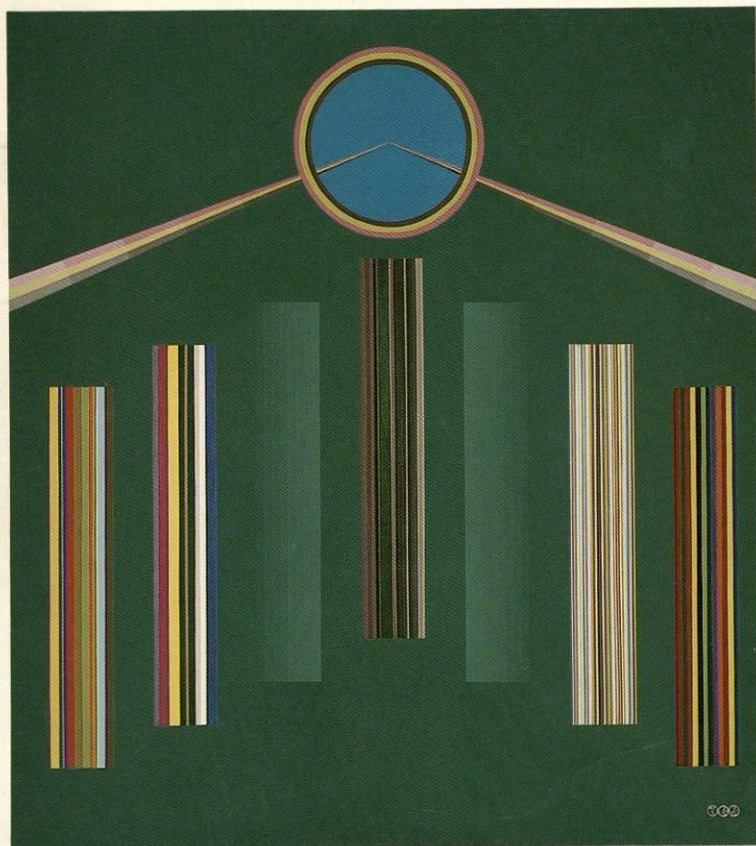


DR. I.J. ROSEFSKY



Fertile Fields 36 x 40 Acrylic on Canvas

**DR. I.J. ROSEFSKY
PAINTINGS**

Studio Art Gallery

May 8 through May 22, 1988

Opening Reception Sunday, May 8, 2-5 pm

State University of New York at Binghamton

Dr. Israel J. Rosefsky arrived at painting in the seventh decade of a remarkably productive life. He was guided to his now principal avocation by the loving hand of his late wife, Elsie Benensohn Rosefsky, whose generous patronage and works also have graced the Studio Art Gallery at the State University Center at Binghamton.

Dr. Rosefsky is a Binghamton native and has practiced pediatrics in his hometown since 1941. He received his B.A. and M.D. degrees from Syracuse University. His pediatric training included a pediatric internship at Massachusetts General Hospital, pediatric studies at the Harvard Medical School, studies at the Well Baby Clinic at the Mayo Clinic with Dr. C. Anderson Aldrich and at the Yale Clinic of Child Development under the proctorship of Dr. Arnold Gesell and Dr. Frances L. Ilg.

He is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, a Diplomat of the American Board of Pediatrics and a member of the American College of Allergists.

As an artist, Dr. Rosefsky favors abstract expressionism and construction. He believes his concepts of construction and form took root in a childhood vegetable garden, where

his carefully nurtured tomato plants were surrounded by whitewashed stones aesthetically arranged in circles, rectangles and squares.

The nurturing elements of gardening also helped to shape the young Israel Rosefsky's incipient interest in medicine, especially pediatrics. In much the same way that the child in the South Street garden delighted in his healthy tomato plants, Dr. Rosefsky has been rewarded by watching two generations of "alumni" develop and flourish.

Throughout his medical career Dr. Rosefsky was supported by his beloved wife, Elsie—perennial student, artist, art lover and enthusiast for all forms of cultural activity. It was she who persuaded Dr. Rosefsky to try painting. "She started me off with egg tempera and gently but firmly directed me into the pleasures of the arts," he said recently.

"When a painting seemed to come off on its own, she had no criticism or comment. But when the colors, form or composition seemed bizarre, she was my greatest yet gentlest critic."

This exhibition is dedicated to the memory of Elsie Benensohn Rosefsky.

This was written by
Dr. Israel J. Rosefsky
and edited by Jeff Davis.



Creativity 36 x 44 Acrylic on Canvas

Red is for Tomato

"What's that red squiggle over there?" I.J. Rosefsky's brother Alec asked him. Only Alec could phrase the question in a way that made Israel smile.

