

Judaica Gallery: Jewish Ceremonial Art

What has been “saved”?

What is being created?

Key ideas

- *Hiddur mitzvah* is the principle of adding a beautiful aesthetic dimension to the fulfilling of commandments
- Biblical interdiction of graven images
- Sanctification of everyday elements of life. Rarified environments and magnificence not necessary
- Objects constantly threatened by loss or destruction--- as Jews fled, they only took as much as they could carry and what they carried was small and/or made of valuable materials
- Lovers of arts so lots of styles, often the styles were influenced by the general culture of the time and place of the artist.

Styles

- Craft: folk styles and techniques in a variety of Media
- Modernist: absence of ornamentation
- Post modernist: increased self- awareness on the part of artists to include social content in their work, expanding the references to Jewish ritual objects to connect the sacred to everyday life

Common symbols

- Jewish art was essentially a folk art It is not the outcome of any doctrine, nor is it subject to didactic approaches dictated by theology.
- Visual symbols used in Jewish art were influenced by the mystical tendencies among ordinary Jews and were adopted by the Jewish communities as motifs which drew upon the “understanding of the heart” and did not always yield to rational definition

Historic communal architecture: Synagogue and Mikveh

- The synagogue was the center of Jewish life after 70CE when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. It was the beginning of communal worship. The synagogue had and has 3 functions:
 - 1. worship
 - 2. Social gathering/celebrating
 - 3. Study/ education

Mikveh (ritual bath) at Qumran, looking east, early first century B.C.E.

Photograph courtesy of Jutta Jokiranta



Mikveh at Speyer c. 1128



What to do after the Temple was destroyed? What developed was a synagogue. What you you find in every synagogue?

A Torah: A scroll with the first 5 books of the Hebrew Scripture

A covering to protect the Torah:

Mantle, breastplate, crown/ rimmonim, yad or Tik with rimmonim and yad

A place to keep the Torah when not in use: an ark (either curtained or cabinet doors)

A menorah/lampstead And the eternal light

A place to read the Torah: bimah



Arch of Titus: menorah

80 CE to commemorate the Siege of Jerusalem 70 CE



Sardis, Turkey, 3rd c. CE



Tempio Maggiore, Florence 1882



Istanbul after 1492!



