

JEWISH SYMBOLS PROJECT



Jewish Symbols and Identity: Community Art Workshops

Wed / Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2, Jan 20 / 12:00 pm / Online

Rabbi Koffman and Ellen Alt, Artist-in-Residence

Explore your connection to four Jewish symbols that are an essential part of individual and communal Jewish identity and explore how each of us as individuals find meaning in them. In each session, participants will learn about a Jewish symbol with Rabbi Koffman and are invited to create related art pieces, guided by Ellen Alt.

Pieces created as part of these workshops will be included in our community wide art project . We welcome you into this community wide initiative!

Participants are encouraged to participate in as many sessions of the series as they would like.

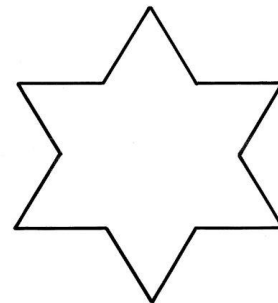
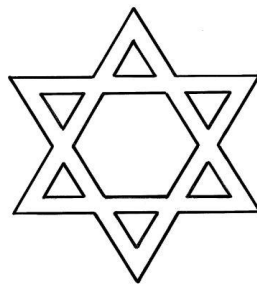
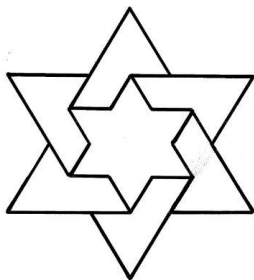
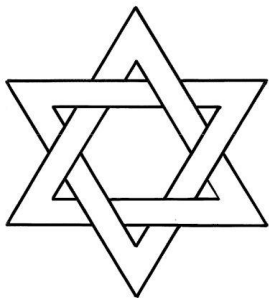
Directions for the creation of your symbol and how to send it Park Avenue Synagogue are included at the bottom of this presentation.

Timing for today:

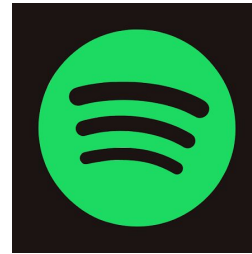
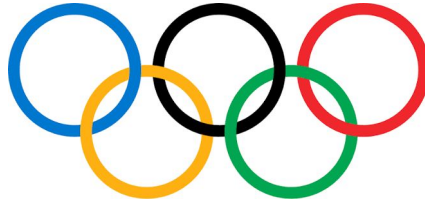
12:00 - 12:25 Teaching about the symbol, Lori

12:25 - 12:35 Directions and sketching ideas for creating your symbol, Ellen

12:35 - 1:00 Optional work time to create your symbol, Ellen



SYMBOLS IN THE WILD



JEWISH STAR



Yaacov Agam, 1980 and 1993

ORIGIN

- Earliest uses were not Jewish
- Found in India, in Buddhism, in Islam referred to as the “Seal of Solomon”
- In alchemy represent the “four elements air, water, earth and fire
- Used in Christian churches and cathedrals
- Started to be used Jewishly in the 14th century in Prague



Stamp Seal, 6th - 15th century CE



Amulet for travel, 19th - 20th century

HISTORY

- Began to be used more in the 17th and 18th centuries
- In the 17th century was used to mark the Jewish quarter in Vienna
- Began to be used much more broadly to mark Jewish identity beginning in the 19th century
- The Nazi's deliberately subverted it and turned it into a sign of humiliation and persecution

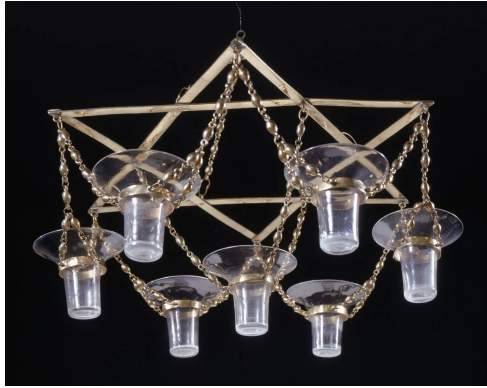


Jewish identification star and stamp, 1941



Michael David, Warsaw, 1980

RITUAL



Sabbath Lamp, 20th century
Passover Plate, Sutria, 1900's



- Today it is used commonly on Judaica objects -from seder plates to kiddush cups to mezuzahs
- It often is found on Jewish coffins and to mark Jewish gravesite

