

TOPOGRAPHY / TIME / ISRAEL

Photographs by Neil Folberg

November 8 – December 15, 2012

Opening Reception: November 8, 6 – 8 pm

It is with great pleasure that we are exhibiting 20 of Neil Folberg's newest photographs. They will be juxtaposed with photographs from his award winning suite entitled *Celestial Nights*. Folberg is not only a photographer and not only a fine technician but his camera is his brush as he is an artist with a poetic and mystical connection to his subjects. Folberg is profoundly steeped in Jewish history and its connection to the "land."

He says of this work:

"In the ten years or so that have passed since *Celestial Nights* was published my work has taken other directions, but all of my work beginning with the desert landscapes I made in the Sinai in the 1980's has been grounded in place. A sense of place and time – that is the essence of presence in a photographic image."

"In some of my most recent work I have added the element of story-telling, as in the series *Serpent's Chronicle* which was first shown at this gallery and is now scheduled for Spring 2013 publication by Abbeville Press; but in this group of photographs, I return to my roots in landscape."



Neil Folberg, *Nahsholim Stormy Coast*, 2012, Edition of 5, Archival Pigment Print, 36 x 28 inches

"The topography of the land in Israel is only partly nature; this land has been continuously settled and has been shaped by people who have left their mark on the land. Places that seem to be totally wild have functioned as major trade routes. Rocky desert hills are terraced, their steep inclines covered with the tracks of goats and shepherds over millenia. The level of the Dead Sea rises and recedes according to rainfall and the amount of water drawn from its sources. Negev hills above the Ruhama Badlands will soon be covered with grain. A Mediterranean port that functioned in the time of Jonah is now washed over by waves, but you can still see the ancient foundations. The Gamla fortress where ancient Israel made its last stand against the Roman legions is now just a stone etching on a precipitous incline. A Second Temple period olive oil factory is being excavated before a new neighborhood can rise above it. Modi'in,



Nahal Michmash and Nahal Parat, 2012, Edition of 5,
Archival Pigment Print, 36 x 28 inches

the ancient site where the Hasmonean Jewish dynasty originated is once again a well developed urban center.”

“The topography of the land is shaped by time. These images show me my place in history. The images from *Celestial Nights* show me where my place is in our Milky Way Galaxy.”

Neil Folberg was born in San Francisco in 1950, but spent most of his childhood in the Midwestern United States, becoming interested in photography around 1966. In 1967 he began studies with Ansel Adams, the American landscape photographer. In 1968 Folberg enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley, which led through a program of individualized study with William Garnett to a B.A. in Photographic Field Studies. He was married in 1975 and in 1976 he and his wife settled in Jerusalem, where he is often found in his Vision Gallery.

In 1979, Folberg began photographing in the Sinai, working there until Sinai was returned to Egyptian control. His desert landscapes have been collected together along with a text that Folberg wrote in a book titled *In a Desert Land: Photographs of Israel, Egypt and Jordan*, published by Abbeville Press of New York in 1987.

He had a major retrospective exhibition at the Musée Nicéphore Niépce in Chalon-sur-Saone, France in 1990/91. In 1992, he was commissioned by the Aperture Foundation to photograph synagogues all over the world. The book, *And I Shall Dwell Among Them: Historic Synagogues of the World* was accompanied by traveling exhibitions in Europe and the United States and publication of a portfolio of EverColor pigment transfer prints by Aperture Press and Vision Editions.

He returned to black-and-white work with a series of photographs of starry night landscapes set in ancient ruins and scenes of the Middle East. This work was collected in the book, *Celestial Nights: Visions of an Ancient Land* (Aperture Press, New York 2001), winner of the New York Book Show Prize, First Place Photography, 2002. This too became an Aperture traveling exhibition through 2007 in the United States and Israel.

Folberg has had over 50 solo exhibitions in museums and galleries in the United States, Israel, Australia, France, Denmark Yugoslavia, Canada, Norway, Germany and the Netherlands. His art is in the collections of over 25 museums in the United States, France, Germany, Australia, Norway, the Netherlands, and Israel.



Nitzana, Nabatean Ruins, 2012, Edition of 5, Archival Pigment Print,
36 x 28 inches