www.bazaarturkey.com

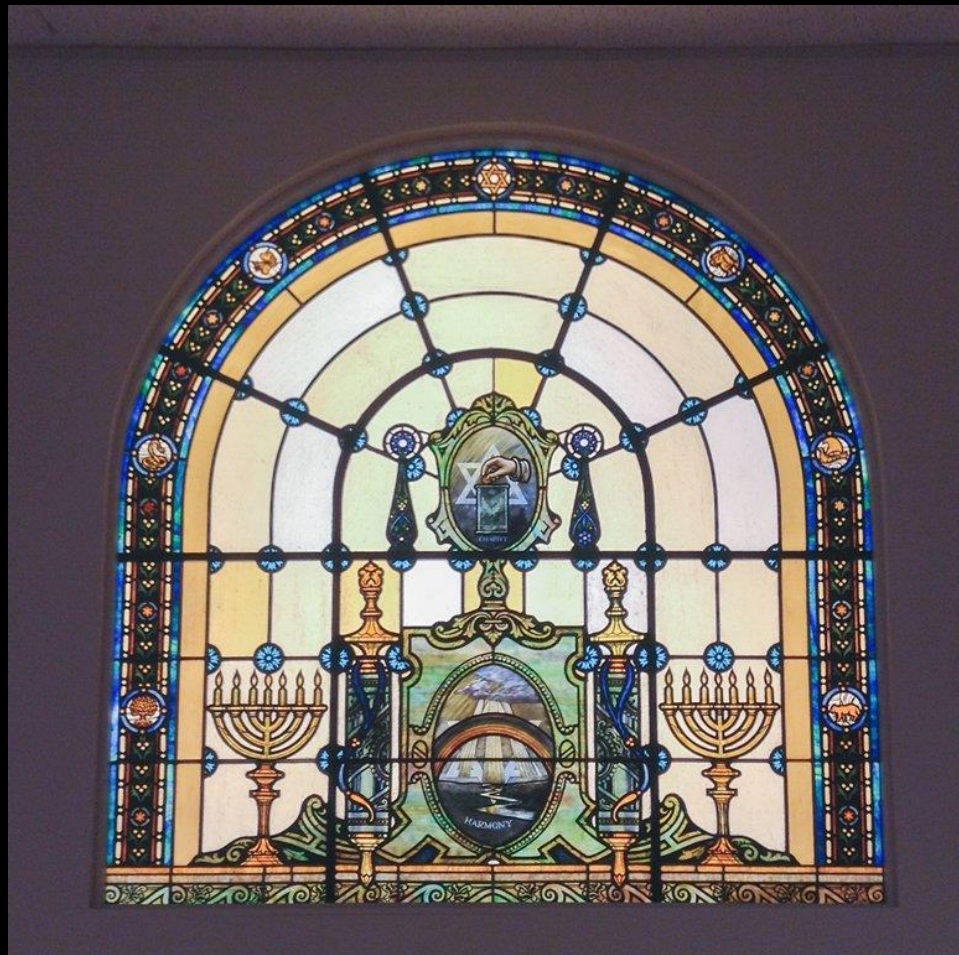


The Harmony Stained glass window is from the former Adath Jeshurun building 3400 Dupont Ave S., 1927, now the Unitarian Universalist Church

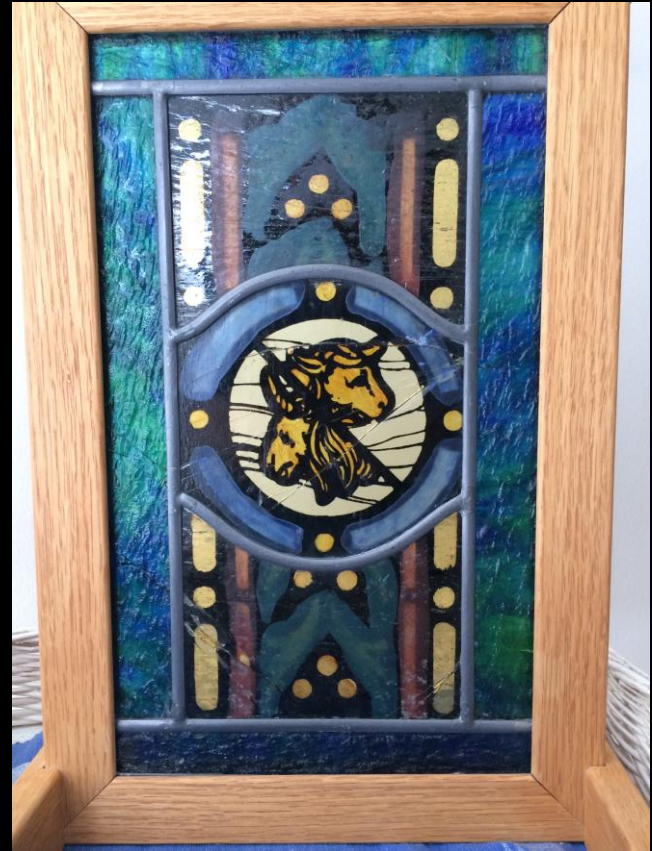


- Adath was the first Orthodox congregation in Minneapolis, 1884.
- Liebenberg and Kaplan were the architects for this building they moved to in 1927. Neoclassical style. By then it was a Conservative Jewish congregation

