

הירקון 3 בני ברק, מגדלי LYFE בניין B טל. 03-5635050 פקס. 03-5617166

יפעת מידע תקשורתי

23.98x31.43	1/5	1	עמוד	the jerusalem post - in jerusalem	09/2026	99076219-3
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: New art for a New Year

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New year, new artistic season

Culture consumers have
a lot to look forward to



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26.36x30.81	2/5	עמוד 8	the jerusalem post - in jerusalem	09/2026	99076213-7
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Cover

New art for a New Year

The Jerusalem Artists' House opens a new season with rich varied offerings

BARRY DAVIS

With the advent of the New Year, the Jerusalem Artists House recently unveiled a new set of exhibitions as the hopeful harbinger of good, exciting, and adventurous things to come.

Judging by the latest set, culture consumers can look forward to a year of quality showings across numerous styles, subgenres, and mindsets.

The new season, as per the venue's tradition, kicks off with offerings from artists selected to join the ranks of Jerusalem Artists Association members.

The resulting display, curated by Tali Ben-Nun, traverses diverse areas of creative endeavor, formats, and philosophies.

Young artists

There is also room at Artists' House for an injection of fresh blood, with contributions by youngsters David Rosenberg and Nitsan Ben-Zimra.

Rosenberg earned his place in the layout by virtue of landing this year's Osnat Mozes Painting Prize for a Young Artist.

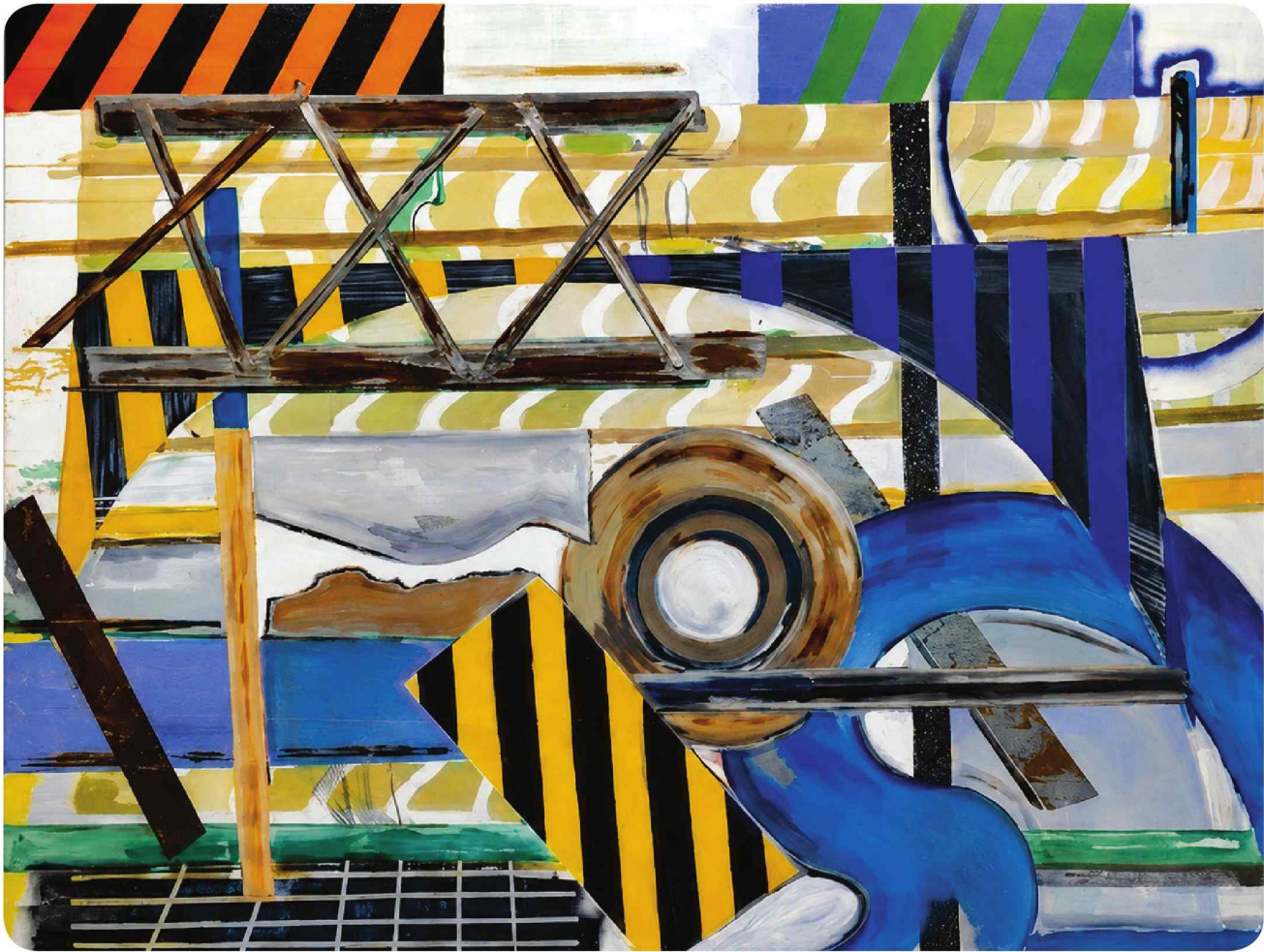
In addition to the prestigious award, the boyish-looking 34-year-old also pocketed NIS 10,000 and got himself a solo exhibition berth at the venerable art repository on Shmuel Hanagid Street.

