

FORT GANSEVOORT

The Jewish Museum
Art Reveals Jewish Diversity
Spring 2007

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artculture & news

A Titan of
20th-Century
American Art

The Sculpture of
Nelson: Constructing
a Legend, at The Jewish
Museum from May 5
through September
2007, reassesses
Nelson's legendary
achievements in the
context of the artist
and times. The development
of her sculpture
from tabletop pieces
to human-scale columns,
room-size walls and
mately environment
public art of architectural
scale—is related to
the complexity of her
history. Although Nelson
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T · H · E
JEWISH
MUSEUM

Art Reveals Jewish Diversity

A 21st-century Israeli artwork illuminates contemporary Jewish perspectives. An Italian artifact is centuries old. Both works are now on view in *Culture and Continuity: The Jewish Journey*.

Cherkassky's Haggadah

Zoya Cherkassky is an exceptional Israeli artist born in Kiev, Ukraine. Her first solo exhibition in 2003 in Tel Aviv—*Collectio Judaica*—featured paintings, sculpture, jewelry, furnishings, and ritual objects that explored historic, often anti-Semitic representations of Jews to western Christian culture.

The Museum has acquired a number of works from *Collectio Judaica*, including the artist's 50-page *Aachen Passover*

Zoya Cherkassky, *Had Gadya* page from *Aachen Passover Haggadah*, Tel Aviv, 2004. Screened print on paper. The Jewish Museum, New York; Purchase: Phyllis Greenspan Bequest, 2005-31-50.

Haggadah, which was inspired by the *Birds' Head Haggadah*, a 13th-century German work, and El Lissitzky's 1919, Russian Suprematist *Had Gadya Suite*. The page from her Haggadah on view depicts the "Had Gadya," or the last of the songs sung at the end

of the Passover seder. A Haggadah is an "instruction manual" for the Passover seder, a compilation of biblical passages, prayers, hymns, and rabbinic literature. The book also describes the order of events and rituals



in the seder, and explains the holiday's rituals. In modern times, Haggadahs have incorporated contemporary Jewish agendas and events and, just as new generations of Jewish children learn the meaning of Passover each year, the variety of Haggadahs gives an old story a new spin. The inspiring tale of the ancient liberation of Jewish slaves in Egyptian bondage is made fresh and relevant.

The purchase of Cherkassky's Haggadah was made possible by the generosity of Murray Greenspan in memory of his wife Phyllis, a dedicated staff member of the Education Department and a volunteer for two decades who passed away in September 2005.

Wedding Wall Panel or Table Top

About three feet wide by five feet high, this exquisite work dazzles the eye with an inlay technique called *pietra dura* (or hard stone). The marble frame is inlaid with a variety of colored stones, many of Italian marble, cut into different forms. A Torah ark is depicted, flanked by two candelabra and cabinets of books. A Hebrew inscription celebrates the joy of bride and groom.

This unique masterwork—only one other example, now lost, is known to have existed—was commissioned in the 18th or early-19th centuries for a wedding in the wealthy Sullam family. Since about 1840, the panel was in the possession of a family in Tbilisi, Georgia, and traveled with them to Constantinople and England in the 1910s.

See images of this glorious artwork—on loan since 2000—and a list of contributors that enabled its acquisition, on

Online Shop Sales Zoom

Talk about impressive numbers! This year's online sales are projected to be over 65% ahead of last year, which was 139% up from the prior year.

A thorough website redesign is one reason for recent success. The dynamic home page is easier to navigate. Attractive images of featured products are paired with more detailed product descriptions. A gift department was added, and

increased, resulting in orders from customers in all parts of the United States, as well foreign locales.

What people are buying varies tremendously. Basics—such as a mezuzah and scroll for a new home—are popular. Some buy multiples of an item, such as ten Haggadahs for a Passover seder. A few people even purchase hand-crafted,

highlights a product, sales take off.

"Our online store has made buying museum-quality Judaica and Jewish gifts more accessible to customers who are unable to visit the Museum," says Stacey Zaleski, Director of Merchandising. She's now looking toward an online gift registry and a wholesale shopping site. To visit the shop online, go to