DESIGN



Sol LeWitt,
kippah, 2001

Robert Indiana, Four
Facets of Esther, 1967



- The actual meaning of the design is uncertain
- According to the Zohar the six points represent the six male sefirot in union with the seventh sefirah of the female
- A more modern commentary was advanced by Franz Rosenzweig in his “Star of Redemption” saying the interlocking triangles represent creation, revelation, redemption on one triangle and Man, the World and God on the other

ARCHITECTURE, PAS skylight

- It was chosen to highlight the center of our sanctuary ceiling
- It is currently being refurbished and will be re-installed next summer



ISRAEL



- The star was adopted by the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897.
- Following independence in 1948 the Provisional Council of State officially confirmed the familiar Zionist banner as the national flag of the State of Israel

CULTURAL EXPRESSSION



- It is a sign of Jewish pride and identity
- It is a sign of Jewish peoplehood and cultural identity



Issac Mizrachi 1991

HOW TO CREATE AND SEND YOUR SYMBOL

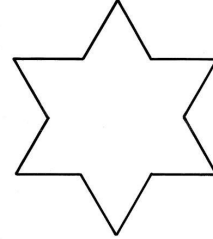
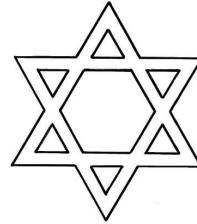
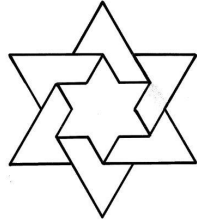
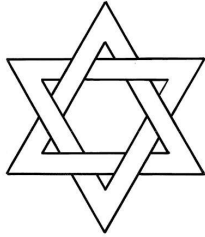
TEMPLATES - Print your symbol, see slide 12

GATHER YOUR ART SUPPLIES, see slide 13

OPTIONAL SESSIONS TO WORK ON YOUR SYMBOLS - Zoom and in-person,
see slide 14

GETTING YOUR SYMBOLS TO PAS - Mail them or drop them off, see slide 15

TEMPLATES FOR YOU TO PRINT



<https://pasyn.org/media/5fnd4rte/star-of-david.pdf>

- Choose one or more of the templates to decorate, paint, draw on, and make your own.
- Print on white cardstock or white paper.
- Work within the thick black borders. The background will not be included in the final image.

ART SUPPLIES

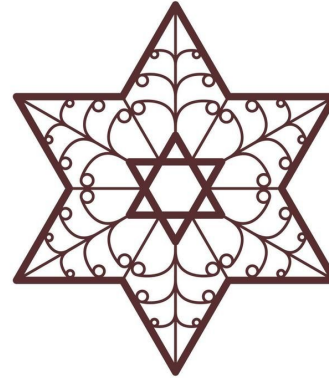
DIRECTIONS

- You can use any materials to create your symbol or symbols
- Create your artwork inside the symbol's thick black outline.
- The area surrounding the symbol will not be included in the final image

MATERIALS

- Pencil, eraser
- Markers or colored pencils
 - Note: if you use colored pencils please use medium to hard pressure when drawing to make sure that the colors show up in the final Image
- Watercolor
- Tempera or other paint, brushes, water cup
- Oil pastels
- Collage materials, glue, scissors
- Other materials

DECORATING IDEAS



OPTIONAL TIMES TO WORK ON YOUR SYMBOL WITH COMMUNITY

In-person at PAS:

Wednesday, Jan 27, 6:30 - 7:30 pm, 87th Street

Thursdday, Jan 28, 12:00 - 1:00 pm, 87th Street

On-line: <https://pasyn.zoom.us/j/82460687803>

Wednesday, February 2, 8:00 - 9:00 pm

Thursday, February 3, 12:00 - 1:00 pm

SENDING YOUR SYMBOL TO PARK AVENUE SYNAGOGUE

What to send:

We are collecting only the originals of all symbols. Please do not send pictures, scans, or other reproductions.

If you want a record of your artwork, please take a photo of the symbol for yourself.

How to prepare your art for sending:

- On the back of your symbol, write your first and last name and the city, state, and country where it was made
- Examples: Ellen Alt, New York City, NY, USA / Ellen Alt, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- Please do not fold your artwork. Keep it flat and protected by placing it in a 9" x 12" envelope, along with a cardboard sheet.

Mail your completed symbol to:

Park Avenue Synagogue
Jewish Symbols Project
C/O Patricia Ezewoko
50 East 87th Street
New York, NY 10128

OR

Drop off in person:

Place your completed symbol in a 9" x 12" envelope or folder marked "Jewish Symbols Project" and hand it to security at Park Avenue Synagogue, 50 East 87th Street, New York, NY 10128

DEADLINE FOR RECEIVING ALL SYMBOLS: FEB 22, 2027