Judging by his spread on the top floor of the building, curated by Ronny Carny, the prize was well-earned. He clearly has a penchant for color – striking, bright, rich hues at that – and is adept at presenting them in compelling ways.

Indeed, the Osnat Mozes Painting Prize committee members noted Rosenberg's ability to explore the formal transformations of painting with deep sensitivity, precision, and a playful approach.

Notwithstanding the seemingly free-flowing line of aesthetic attack, Rosenberg says his approach to the visual bottom line takes on plenty of corporeal, definitively tactile elements en route.

"These works may give the impression of being very organized and tight, and my works look very graphic and neat. But my method is much wilder. In my studio, and in my life,



Osnat Mozes Painting Prize winner David Rosenberg produces stratified aesthetics that straddle dimensions and varified sensibilities. (Photos: Artists mentioned)

I feel there is a lot of room for playing around with material, unfettered ideas, working outside in gardening and welding, and things that come from very different worlds."

That, indeed, provides fascinating insight into the person behind the exhibited end product, and some of the subtext to his cerebral roaming.

"All of that brings me ideas I can use in my work, at home and in my studio," Rosenberg explains. Each to his own, naturally, and, as they say, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

There is very little of the recognizable real world – as we generally know it – in Rosenberg's paintings. That said, the images don't require much clarification. There are grid shapes, excerpts of what appear to be latticed windows, and the odd

meandering worm-like design that could reference anything going on.

Yet it doesn't come across as overly abstract. Everything seems to be rooted in a user-friendly, readily accessible world. That makes the works even more alluring and attractive, even without the compelling color, form combos, and intriguing layering.

The Osnat Mozes award jurors also succinctly discerned that Rosenberg's works "focus heavily on the relationship between the flat surface of a canvas and its capacity to generate visual illusions, balancing serious, painstaking inquiry with self-aware humor."

Rosenberg goes along with the yin-yang observation of his creative machinations and what they deliver on his canvases.

"I don't always search for an image," he notes. "Often, what is more important to me is the confluence between the materials and the colors, the contrasts."

That much is obvious from his collection at Artists' House, with the former coming through in his use of rust in a couple of works. That adds substance and a softly abrasive dimension to the otherwise smooth outer layer, as well as enriching the palette purview, per se.

There is something of a balancing act across all the works of various ilks. Seemingly disparate color fusions produce an oxymoronic effect rather than dissonance; clearly defined shapes and shades reconcile with comfort, as do the straight-laced and tongue-in-cheek parts, and the

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stratified and more two-dimensional aesthetics.

Existential themes

It comes as no surprise to learn that October 7, 2023, themes, and subsequent regional altercations, feature prominently in the work of some of the artists in the season opener.

The violence and repeated existential threats that appear to be our lot in this part of the world are core to Orit Livne's portfolio.

A cluster of postcard-sized paintings form part of her *War Diary* venture: "There were originally 40, corresponding to the 40 days of the war with Iran," she explains. Her modestly proportioned slot on the middle floor at Artists' House allowed room for just half of her thematic output.