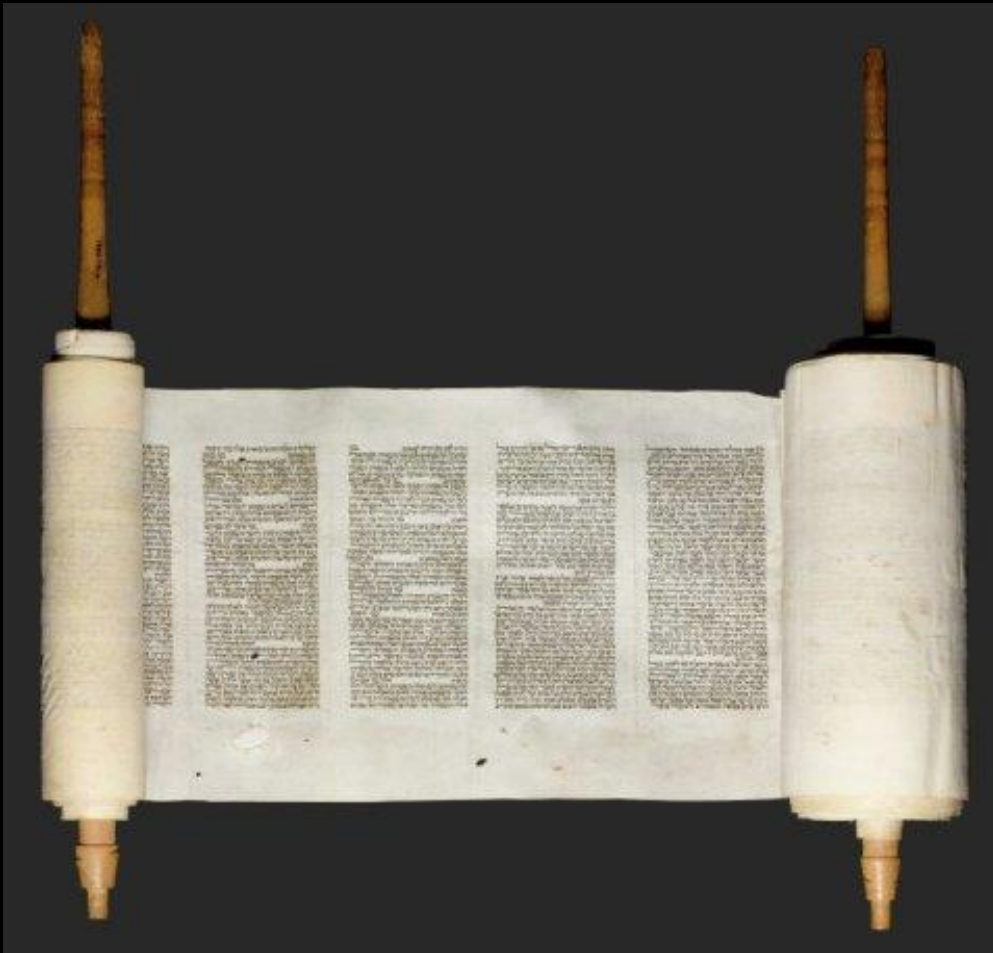
Mia has the “Harmony” stained glass window 2002.173.3A,B from when the congregation moved to its new location in Minnetonka.



L: Zebulon R: Joseph (Ephraim and Manassah)



A handwritten Torah would be in every synagogue. The Torah is the center of Jewish thought. Questioning is the basis for all that comes after.



Ashkenazi Torahs have crowns or *rimmonim*(Torah finials), a breast plate and a yad.



Gan Eden Syngogue



Torah

Torah mantle 98.136.17 (nov)
US, 1954 velvet with embroidery



Tik Torah scroll case, early 20th c
Brass, cloth, beads, wire
2003.165.1a-c



Torah binders are usually textiles

This example from Mount Zion in St. Paul is needle point.



- .Torah belt, 20th c, . Brass, enamel, 2003.228.50 (nov)



Ashkenazis Torahs have crowns or rimmonim (torah finials), a breast plate and a *yad*/ torah pointer

- 2000.229.2

- 2000.229.1



Rimmonim can be with tiks or with mantles on the Torah.

98.156.1.2 Iraq (nov)



2000.66.3.1 Morocco G254



2000.66.4 Morocco 20thc, silver



2013.82.4.2, late 19th c.



Not on
view

98.206.1 Austrian



2002.137.1.2
Russia early
20thc
Silver,

Yads: Yad means hand and often the pointer has a shape of a hand at the end. The Torah pointer is used for reading the Torah scroll, to avoid touching the sacred manuscript with the hand. Similarities and differences?



Yad, 20th century, Unknown artist, Germany, 98.136.9a,b; c. Yad, 1870, Unknown artist, Vienna, 98.156.2a,b, and Yad, c. 1900, Unknown artist, Morocco, 2003.165.2.



Other yads in the collection (not on view) Both by Michael Ende.



Synagogue Capurnum, Israel 2nd-3rd century CE: image of the portable ark



Often the ark is a wooden or metal cabinet.

simple



Beth El Synagogue Meilah





- Cuneo Synagogue 18th c

Mia has a Torah curtain (nov)

2004.29.6



A synagogue needs a ner tamid/eternal light (nov)



- This one is from Syria, late 19th c.
- Symbolizes that God is always there
- Can be electric, candles, oil etc

Tzedakah Boxes: what similarities and differences?



Top L) Tzedakah (justice or charity) box, mid 19th century, Unknown artist, Perisa, 2001.177.8; (Center) Tzedakah Box, 19th century, Unknown artist, France, 2000.229.3; (Bottom L) Tzedakah box for the Copenhagen Society for the Care of the Sick, 1901, 2006.67.2a,b AND (Top R) "Noah's Ark" tzedakah box, 2002, Robert Lipnick, 2006.3a,b; (Bottom R) "Pacific" from the Tzedakah Box series, 1998, Tony Berlant,



Tzedakah boxes not on view



Examples of tzedakah tin boxes for specific organizations



Most of Jewish life is in the home : “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your gates”

A reminder to obey commandments in your home and on your way.

