Hershberg will be held through Saturday, October 10, 2009. The exhibition will run concurrently with an exhibition of work by Will Ryman at 545 West 25th Street. This will be Hershberg's third solo exhibition with Marlborough and his first in eight years.

From Afar will consist of ten paintings. The works will range from intimate oils like the five by ten inch Fratta Todina From Afar I to three 98-inch-wide masterpieces of landscape painting. These three will be on view together for the first time since they were executed over the last six years. The earliest, Aria Umbra I, is an expansive view in the Umbria region of northern Italy. This will be on loan from The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. This is followed chronologically by Tel Kakun, a view of northern Israel, and then Aria Umbra II, a view of the eponymous area in Italy.

Interspersed among these three major landscapes are seven smaller paintings and studies including *The C-Spot ~ Papigno*, painted on the site of Corot's famous work, as well as views of the hill towns Fratta Todina, Monte Melino, and Spineta. Together they create an essay on the effect of light, atmosphere and earth in the geographically disparate but atmospherically similar areas of northern Israel and northern Italy.

The landscapes are framed to accentuate quite consciously the great distance, hence the subtitle *From Afar*. But this word has additional meaning since in Hebrew "afar" is quite literally dust. This exploration of the raw matter of the landscape and of landscape painting – dirt or earth – is a central fascination for the artist who describes it as "very primal – the stuff of creation." And as is visible in centuries of Italian landscapes from the background in Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* onwards, Hershberg's paintings are suffused with the atmospheric perspective created by these dusty valleys. As he notes, "All that dust in the aria hangs over everything, defining a seemingly endless nothingness into a measured and felt diaphanous volume of ether that starts where the eye begins to see."

Israel Hershberg was born on November 7, 1948 in a Displaced Persons camp in Linz, Austria. In 1949, he emigrated to Israel and lived there until he was nine. In 1958, he immigrated to the United States where he attended the Brooklyn Museum School, Brooklyn, New York from 1966 to 1968.

In 1972, he received a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York. In 1973, he received his Master of Fine Arts, State University of New York, Albany, New York. From 1973 to 1984 he was instructor of painting and drawing at the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, Maryland. In 1984, he taught painting at the New York Academy of Art, New York, New York.

Israel Hershberg moved back to Israel with his wife and family in 1984. In 1991, he was awarded the Sandberg Prize for Israel Art and in 1998 the Tel Aviv Museum of Art Prize for Israel Art. The artist is the founder and director of the Jerusalem Studio School, and lives and works in Jerusalem, Israel.