

*Tuesday, November 29, 2005*



I have helped Esther with framing for her exhibition. As a present she bought us a ticket for a concert of the American singer Matisyahu and his band in de Melkweg. He is a Lubavitch orthodox jew who sings religious songs on a reggae sound. Not surprisingly, the pop temple was filled with people Esther knew from the synagoge. Men were dressed casually and wearing honkball caps instead of yarmulks. Among a largely Jewish audience were some hardcore rasta's. Chassidic sidelocks met Jamaican dreadlocks. Matisyahu appeared in a traditional gaberdine like he just returned from a kollel in Mea Shearim. But he did not look lost on this reggae stage. Soon he took off his long black coat and hat when the music made him dance and sweat. And he was jumping high to show that God helped him to deny gravity.

The sound was heavy and shaking through my spine. It was like the downstairs neighbours were drilling the wall. There was no way to understand his lyrics, but it seems that he was singing: *Torah food for my brain let it rain till I drown, Thunder! Let the blessings come down.* I like the idea to combine the music of Bob Marley and Shlomo Carlebach. Both musicians were deeply religious. Only their promised land was at a different location.

Sitting high on a side ballustrade Esther and me were making sketches. The reggae rhythm brought us in the right trance and there was just enough light to see the lines on paper. When I came home I found out that some of these orthodox pictures were accidentally made on the backside of nude model drawings.