Mezuzah: US 2004, 2004.200

Michael Ende 1985 2003.228.47a,b (nov)



Not on view

Ilya Schor Mezuzah
2008.2.2a,b



Michael Ende,
Mezuzah



Mezuzah Poland
c.1900 2003.228.48



Sabbath is the most important holiday: "More than Israel has preserved the Sabbath, the Sabbath has preserved Israel "A taste of the world to come!

- Candles, wine and bread for the beginning.
- 2 candles: observe and remember/ light and darkness; Pharisees first established the lighting of the candles
- Some use 2 loaves: to remind of the double portion of manna sent to the Israelites in the desert in Exodus. a sign of plenty. Others just use one challah.
- The only holiday where women traditionally have had the major role.
- The mystics in Safed would go out to the gates at sunset to welcome the Sabbath Bride (married to the people of Israel.)
- Havdalah (separation) wine, spices, braided candle.

Candles and candle holders

Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert
2008.2.3.2a,b



Moshe Zabari 2001.90.2a,b



Kiddush cups: wine is the symbol of joy

**Kiddush Cup and saucer, Iraq, c
1920, 200.67.2a,c**



**Michael Ende Wine cup and
Saucer 2003.228.20a,b**



Kiddush (wine) cups (not on view)



Kiddush (wine) cups by Michael Ende (not on view)



Ritual washing of hands

- N'tilat Yada'im hand washing cup, c. 1985, Michael Ende,
- Silver, Brass, 2003.228.38



Challah plates, knife and cover not in mia collection



Sabbath hanging lamp, 19th c., France 99.223.1a,b



Hanging Sabbath Lamp from the Erna Michael Haggadah , Middle Rhine, Germany c 1400 at the Israel Museum

Havdalah set

Havdalah marks the end of the Sabbath



Havdalah sets at mia—not on view

**Havdalah set, Jacob Greenurcel
, 1982, 2006.67.1a-g**



**Havdalah candle holder and spice box, 1760
Johann Samuel Beckensteiner 2006.67.3a,b**



Spice containers (on view)

Artists have always
expressed great creativity!

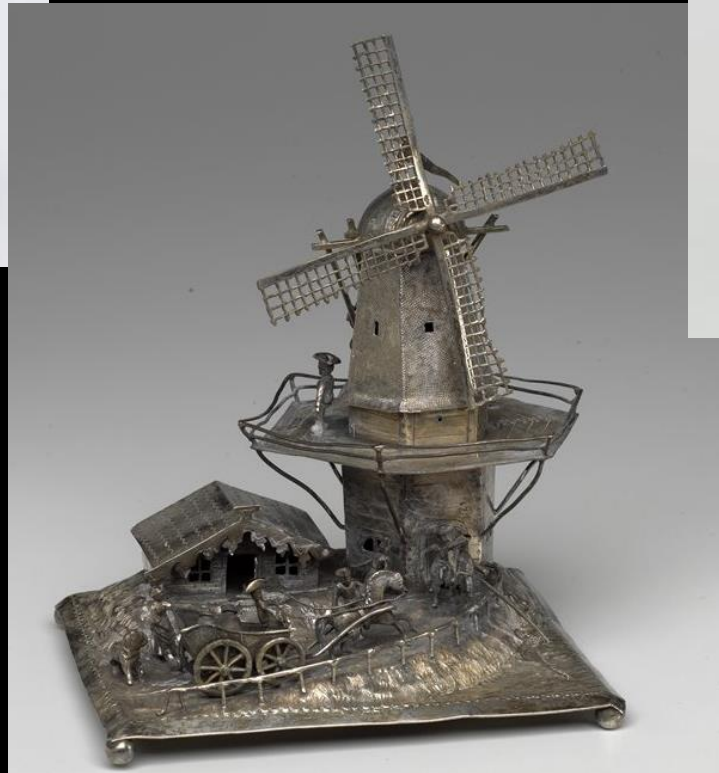
Counter clockwise from top left:
Unknown artists, Israel, *Spice container*, 20th century,
98.136.4.1,2; Netherlands, *Spice container*, late 19th century,
2001.177.4; Poland, *Spice container*,
c. 1889, 2001.177.5; Czechoslovakia,
Spice container, 20th century,
2000.66.2; Michael Ende, *Spice container*,
c. 1985, 2003.228.14a-d



