Nancy Lee Katz

American, born in 1947, died in 2018

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, 1994, printed later

Gelatin silver print

Jewish Museum, Gift of Michael S. Sachs, 2023-19

In this sprightly portrait, Ruth Bader Ginsburg poses in her chambers at the United States Supreme Court. Perched atop a stool as if to accentuate her diminutive height, she holds a law book. The surrounding shelves hold photographs of Justice Ginsburg with presidents and other dignitaries. Ginsburg's book cart is decorated with an image of the Egyptian queen Nefertari being led by the goddess Isis.

Amulet, eighteenth–nineteenth century

Possibly made in Germany

Cast, repoussé, punched, and engraved silver and ink on paper

Jewish Museum, Gift of the Danzig Jewish Community, D 5a-b

This amulet entered the Jewish Museum's collection in 1939 as a part of a large group of objects sent for safekeeping by the Jewish community of Danzig (present-day Gdańsk, Poland). Its decoration incorporates a Hanukkah lamp, a Star of David, and a depiction of the Tablets of the Law. The cylindrical container at the top of the amulet contains fragments of a mahzor, the prayer book used during the High Holy Days. The tubular form recalls the case for a mezuzah, a scroll traditionally placed by Jewish people on their doorposts.

Though not religiously observant, Ruth Bader Ginsburg proudly noted that she was the only Supreme Court justice to install a mezuzah on her chambers' door. Ginsburg's commitment to advancing legal protections for marginalized people drew on not only Jewish tradition, but also on her experiences as a Jew: she noted that being Jewish "makes you more empathetic to other people who are outsiders." For Ginsburg, who grew up during the 1930s and 1940s, this commitment was amplified by her awareness of Nazi persecution during World War II.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Ruth Bader Ginsburg gift to the National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia, PA, 2021

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York

This simple pleated jabot—an ornamental ruffle that adorns the neck—recalls those commonly worn by lawyers and judges in Europe and its colonies from the eighteenth century to the present. Ginsburg noted that standard judges' robes in the United States are made for men, with a space around the neck for shirts and neckties to show. When she joined Sandra Day O'Connor on the Supreme Court in 1993 as its second female justice, the two decided that it would be appropriate to add "something typical of a woman" to their robes; to do so, they mined the history of legal dress while adding the practical element of sewn-in pockets.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Emmanuelle and the Charm Bracelet, 2006

Emmanuelle and the Key Necklace, 2021

Putting Grandma's Necklace on Emmanuelle, 2021

Archival pigment prints

Courtesy of Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York

Elinor Carucci is known for raw, emotionally charged photographs of herself and her family. Her twin children, Eden and Emmanuelle, have been the focus of two decades' worth of photographs that capture childhood in ways that seem both specific and universal. In *Putting Grandma's Necklace on Emmanuelle*, Carucci leans carefully over her daughter, her hands encircling her from above, suggesting jewelry as a symbol of maternal affection and care. Amulets such as the Persian inscribed pendant on view nearby echo this association.

Ginsburg revered her mother, Celia, who was an impassioned advocate for her daughter and passed away just before Ginsburg's high school graduation. "On days when I need extra energy, courage, staying power, or luck," Ginsburg said, "I wear my mother's pin."

Decorative breast panel, nineteenth century

Made in Eastern Europe

Silk and linen embroidered with metallic thread

Jewish Museum, Gift of an anonymous donor, JM 9-78

This decorative panel, known as a *brusttukh* or *brusttikhl* in Yiddish, was part of traditional Eastern European Jewish dress in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Women wore these panels around the neck, secured with a ribbon and tucked into a skirt.