"I started on this on the first day of that war," she adds. It was very much a here-and-now project. "The plan was to make one small painting each day, to complete it and not touch it

again. Then I'd do another one [on the morrow]."

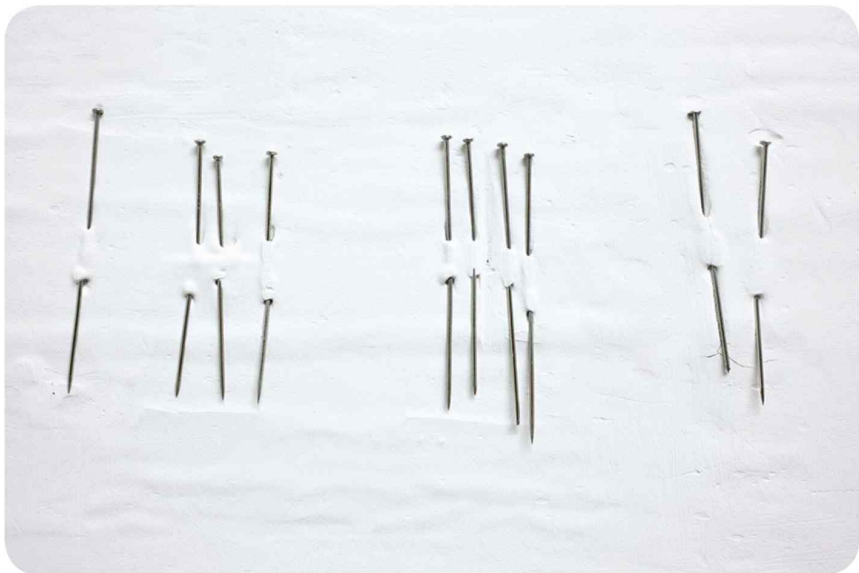
Livne strays into spiritual realms when I ask about the numerical element: "The children of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years, and the standard duration of quarantine is 40 days. Suddenly, 40 became an important number, with depth and meaning."

She might have added that on his first ascent up Mount Sinai, Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights on the peak as God passed the Ten Commandments to humankind.

The small works start with a layer of oil paint, after which Livne erases parts with rags soaked in turpentine.

That process of reduction spawned imaginary scenes that gradually gave way to a more visually brighter view, suggesting a glimmer of better things to come shimmering just over the horizon.

Diminishing the initial color application, for Livne, follows a philosoph-



Nitsan Ben Zimra's 'We've Moved' set fuses physical layers to create optical illusions.

ical take on life: "For me, erasure and reduction are a very important procedure. It is a sort of anti-material approach."

Her threesome on the upper floor, gleaned from her far larger *Meanwhile* series, follows the same technique: applying a top layer and painstakingly chipping away at it to produce unexpected nuances of form and shade.

As you spend time with the red-

hued works, you begin to discern fetching floral shapes that emerge from the backdrop.

For this venture, Livne also used thinned paint that underscores the diminishing dynamic and conversely helps delineate the spectral figures of the flowers.

The images have a dream-like quality that seems to draw on the past and allude to fading memory.

Innocence reclaimed

On a far brighter, tender, life-affirming note, Julia Aronson's *Horizon* drawing series takes us back to where we all began, and the most innocent and trusting phase of our existence on terra firma.

Her set takes a minute or two to work out, as the drawings initially conjure up thoughts of gently undulating terrain or something far more abstract.

The thematic scene gradually emerges as you note a baby's head, from very close up, and the juxtaposition of the soft, pillowy flesh belonging to two human entities.

The infant's mouth is secured to its mother's nipple as it latches onto its only source of life-giving nutrition. It is the most intimate of pairings, as they bask in a symbiosis of complete dependence and unconditional loving communion.

"That is my last baby," says the 46-year-old mother of three. "I am not going to have any more children, so I wanted to document it." She managed that with gusto and abundant maternal love.

Many artistic presentations warrant a zoom-in, zoom-out viewing tactic to appreciate the technical minutiae



Ori Livne's ethereal red-hued works draw on the past and allude to fading memory. (Elad Sarig)

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that make up the whole. *Horizon* takes that to a completely different level.

The snapshot of babe and breast recurs across the group of drawings, from different angles and perspectives. If you take a more graphic approach, you may home in on the dispassionate details.

