

ARTFORUM

Ein Harod

“A New Horizon for New Horizons”

MUSEUM OF ART, EIN HAROD

Kibbutz Ein Harod

February 27–July 31



View of “A New Horizon for New Horizons,” 2016.

Founded in 1948, the Ofakim Hadashim, meaning “New Horizons,” group of twenty-some artists hung together for well over a decade, and their embrace of such movements as Cubism, Surrealism, and biomorphism, among others, coincided with the formation of modern Israeli art. From the beginning, there was a dual imperative to acknowledge, even synthesize, the stylistic proclivities of an international art world and to form, through such appropriations, a distinctly national school. “A New Horizon for New Horizons” is the first comprehensive exhibition since 1966 to show the work of this cohort, and it complements the publication of a revised and annotated edition of [Gila Balas](#)’s 1980 monograph and exhibition history of the group.

The cracked surfaces of paintings and original frames evidence their hiatus from public view. To be sure, much has changed in the fifty years since, and this current outing makes clear both the historical ambitions of and the later developments in Israeli art inspired by their work. Installed chronologically, the show deftly reveals the move of so many individual practitioners from figuration to some mode of abstraction—as with Robert Baser and [Joseph Zaritsky](#)—and from a darker palette to one ever lighter, even sun-bleached, as in [Raffi Lavie](#)’s untitled painting from 1962. And yet, such supposed advances coexist with other notions of painting, sculpture, and works on paper, which admits the uneven reception of art from elsewhere—many of these artists, including Zaritsky, spent time in Europe—and the competing priorities within what had become a moribund style.

Still, much of the work feels vital beyond its historical importance. The fact that the last gallery houses works by contemporary artists contributes to this argument of generational passage and homage from within, paradoxically bringing the wider relevance of such forbearers into the present tense.

— [Suzanne Hudson](#)