

## **Hair**

Text: Monica Lavi

Exhibition at Yavne Art Gallery, 1994

Michal Biber paints hair in many variations. It could be loose, it could be tied up or braided. The perspective she paints the hair through is so close, it almost seems it ceases to be hair and becomes abstract painting. This closeness to the subject painted, which is physical and emotional is a contrast to the hiding and concealing in the paintings. In any of the paintings the faces of the people are covered, so the hair becomes a kind of screen or curtain concealing rather than exposing. Hair growing on a head is considered a body ornament but it might give a very unpleasant feeling when it departs the head, and lays on a hairdresser salon's floor. Hair is perceived as a symbol of strength and vitality, acknowledging biblical Samson, which the loss of his hair represented the loss of his strength and his soon to come end.

What does the hair Michal Biber paints conceal? Maybe the will to be close but still hide behind a protective screen? Or maybe the fear of its loss or the will to paint an abstract painting where the hair is merely a realistic pretext?