That, of course, is an important aspect of the aesthetic composition, but the spectator experience is immeasurably enhanced when you note that a small shaded spot is, in fact, a baby's nostril.

There is a paradoxically fragmented continuum to the aligned frames that pull you this way and that as you try to work out the lay of the land – in real geomorphological terms – as your brain tries to balance the figurative and the nebulous.

There is more in the way of uncompromising parental safeguarding and love going on in Elkana Levi's oil painting triad.

Palette-wise, all three are dominated by shades of brown and olive green, a testament to the fact that he has spent much of the past three years in reserve military duty.

Levi pulls nary a punch in conveying the reality of his ludicrously imbalanced lifestyle, trying to find the time and emotional wherewithal to glean some comfort from his quotidian – supposedly normal – life between donning his khaki uniform, slinging his rifle across his shoulder, and heading off for yet another stint on the frontlines.

Noah's Ark proffers a particularly touching scene in which Levi depicts himself in soldier garb, palpably at the end of his emotional and physical wits, slumped in a rocking chair.

He holds a toy Noah's ark in one hand and a paintbrush in the other, with his infant daughter resting in his lap.

He looks exhausted, bewildered, and discombobulated by the never-ending seesaw logistics of his life, and appears to be unsure about what he should be doing away from the army.

Should he make the most of his downtime by getting back to his creative pursuit, or should he be doing his best to compensate his child for the long periods when she had to make do without her dad?

The constant disruptions to his personal life are also clearly displayed, albeit in a more abstract form, in another canvas he calls *Still Life in Respite*, which shows a crumpled plastic bag filled with sweaty, dusty uniforms.

And the large *Untitled Soldier* scene

depicts a soldier bending over to tie his bootlaces. His rear end, unabashedly displayed front and center, evokes something almost post-human and conveys an air of despondency spawned by prolonged presence on the battlefield.

The paintings come from Levi's self-explanatory series called *Art in Respite*. By definition, it has a documentary nature.

"When I paint realistic works, I document the moment I get back home – with my emotions and what I bring



Canadian-born painter Linda Adams mixes bold colors with daring abstraction. (Yael Ilan)

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Julia Aronson's 'Horizon' drawing series offers an intimate snapshot of maternal love. (Warhaftig Venezian)

back from the army.”
It is a jarring point in time, and forms part of – in a probably unintentional curatorial juxtaposition with Livne’s postcard set – a wartime journal.
“I can see how I was at the time of each painting,” Levi says. “In that way I can also follow my own growth and development.”

Diverse yet unified
Nitsan Ben-Zimra’s installation-fashioned collection on the ground floor comprises diverse objects, aesthetics, and textures, yet imparts a feeling of continuity and cohesion.
The 30-year-old multidisciplinary artist makes optimal, intelligent use of the two rooms at her disposal in her *We’ve Moved* arrangement, displayed in a very physical structural sense.
A diminutive needle-and-plaster set fuses what looks like an unfurled roll of cloth, with needles tidily inserted, with the white plaster of the wall on which it is mounted.
The seamless edifice-artwork synthesis reappears in the second room where a metal plate, which has been subjected to some industrial-leaning treatment, with ostensibly peeling wallpaper or some other similar peripheral material, gives the impression of a substratum emerging as the whitewashed wall surface decays.

That is quite an optical trick, and Ben-Zimra is clearly blessed with sensitive and capable hands, as well as an eye for visual potential wherever she looks.
The large monochromatic ultra-blurry photograph which faces the so-called wall peeling item feeds off nocturnal urban sentiments and aesthetics the vast majority of us would miss – or dismiss – as uninteresting or even downright ugly.
The artistic bottom line is the result of a somewhat convoluted process: printing the image on thermal paper before transferring it to a much larger format, which heightens the grainy, fuzzy quality of the image, adding mystery and intrigue while accentuating the manifold linear mélange.
The works, which also include a long piece of rope hung vertically on one of the walls that tapers toward the floor, and a distinctly defunct office desk propped up at an improbable angle with drawers that can never be opened, straddle the fine line between reality and fantasy, and original purpose and reinvention.
All in all, that’s not a bad start to the Artists’ House new season and one which bodes well, at least in an artistic sense, for our continued existence in this part of the world. ■

The exhibitions close on November 7.
For more information: www.art.org.il



Elkana Levi conveys the challenges of juggling national duty and parenthood.