"The squiggle is the way a tomato plant feels before it produces its fruit," Israel replied.

The question and Dr. Rosefsky's answer to it real a great deal about the man whose work is being displayed at the Studio Art Gallery at the State University Center at Binghamton. Tomatoes, you might say, have played a pivotal role in the development of Israel Rosefsky, both as an artist and a physician.

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"Israel. Come on in. It's time for dinner."

The tiny woman with the heavy Yiddish accent called out to her son through the back door of the wooden frame house on South Street, next to the Susquehanna River in Binghamton. Harry, Alec, Minnie and Marion already were seated at the table. But 10-year-old Israel was always busy in his garden.

It was as if he were attached to one of the vines. The tomatoes were delicious. There was no doubt about that. His father, who died of pneumonia when Israel was just eight months old, would have been proud. So what if Israel was a bit late coming inside? At least he added something special to the table.

"It isn't fair. Just because he's the youngest one in the family, he gets to do what he wants," Harry would say. But his protests weren't meant too seriously. He was as fond of Israel as the rest of the family was. And he joined in the heartfelt greetings when Israel finally came inside.

"So, how's the farmer this evening?" his mother asked as Israel sat down to his favorite meal—kugel: a mixture of raisins, pasta and cheese.

"I didn't lose a single plant to that frost we had last night, thanks to the paper bags I put over them," Israel replied.

"You really take pride in keeping those plants alive, don't you? One of these days, you'll make a fine farmer," his mother said.

"He doesn't want to be a farmer any more." Marion announced.

"He's going to be a doctor. I heard him talking to his friends."

"So you're going to be a doctor?" his mother said. "What are we rich? Where will you get the money? It won't come up out of the ground, you know?"

Next it was Alec's turn to offer advice: "You'll have to work awfully hard and get good grades at school. That's the most important thing. If you want to be a doctor, we'll help you earn the money." Alec was close to his brother and was pleased to hear that Israel planned to be doctor. After all, Alec already knew he was going to be a lawyer.

"I'm with you too," Minnie said. "If you put as much effort into earning money for medical school and studying as you do into that garden of yours, you'll have no trouble at all."

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As it turned out, there was a long road separating the dreams of a 10-year-old and the realization of a remarkably rich, creative, selfless and caring life.

Earning enough money in the 1920s

and 1930s meant countless hours in myriad occupations. Israel delivered newspapers; organized the Sunshine Ice Cream Service; sold fireworks; set pins in a bowling alley; worked as a grocery clerk, and did household maintenance.

There wasn't time for much else besides working and studying. But, one-by-one, Israel accomplished his goals: undergraduate, medical student, intern and resident in pediatrics. Each was rewarding, satisfying and a source of pride. But Israel was lonely. Life was incomplete without marriage.

He had known Elsie Benensohn since childhood but hadn't been interested in her in any special way. He knew she lived in the more well-off section of Binghamton. That was all. But when they were both in their late twenties Israel and Elsie came to know and enjoy one another. She would be the bright, vibrant person to raise his children and be his companion while he served the needs of the community. Elsie and Israel were married in the fall of 1937.

Their marriage lasted for nearly 50 years and was filled with excitement

and creativity. There were three children: Jonathan, first the pediatrician following in his father's footsteps, eventually became the scientist he had always wanted to be.

Quinn, deliberate and slow to make up his mind, became a child psychiatrist.

Robin, not to remain in the shadow of her elder brothers, brought integrity and wisdom to teen-agers through drama.

Of course Israel knew what happened to his own children and grandchildren. But he also delighted in learning what happened to his former patients as they grew older. The huge list of his 'alumni' included lawyers, judges, artists, concert violinists, ballerinas, chemists and editors. Some became doctors themselves. It naturally made Israel proud that he had played such a vital role in helping so many to reach their potential.

As Israel watched generations of children mature, he also provided fertile ground for Elsie to pursue her interests, many of which he shared himself. Elsie, the perennial student, cultural enthusiast and artist, finally persuaded Israel to try painting.

"I don't know about that color," Elsie said in a matter of fact voice which meant he should start over again.

"What would you suggest?" Israel asked, pointing to the countless shades of vermilion neatly laid out in swaths on the palette.

As a gardener, Israel's tomatoes were the most succulent one could imagine. As a pediatrician, he had earned the respect of a community. Yet his spirit was restless. From age 60 on, he set himself a new goal, to find a way to demonstrate his philosophy of life through art. Today his technique and subject matter are highly symbolic, vividly colorful, technically flawless and ultimately penetrating.

This was written by Dr. Quinn Benensohn Rosefsy and edited by Jeff Davis