



Israeli artist Moshe Kupferman's Section A painting of his 'With Beirut, After Beirut, With Beirut' series will be exhibited at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

Israeli artist Moshe Kupferman will exhibit at Albright Knox

Israeli artist Moshe Kupferman will be in Buffalo to celebrate the opening of the exhibition, "Moshe Kupferman: Between Oblivion and Remembrance," at a reception at the Albright-Knox from 8:30-11 p.m. January 17.

Paintings, works on paper, and sketchbooks comprise the first retrospective of the artist's work organized in this country. The exhibit continues through March 1.

The works in the exhibition are drawn from public and private collections in the U.S. and from major collections of the artist's work in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art. They include an oil painting and several works on paper from the Gallery's permanent collection.

Characterized as lean and understated by critics, Kupferman's vigorous, abstract work is the product of his life experience. Born in 1926 in Jaroslaw, Poland, Kupferman was raised in a traditional Jewish family.

His childhood and formal schooling ended with the outbreak of World War II, when, in 1939, the German army occupied Jaroslaw and drove the city's Jewish population eastward into Soviet-occupied territory.

In 1940 his family was arrested by the Soviets and moved to Soviet work camps. When the war ended, Kupferman was the only member of his family to survive.

He spent a year in refugee camps in Germany, where he visited the old master collections in Munich, his first experience with fine art. He was inspired:

"I just started to draw. Nothing serious, but a safety valve, a way of letting out what was inside me," he said. Kupferman immigrated to Israel in 1948 and joined a group of refugees in founding the collective community, Kibbutz Lohamei Ha-Gettaot, (Kibbutz of the Ghetto Fighters.)

Kupferman's art is a blend of his restrained understanding of abstract painting and deep emotional responses to his past.

He restricts his palette to a few colors: white, black, crimson, green, brown and yellow, mixing a purplish hue from these colors that is a unique characteristic of his work.

The limited colors enhance the abstraction and lend what John Coffey, curator of the exhibition calls "a solemnity — a philosophical seriousness to the imagery." The marks and forms the artist uses have developed as a "personal repertoire."

According to Coffey, "Moshe Kupferman must be counted among the dwindling congregation of late-century artists whose faith in the redemptive power of art remains unshaken.

"He holds to that most romantic of modernist beliefs: that art should pursue the self.

"And in that pursuit, he has endeavored to close the interval between imagination and image, not merely to translate mind into picture, but to picture mind. His art stands as a fundamental affirmation of being."

Even though Kupferman denies any political motive for his work, many of his most passion-

ate images are direct responses to the chronic condition of war in the Middle East.

Several works in the exhibition reflect the artist's anguish towards acts of violence, including works from two series, "Paintings in Times of War" and "With Beirut, After Beirut, With Beirut."

Buffalo Jewish Review,

3 January 1992