An elaborately decorated *brusttukh* like this one would have been worn on the Sabbath and for festivals rather than every day. The accessory might have been given to a bride, along with an apron and a hair covering, to symbolically encourage piety and childbearing. Because the *brusttukh* covered the fastenings of a bodice, it was also understood as a marker of modesty. Ironically, eye-catching panels like this one would have drawn attention to the wearer's bust, while the intertwined coils of its abstracted floral or vegetal design echoed the laces of the bodice underneath.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Husband Marty Ginsburg's words, "It's not sacrifice, it's family," 2020

Archival pigment prints

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-33

Courtesy of Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York

The lining of this elegant but playful collar (bottom) is embroidered with a quote by Justice Ginsburg's husband, Marty, who passed away in 2010. Each layer of the collar refers to a member of the Ginsburg family. Custom-made by M.M.LaFleur, a New York–based workwear brand with a feminist bent, this collar was given to Justice Ginsburg by her former law clerks at a reunion in 2018.

The Ginsburgs' partnership was highly unusual for its time. Marty refused to call his choice to prioritize his wife's career a "sacrifice," underscoring his deep respect for her. Justice Ginsburg felt that similarly egalitarian relationships should be available to all. Her lived experience drove her quest for "equal citizenship stature for men and women."

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Early in Ginsburg's time on the Supreme Court, 2020

One of Ginsburg's Original Lace Jabots, 2020

Archival pigment prints

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-39, 2021-45

These jabots date to Justice Ginsburg's early years on the Supreme Court. She often wore the jabot below for portraits and ceremonies, including for several court group photographs.

Before machine manufacture, lace was dazzlingly labor-intensive to make, and for centuries was a ubiquitous status symbol among European elites. Despite its lofty associations, however, lace was typically made by women for low pay and without labor protections.

Gender-based employment discrimination was the subject of Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire (2007), a case in which the Supreme Court ruled against Lilly Ledbetter, a woman suing her employer for being paid substantially less than her male colleagues. Ginsburg's dissenting opinion, among her best known, accused the court of ignoring the insidious ways that women suffer from unfair treatment at work. The opinion laid the groundwork for the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2009.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Final Term and Lying in State at the Capitol, September 2020, 2020

Court Collar, 2020

Archival pigment prints

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-37, 2021-36

After the French Revolution in 1789, men's fashion in Western Europe and North America became largely subdued, with minimal prints and decoration. Lace—previously considered stylish regardless of the wearer's gender—became associated with femininity. Ginsburg and her fellow female justice, Sandra Day O'Connor, adopted lace accessories as a way to underscore their presence on the otherwise all-male court. In doing so, they cleverly appropriated the traditional attire for (male) judges and lawyers, which had once been a symbol of patriarchy.

Ginsburg wore the collar depicted in the photograph at left several times during her final term on the bench. She also wore it after her death in September 2020, while lying in state at the Supreme Court and at the United States Capitol—the first woman as well as the first Jewish person to have been accorded this honor.

Marriage amulet, 1850–83

Made in Morocco

Gold, emeralds, and probably rubies

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Helen and Jack Cytryn Fund, 2018-27

This amulet, along with other jewelry, was worn by Simhah Cohen El-Haddad at her berberisca ceremony in 1883. Held the week before a wedding, this traditional Moroccan Jewish ritual centers on the initiation of the bride into the secrets of married life and her new role as a transmitter of tradition.

Shiviti amulet, late nineteenth century

Made in Persia (present-day Iran)

Flat-chased, engraved, and soldered silver

Jewish Museum, Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2988

This type of amulet was intended to be worn on a necklace and provide protection against the evil eye. *Shiviti* amulets are always inscribed with the first half of Psalm 16:8 ("I have set the Lord always before me"). They often include Psalm 67, which invokes divine protection.

Amulet, early twentieth century

Made in North Africa, possibly Morocco

Engraved and traced silver

Jewish Museum, Gift of Dr. Harry Friedenwald, JM 23-47

Hand-shaped amulets have a long history in North Africa. Jews and Muslims alike believe that they offer protection against the evil eye of someone who might envy the wearer's good fortune. This motif is known as a *hamsa*, which comes from the Arabic word for "five."

