

*For Immediate Release*

## I of the Storm: Michael Hafftka, Recent Work

**March 22, 2009 – August 30, 2009**

New York: After more than 30 years of portraying the human figure with a neo-expressionist style, Michael Hafftka turns to his Jewish heritage for subject matter and inspiration in his new exhibition, "I of the Storm: Michael Hafftka, Recent Work," at the Yeshiva University Museum. Frequently compared to the painters Soutine, Goya and Rouault, Hafftka here makes use of mystical images, biblical themes and the Hebrew alphabet in watercolors and oils. The exhibition runs from March 22, 2009 through August 30, 2009.

**Alef-Bet** – A group of 22 watercolors based on the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The series is an exploration of contemporary Jewish themes and a tribute to the artist's parents who were survivors of the Holocaust.



**Lamed**



**Zohar: Be-Reshit #6**

**Zohar** – A group of watercolors based on The Zohar, or Book of Splendor. Hafftka's expressionism serves as a visual exegesis of this 13th century Jewish mystical text, which is widely considered the most important work of Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism.

**Oil Paintings** – Several recent works on Jewish or biblical themes including "The Flood," "Honi Ha Me'agel" (Honi the Circledrawer) and "Babel." A centerpiece of this group is "The Hill (Jerusalem)," a large-scale triptych that the artist recently donated to Yeshiva University Museum.



**The Flood**

The son of Holocaust survivors and refugees from Europe, Hafftka was born in Manhattan in 1953 and raised in the Bronx. After the Yom Kippur War broke out in 1973, he volunteered to work on a Kibbutz in Israel for a year. The experience, which the artist says was accompanied by a series of visions and mystical dreams, led him to experiment with painting, which became his true vocation.

A book of Hafftka's work, *Michael Hafftka – Selected Drawings*, was published in the early eighties, which led to Barbara Flynn of Art Galaxy offering Hafftka his first one-person show in 1982. Hafftka's work is represented in the permanent collections of, among others, The Metropolitan Museum, Museum Of Modern Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Carnegie Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, New York Public Library Collection, Housatonic Museum of Art, Arizona State University Art Museum, National Gallery of Art, and the Yeshiva University Museum.

### **Public Programs**

- Gallery Talk: Tuesday, April 21, 2009 at 1:00 pm

### **About Yeshiva University Museum**

For 35 years, the Yeshiva University Museum has provided culturally diverse exhibitions and programming for the greater metropolitan area and beyond, as well as to Yeshiva University students, faculty, and alumni. Its

permanent collection includes more than 9,000 objects spanning over 3,000 years of Jewish history. The Museum also emphasizes teaching schoolchildren and adults of diverse backgrounds about Jewish culture through many varieties of interdisciplinary programs. Located at the Center for Jewish History, the Museum occupies four spacious galleries, a children's workshop center, and an outdoor sculpture garden.

**Listing Information:**

**What:** I of the Storm: Michael Hafftka, Recent Work  
**When:** March 22, 2009 – August 30, 2009  
**Where:** 15 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street (between 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Aves), NYC  
**Hours:** Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 11 am – 5 pm  
**FREE** Mondays @ YUM, 3:30-7:30 pm  
**Admission:** \$8 for Adults; \$6 for seniors and students and children (ages 5 – 16)  
FREE Members and children under 5; FREE with valid Yeshiva University ID card  
**Public Information:** 212-294-8330 [www.yumuseum.org](http://www.yumuseum.org)  
**Press Inquiries:** Yeshiva University Museum 212-294-8330 [press@yum.cjh.org](mailto:press@yum.cjh.org)  
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