

IRVING PETLIN (b. 1934, Chicago, Ill.)

*Hebron*, 1998-2001

Chalk & Oil Pastel on unprimed Belgian Linen

84 x 192 in.

*Exhibition:*

*Out of the Shadows*. School of the Museum of Fine Art, Boston, 2001

*Irving Petlin: Endgame*. Kent Gallery, New York, 2002

*Notes:*

*Hebron* was started in 1998 and finished in 2001. The work is an evolving drawing in pastel on raw linen, of a people assembled in an agony of human gesture and emotion. Movement through increasing or lessening emphasis of the material is akin to breathing at variously different intensities. The light appearing and disappearing like the history of its "name ." The silences that come between hurling figures are like islands of calm between struggles and shouts. The picture is on two panels together measuring 16 feet in length and 8 feet in height.

*Hebron* is a summation of my belief in the hand in the making of art. The drawing and articulation are always narrating in the close-knit passages of troubled human souls. The frieze that we see carries with it the hand's Memory of many pasts, many memories. Pastel is unique for making such a work. Sticks of pastel are the powders of the earth compressed. The colors are the colors of the ancient world delivered into our time.

*Literature:*

*Poiesis: A Journal of the Arts & Communication*, 2006, vol. 8, ill. p. 55.