

Landscape Man

Art of Erez Rota Sisoke

Erez Rota Sisoke's exhibition *Landscape Man*, focuses on the Israeli landscape and how the artist relates to it. The landscape in Rota Sisoke's paintings and sculptures tells his personal story of wandering, within the Jewish-Israeli reality and experience. His rapid and fluid brushstrokes, the strong contours, and the bold colorfulness of his paintings reflect his passion for the local landscape and how important it is to him, as vital as the air he breathes. His sculptures are made of metal - many were fused from old sculptures and some are supported by bases of cement and natural stone. Most of these sculptures are situated on the artist's farm, in a private sculpture garden, where they are exposed to the silence of the wilderness and heed to the whispers of the strong desert winds.

Erez Rota Sisoke was born in Tel-Aviv, the son of a farming family from the Jezreel Valley. He grew up in several places - in the city, on a moshav and on a kibbutz, and became deeply connected to rustic landscapes. Following his military service, he returned to agriculture, growing grapes on an agricultural farm in the Jordan valley, but then left his farm to study art in Tel-Aviv. There he was exposed to city scenery, and the bright Mediterranean light reflecting off Tel-Aviv rooftops. During this period, he became interested in winemaking, took a course at the Sorek vineyard, and made wine in his Tel-Aviv studio. His longing for rustic landscapes lured him back to nature, and he settled in the Judean Mountains, south of Beit Shemesh. As a man of vision, and a modern pioneering Zionist, he started the *Rota Farm* together with his son, near Kibbutz Revivim, where he planted an ecological vineyard and opened a boutique winery. The artist also runs workshops on the farm, focusing on wine, art and the environment.

The exhibition includes oil paintings, sketches, small statues and photos of larger statues that interpret the Israeli landscape and man's place within it. The artist has become one with the landscape and the environment, and they are fused together in his work, creating *Landscape Man*.

Shira Mushkin, curator

Erez Rota Sisoke: Milestones

1955 - Born in Tel-Aviv

1984 - 1988 - Studied art at "Art Institute Bat-Yam" in Bat-Yam

1986 - Present - Exhibits work in galleries and museums in Israel and overseas

1992 - 2004 - Established an educational-agricultural project at a school in Mevaseret Zion and other educational art projects for youth in Jerusalem and the surrounding area

1999 - Participated in the "Hiria" project at the Tel-Aviv Museum of Art, with twenty other selected artists, in an effort to change the social perspective on the environment and to rehabilitate the Hiria Dump

2001 - "Sharkia", a solo exhibition at "Engel Gallery" in Tel-Aviv, and one of the gallery's many artists

2003 - Received "Artist-Teacher" Prize from the Ministry of Culture and Sport, and the Ministry of Education

2004 - Established "Rota Farm", an ecological farm in the Negev, where the artist now resides and works