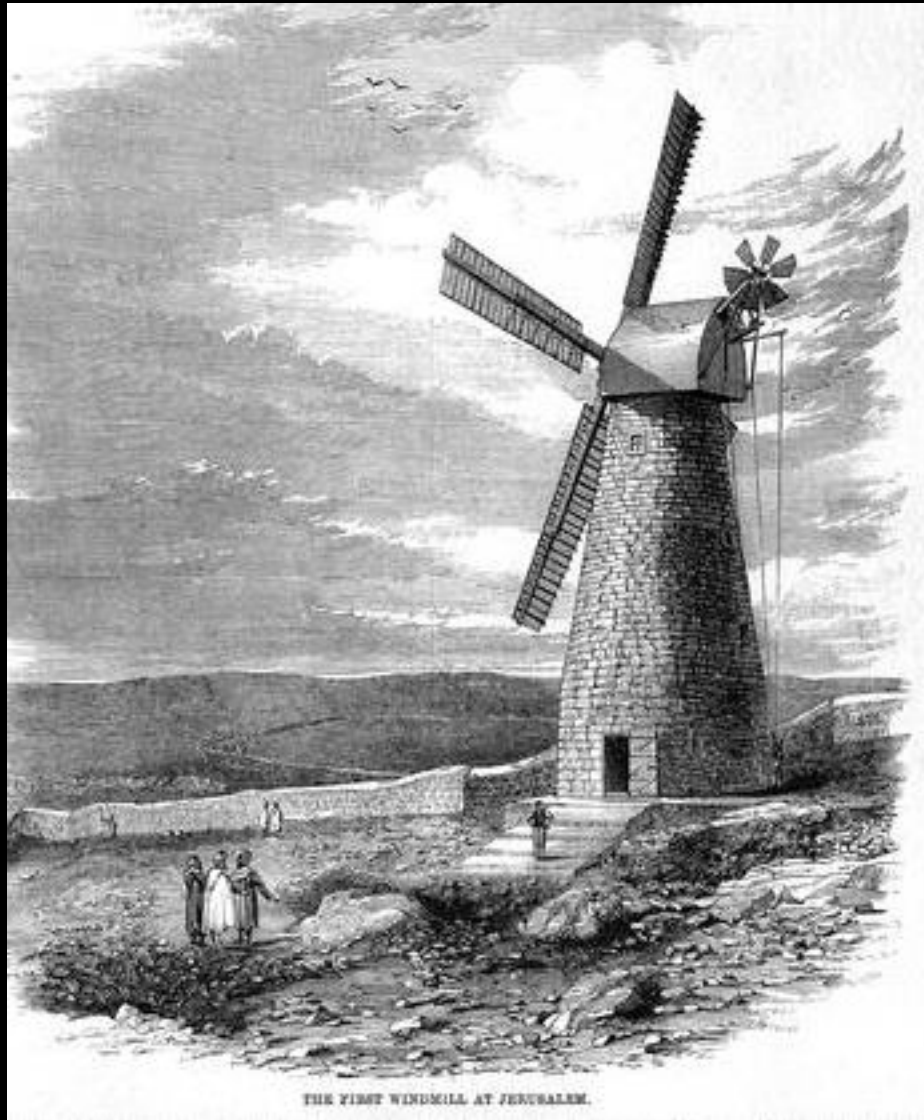
Spice containers (not on view)



Windmill Spice containers



Montefiori Windmill, Jerusalem, 1858 and today



Spice containers (not on view)

Joshua Marrow, Spice container in the form of Harkness Tower at Yale University, c. 2001, 2002.264a,b



Dabbah Judaica, Spice container, c. 1950, 2002.19.5



Boris Schatz, Ludwig Wolpert and the Bezalel School: goal to develop a distinctive “Hebrew” style, as opposed to having Jewish artists work in diasporic styles. The artists blended varied strands of surroundings, tradition and innovation. The use of Hebrew letters was one of the new motifs.

Self portrait, c 1930 oil on resin on panel, in a repousee brass frame



Blessing candles



Scribe



Blowing the shofar



Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert

It wasn't till Ludwig Wolpert(1900-82), a German metalsmith, arrived in 1926 created a new Israeli style: used stylized calligraphic Hebrew lettering as part of the design. He is credited with starting what became modern Judaica, elevating the ritual objects to museum quality.

