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whitehot | March 2012: Mother: Interview with Nir Hod



*Artist Nir Hod in his studio March 2012, his new series of new paintings is entitled "Mother"*

Nir Hod *Mother*

opening at Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York, NY

March 28th 2012

Israeli artist Nir Hod's recent series entitled *Mother* is a group of paintings of a female figure that appears in a photograph taken by the Nazis in 1943. This photograph is the work of Nazi photographer Franz Conrad who was documenting Adolf Hitler's destruction or "ethnic cleansing" of the Warsaw Ghetto during the second world war. The complete photo shows a group of Jews being held at gunpoint by Nazi Soldiers, a small boy holds his hands in the air in terror and to his left is an image of a woman doing the same. The boy with his hands held up shows a famously dark moment in history and is the central aspect of this photograph. The woman with raised hands pictured to the left of the boy has been isolated by Nir Hod as the central figure in his series *Mother*. This foregrounds her as the main theme of his paintings and brings out other readings of the image beyond the original source. The resulting Nir Hod painting is of a woman holding up her hands with a leather bag hanging down off each of her arms. Hod's treatment of this female figure intensifies the ambiguity of the woman's gesture, giving one the sense that it could be something other than a historical image, but rather something contemporary.