

aZoya Cherkassky | The Burial of Patricia Nnadi

Curator: Avi Lubin

In the last years artist Zoya Cherkassky went on three trips to Nigeria, where her husband Sunny comes from and where his family lives. These resulted in an exhibit of 40 small paintings on paper, divided into three chapters, three series that document three visits.

The first journey, which gave the exhibit its title, was for the burial of Patricia Nnadi, Sunny's mother. Cherkassky draws Sunny's relatives, the village where they live, the current local culture of the place, the dress, the food and the rituals. As usual, she draws from observation. Some of the paintings show the public sphere - the market, the school, the grocery store, the vegetation surrounding the village and the water tanks. Others portray intimate scenes from the family's domestic sphere - Sunny giving out presents to the children, a Nnadi family gathering, and her daughter's birthday party. The painting compositions are often influenced by Western art history, with Cherkassky creating her own variations, for instance Van Gogh's *Potato Eaters* or Robert Braithwaite Martineau's *The Christmas Hamper*.

In another small series of paintings Cherkassky goes back to Biafra - a civil war in Nigeria in the late 1960s, whose impact is still evident there to this day. In that series, exceptionally, she paints out of stories, memories of the villagers, and not out of observation.

The exhibit was produced with the support of Rosenfeld Gallery, and with the help of the Department of the Arts, the Culture Wing, Municipality of Tel Aviv-Yafo, and the Yehoshua Rabinovich Foundation for the Arts, Tel Aviv.