

Elkana Levi (b. 1993, Israel)

Elkana Levi's realistic oil paintings are immersed in a palette of browns and olive-green. Between stints of reserve duty on the northern border, the slow process of painting in oil offered him a mental respite. Time spent in the studio became a survival haven, a protective layer against psychological burnout. The three paintings featured in the exhibition are from the series *Art in Respite*. In *Still Life in Respite*, Levi focuses on a crumpled plastic bag filled with sweaty, dusty uniforms. *Untitled Soldier* depicts a soldier bending over to tie his boot laces. His backside, turned toward the painting's foreground, evokes a weary, aging horse. In *Noah's Ark*, Levi depicts a self-portrait, dressed in IDF uniform and seated in a rocking chair, a toy Noah's ark in one hand, and a paintbrush in the other. His infant daughter rests on his lap, yet his thoughts seem to have wandered far away, perhaps haunted by reemerging battle scenes. Embracing in the rocking chair, father and daughter look out to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground, seeking to be each other's refuge and anchor amidst the deluge.