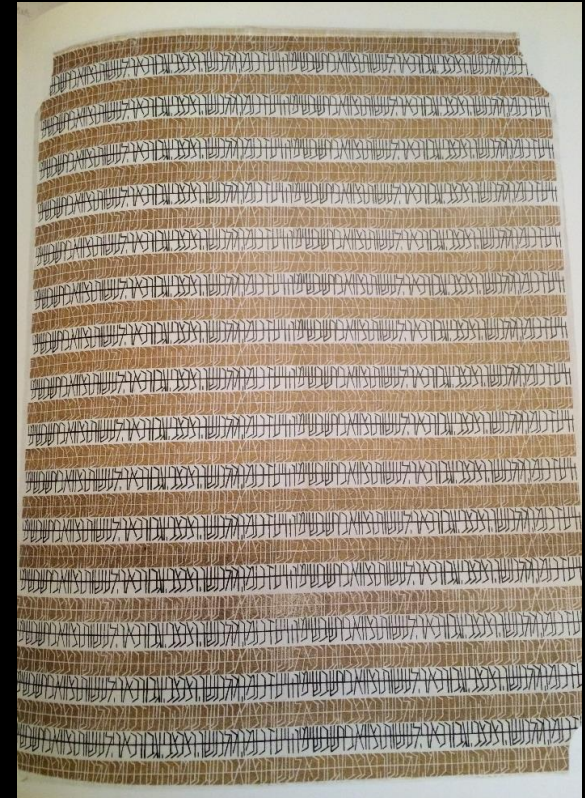
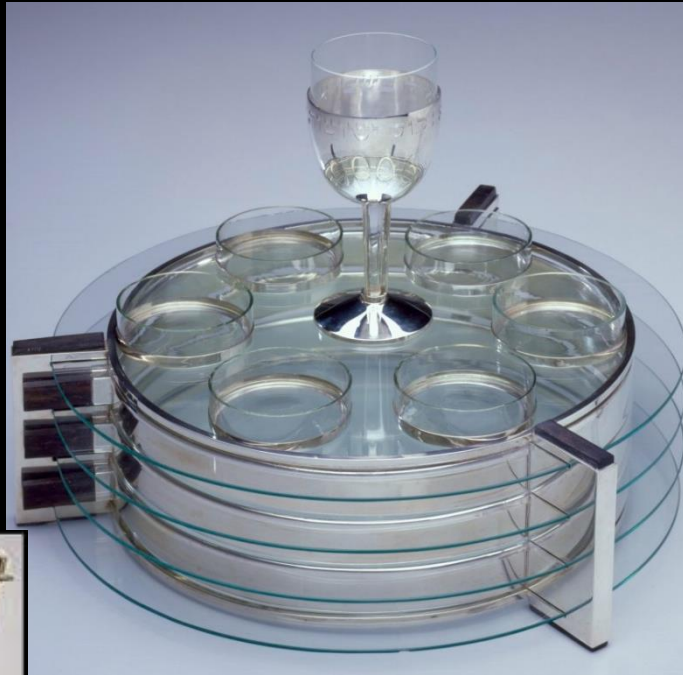
Counter clockwise from top left:
Megillah (scroll of Esther) case, c.
1965, 98.136.8a,b; Sabbath
candlesticks, c. 1960, 2008.2.3.1a,b;



Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert

“Wolpert's work is characterized by the use of stylized Hebrew letters as a primary design motif.”

(artsmia.org)



Moshe Zabari (b 1935) succeeded Wolpert at the Toby Pascher School until 1988 when he returned to Israel.
2001.90.2a,b

Not in our collection – but had to show it to you: Torah crown 1969



Jewish holidays follow the lunar calendar with an extra month put in 7 out of 19 years.

All holidays start at sundown and end at sundown (first 3 stars)

Rosh Hashanah: beginning of the 10 days of penitence and spiritual renewal.

Yom Kippur : Day of Atonement

Etrog (citron fruit) box, early
20th century, 98.136.18 (nov)

Isidor Kaufman, "The Descendant of
the High Priest", oil on panel

Sukkot



Silver box used as Etrog
(citron fruit) box,
Europe,
2003.228.39(nov)

Sukkah: a booth open on one side, roof can see the sky. The sukkah is the “booth” in the Feast of Booths, Sukkot.



Hanukkah

Hanukkah lamps: *hanukkiah* is a better word than menorah

Unknown artist,
Germany or
United States,
Hanukkah lamp,
early 20th
century,
98.136.6a,b



8 wick molded ceramic
oil lamp , Ancient
Israel,
3rd-5th c. CE
Israel Museum, NYC

Hanukkah lamps

Other Hanukkah lamps on view...

