

Two Israeli Artists, Two Worlds of Art

MOSHE MIKANOVSKY

The Israeli Artists Group of Greater Toronto brings together Israeli artists in different disciplines of visual arts, to work, socialize and enhance the Israeli and Jewish culture in Toronto. In this series of articles, we will open a window to some of our artists who live and work in our midst.

This week, I met with two very talented artists, both of whom have lived in several countries before finally settling in Toronto, both influenced by their multicultural experiences, and diverse art education background. But each has developed in a very different way.

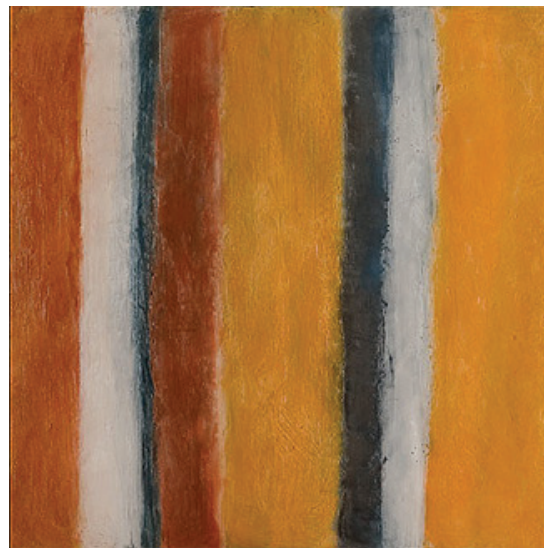
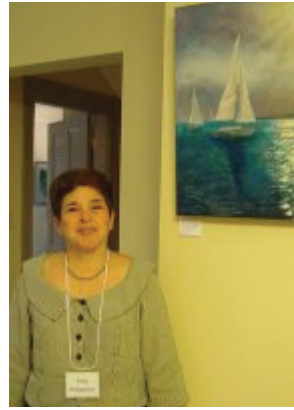
First, landscape artist Silvia Philippsohn. Born in Argentina, Silvia, who is better known to her friends as Suzy, made Aliya in her teens with her parents, and in the mid-eighties immigrated to Canada with her husband and children. Professionally educated as an interior designer, Suzy always painted and created artwork in different mediums – watercolors, acrylics, ink, sculpting, jewelry making and glasswork. But her love for color and subject matter drew her to focus on painting.

Her inspiration comes from landscapes, floral and still life, mainly of fruits and animals. Throughout her landscapes and seascapes, an untold story directs the viewer through the usage of bold colors. Whether it is a sunset in the Mediterranean, a rocky beach on Lake Huron, a field of poppies in California, or an unknown path, you can't keep but wondering what memories these beautiful paintings are based on. And in Suzy's own words: "The inspiration for my paintings comes from my love for nature and the sea,



Clockwise from top left:
The Path by Silvia Philippsohn
Acrylic on gallery canvas, 24"x20"x1.5"
Suzy with her painting "Returning Home"

Contemporary artist Myriam Levy
Go by Myriam Levy, encaustic, 20"x20", 2009



which symbolizes for me freedom and relaxation. I express my feelings through the warm colors I use and the light emerges from them. It all brings me to the scene of my childhood".

Suzy is a member of several artists groups in the GTA. Her excited spirit is a blessing for the Israeli Artists Group, as she helps and welcomes all new artists and makes everyone feels at home. In her own words: "My friends at the group influence my art in many ways. We learn from each other, and discuss

many artist-related topics. Everyone is treated equally and it's a great pleasure!"

The second artist I interviewed is abstract painter Myriam Levy. Born in Switzerland, Myriam first started her artistic education in Lucerne, and later on continued in the Avni Institute of Fine Arts in Israel. She had the opportunity to train in painting, modeling and sculpting with distinguished artists such as Israel Hershberg and Zvi Lachman. Myriam lived in Israel for many years, where her work

was shown both in solo and group exhibitions. In 2006 she moved to Toronto with her husband and 3 sons as the family wanted to face new opportunities and encounter a different atmosphere in a multicultural society.

As an abstract painter, Myriam's medium of choice is encaustic. Encaustic is an ancient technique also known as hot wax painting, which involves using heated wax to which colored pigments are added. The encaustic medium has a unique ability to be worked and reworked.

Modeling, scraping, incising and incorporating different materials are some of the exciting possibilities this medium can offer.

Myriam's multicultural life experience shows beautifully throughout her body of work. In her own words: "I am interested in rhythm, color and texture and try to achieve a universal language in my paintings through repetition and minimal forms."

Myriam is involved in the local community in social and artistic events. She has started offering encaustic classes in her studio and would love to teach members of the community this unique artistic medium.

Suzy's art can be viewed online at <http://silviaphilippsohn.webs.com/> and in person upon appointment at her studio. To contact Suzy please email her at silvia200oil@yahoo.com

Myriam's art can be seen and purchased at the Engine Gallery at the Distillery District in Toronto, Townsquare Gallery in Oakville, Ontario, and at the Halde Gallery, Widen, Switzerland. Until recently her work was presented at the Engine Gallery in a group, and in June 2010 the gallery will have a solo show of her work. Myriam can be reached at 416.627.0182 or by email at mflevy@rogers.com. To view more of her work visit www.mflevy.com

Both Suzy and Myriam will be participating in the Israeli Artists Group show on May 15-18 at the MacDonald House, 121 Centre Street, Thornhill.

Moshe Mikanosky is a member of the Israeli Artists Group of Greater Toronto (moshe@mikanovsky.com)

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