

FROM COHERENTLY-painted self-portraits to graphic representations visualizing the forces that control one's life, **Asad Azi** returns in a different form. His half-dozen vertical panels could be architectural decoration as much as formal painting. Projecting an atmosphere of a walled tabernacle or basilica, Hellenistic running borders, Noland chevrons or Matissean patterns en-

close Rothko-inspired washed fields of pale reds, blues and greens, onto which a darker goat's head with floppy ears is silhouetted; then socially or politically paraphrased on the same canvas by a silhouetted potted plant with floppy leaves. This collation of symbolic cross-cultural motifs – often quite beautiful, as in a grey and chalky-white tactile canvas – attains a unique Middle Eastern quality tinted by western art values. Several of Azi's other canvases retain his familiar trend of pictorializing frontal, Ptolomaic portraits clamped by Arab tapestries or flat pictograms. (Artifact Gallery, 43 Nachmani, Tel Aviv). Till Jan 13.

LARGE GROTESQUE ceramic heads flashing smiles of mouthfuls of oriental teeth and dripping with occasional pink, blue or white paint and wrapped by a satin pillow, provide only intimations of **Ziona Shimshi's** two-pronged title "I Was in