Counter clockwise from top left: Robert Lipnick, Hanukkah lamp, 1989, 2005.145.2; Michael Ende, Hanukkah lamp, 1986, 2000.172a-l; Rotger (Rudiger) Herfurth, Hanukkah lamp, c. 1760, 2008.2.1a,b; Unknown artist, Italy, Hanukkah lamp, 19th century, 98.136.13a,b; Unknown artist, Poland, Hanukkah lamp, c. 1800, 2001.177.7; Anatoli Luovitch Kaplan, Hanukkah lamp, early 1970s, 2005.24



Hanukkah lamps

Not on view



Celebrating the holiday: you didn't have to be at home. If you were traveling, you took a *hanukkiyah* with you.

Traveling Hanukkah lamp, 20th century
Unknown artist, *Probably Israel*
Silver
2002.137.4



Peter Shire, Menorah #2, 1986
Steel, anodized aluminum, brass, chrome, enamel
2011.4



Dreidels— A great miracle happened there! (here!)

- Dreidel (top), c. 1900
- Unknown artist, *European*,
- *Brass, nickel alloy*
- 98.136.1



We know the provenance of this object.

Combination Hanukkah lamp and dreidel, Michael Ende, 1982, silver and plexiglass, 2003.228.33 A-Q



Hanukkah lamp, c.1960, David Palombo, Iron with black patina, 2012.38



Purim story is embroidered on this English box: 1662 95.14A-BB



Purim

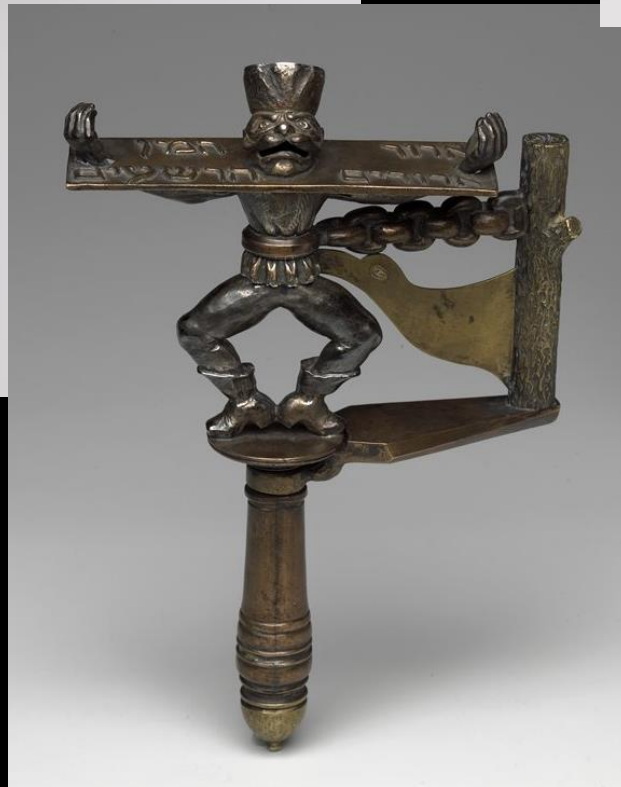
Megillahs cases are scroll holders. They can be any size! Purim megillah holders contain the Scroll of Esther.

Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert,
Megillah (scroll of Esther)
case, c. 1965, 98.136.8a,b (on
view)



Purim

Groggers are noisemakers.
(These are on view.)



Counter clockwise from top left:
Unknown artist, Middle East or India,
Grogger (noise maker), 20th century,
98.136.15; Unknown artist, Europe,
Grogger (noise maker), 20th century,
98.136.16; Michael Ende, Grogger
(noise maker), c. 1985, 98.136.2;
Michael Ende, Grogger (noise maker), c.
1985, 2003.228.41

Not on view: 1866, possibly Poland,
silver





Passover: the most celebrated and beloved holiday. My seder. Can you see the seder plate?ceremonial foods? Kiddush cups?Matzah?



Passover seder plates, matzah holders/covers, Elijah's cup, Miriam's cup

Seder plate, 19th c. Germany
98.136.14



Passover seder plate, 1880-1890,
Czechoslovakia 98.140



Passover

(Seder plates not on view.)



