



WATCH 10 VIDEOS IN
THIS ISSUE SEE PAGE 34

AMERICAN
art
C O L L E C T O R



*Also Showcasing
Glass, Ceramics & Wood*

YIGAL OZERI

Modern-day approach

When Yigal Ozeri, born in 1958, was 32 years old, he made the move from his native Israel to New York City. A recognized architectural artist in his homeland, Ozeri gradually transitioned to photorealistic portrait work. The self-taught artist was 45 when he began these allegorical scenes that combine the figure and the landscape.

“Most artists in history started realistic and went to abstraction. That is the natural way, and I did the opposite,” says Ozeri. He further explains that “People say [my work] is a photograph, but all the underneath and the first layers are abstraction...My brush is much looser than other artists; this is why it’s so unique.”

When Ozeri moved to New York, he had a studio in Long Island City. Inside the studio was a window pigeons came to every night; this fascinated Ozeri and became his first venture into painting from life. He then began taking photographs of the birds and slowly incorporated figures and nature into his pieces. The work he creates today is contemporary, but it also has a romantic quality that spotlights the figure and nature and its beauty.

“I take a model to nature, photographing and doing a movie of every girl. It’s like the model does a performance in nature, and I capture that and then I work in my studio,”

Ozeri explains. “My paintings start almost like a film, and then I go through digital images in the computer, and then we start to paint. Every painting that we do is a whole process. It’s not academic—I am not academic. I am against academic painters bringing the model into the studio. In 2015, it doesn’t exist...There is nothing today that doesn’t use video. It is not in this life.

“I’m against this idea because we’ve moved to a different century,” he continues. “There are so many things going on, and you have to use the modern elements to be able to paint and change and evolve.”

Film and photography are the tools Ozeri uses to capture his ideas, but it is what is brought to the canvas that completes the painting and brings it to life. Working with an assistant, Ozeri does multiple paintings at the same time. The work begins loose and abstract then tightens as it progresses. He works with a small brush on a large canvas, painting every part of the composition in a detailed and almost scientific manner—infusing movement into the paintings and giving them a three-dimensional quality.

Through July 17, Ozeri will present a new exhibition of paintings, mainly from his travels to Bear Mountain, at Louis K. Meisel Gallery and Bernarducci.Meisel.Gallery in New York City. ●

1 Yigal Ozeri at work in his studio.

2 *Untitled; Zuzanna*, oil on canvas, 36 x 54"

3 *Untitled; Olya*, oil on paper, 42 x 60"

4 *Untitled; Olya*, oil on canvas, 88 x 110"

Video by Vincent Zambrano.





2



3



4