Passover, Elijah's cup

- Elijah cup, 20th c. 98.136.5



Counting the *omer* from Passover to Shavuot (nov)

Omer counter, 20th century
Unknown artist, *Israel*
Brass, other metals, polished stones, paper
98.136.12



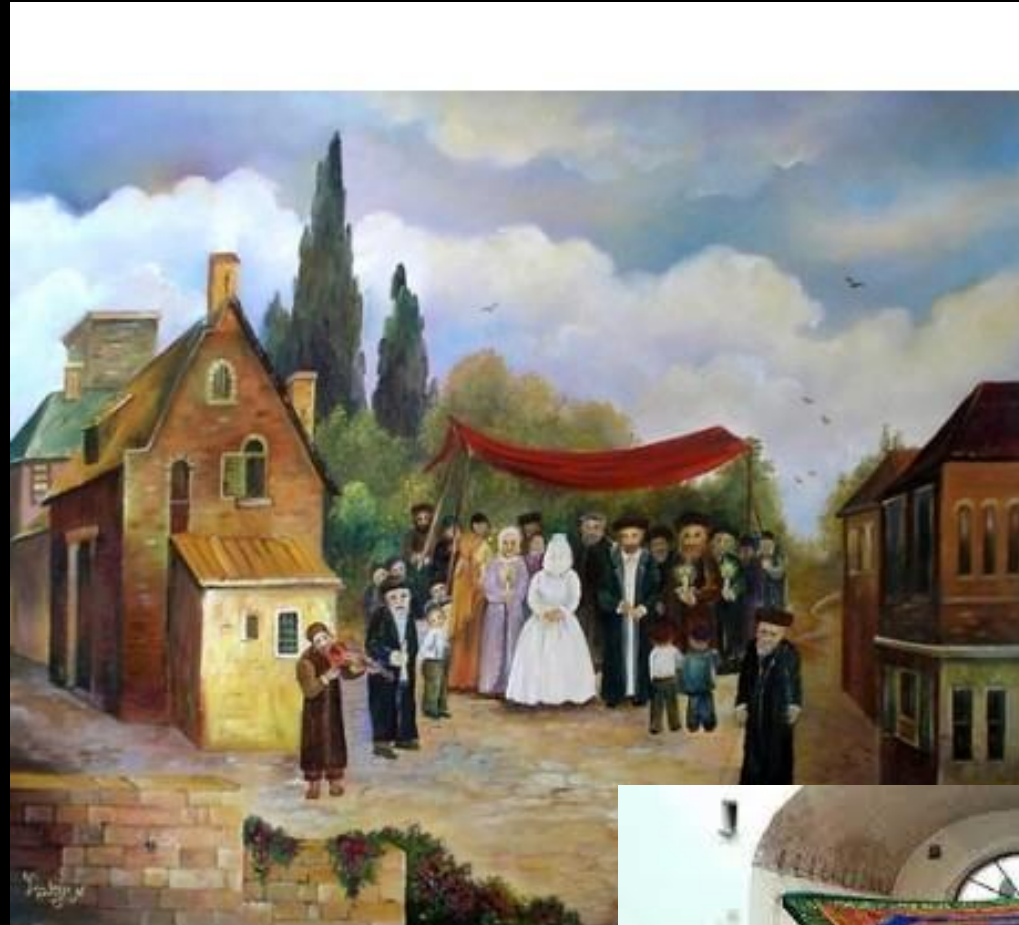
"Saphyr (Variation V)" omer counter, 2005
Tobi Kahn
Wood, acrylic pigment
2005.115



Life cycle: circumcision

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

- Family plus the community
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah: a 13 year old is his own person in the community; not just the child of a certain family.



Life cycle: marriage



Ketubah (marriage contract) **1879**,
Unknown artist, Iran, Paper, ink, pigment.
98.156.3



Marriage
kiddush cup,
Michael Ende, c
1985
2003.228.27



Israel, 1960
2001.177.2a,b



Wedding ring on chain,
c 1985, Michael Ende
2003.228.32

Ceremonial wedding rings

These ceremonial wedding rings are from the 16th-17th c CE from Italy/Southern Germany (Jewish Museum, London)

What was borrowed?
New? In the 20th c. version?



Alexander Tylevich's sculpture "Shackles of the Pale" 1994



Death: mourning customs

- Burial is soon after death
- *shiva*: first week:
community comes to the mourner
- *Shloshim*: first month
- First year
- *Yahrzeit*: every year on the date of the death (either Hebrew date or English date)

Judaism as a daily practice

Tefillin (prayer container) box, pair, late 19th c, Austria,
silver
2001.177.11



Prayerbook, c. 1775,
Italy, North Carolina
Museum

Going to live in Eretz Yisrael

- Aliyah Plaque, c. 1925
- Unknown artist, Kurdistan
- Silver
- 2000.100.3



Amulets

Amulet, Date Unknown

Silver

2003.228.4



Hamsa amulet, c. 1920
Unknown artist, Morocco,
Gold, diamonds, pearls
2003.165.3



Hand pendant, about 1850
Unknown artist, Morocco
Silver, enamel, glass 91.141.17