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

University of Hawai‘i Jurist in Residence Collar (2017), 2020

Gift from Her October Term 2016 Clerks, 2020

Archival pigment prints

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-42, 2021-35

In 2017 Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a jurist in residence at the University of Hawai‘i. This necklace depicted in the top photograph is made of Hawaiian shells. The jewelry was commissioned from the Polynesia-based artist Rava Ray and presented to the justice as a gift.

Amuletic necklace, early twentieth century

Made in Syria or North Africa

Cast silver, copper, and metal alloy, animal tooth, and coral, stone, and/or glass

Jewish Museum, Gift of Dr. Harry Friedenwald, JM 74-47

This necklace contains pendants that protect against a variety of ills. Examples include charms in the shape of a toad for teething problems, a sword or ax to embolden a male fighter or to wish for brave sons, a spoon to ensure that food is always in good supply, and a key, perhaps to paradise.

A necklace with a key pendant is also visible in Elinor Carucci's photograph of her daughter Emmanuelle (on view nearby).

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

“Elegant” Collar, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-34

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

South American Collar: the last collar Ginsburg wore in her lifetime, at a wedding she officiated on August 30, 2020, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-38

Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts (Keter Workshop)

Founded in Jerusalem, 1906

Amulet case or Sabbath key holder, 1910–20

Filigreed silver

Jewish Museum, Bequest of Goldie Futterman, 1999-62

This object may have been used as an amulet case or may have allowed Jewish people to "wear" their keys—a workaround for the halakhic prohibition of carrying items outside the home on the Sabbath. The work is emblazoned with a six-pointed star. This multicultural motif was probably first used as a distinctive Jewish emblem in the 1600s, when it was adopted by Prague's Jewish community. By the nineteenth century, the star had become the preeminent symbol of the Jewish people, appearing on numerous forms of Judaica. It was a popular motif for the first artists trained at the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts, founded by the Zionist Congress.

In the early days of Bezalel, many metalworkers were Yemenite Jews, for whom metalworking had long been a traditional occupation. Other examples of this Yemenite art form are on view nearby. Filigree, the technique of twisting and curling metal threads, resembles lace in its delicate appearance.

Birth amulet, early twentieth century

Made in Baghdad

Pierced gold, onyx, and pearls

Jewish Museum, Gift of Francine Simon, 2015-19

Israel Dov Rosenbaum

Nationality unknown, birth and death dates unknown

Amulet for expectant mother, 1879–80

Made in Pidkamin', Austro-Hungarian Empire (in present-day Ukraine)

Ink and gouache on cut-out paper

Jewish Museum, Gift of Helen Finkel Green in memory of Israel Dov Rosenbaum, Bessie Rosenbaum Finkel, and Sidney Finkel, 2004-65

While most of the amulets on view here are jewelry, paper amulets make up a significant portion of those in the Jewish Museum's collection. This cut-paper amulet, signed by its maker, Israel Dov Rosenbaum, incorporates a cartouche with the text of Psalm 121 written in a spiral and flanked by lions. This psalm, which praises God as a guardian "who neither slumbers nor sleeps," is often invoked to safeguard women in labor.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Majority Collar, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-44

The counterpart to her better-known Dissent Collar (an image of which is on view nearby), this collar was one Justice Ginsburg often donned to deliver a majority opinion from the bench. Over her tenure, she authored more than two hundred such opinions for the Supreme Court. Ginsburg also wore this collar to Barack Obama's State of the Union Address in 2013, as well as to one of the first gay weddings she officiated, later that year.

While a handful of Ginsburg's necklaces and collars were handmade by artists or incorporated precious materials, many others were mass-produced and affordable—this one, a gift from her 2016 law clerks, came from Anthropologie. This egalitarian sensibility was fitting for a woman who grew up in a working-class family and whose legal work remained sensitive to economic inequality.

South African Collar: Ginsburg's favorite collar, worn in her official portrait, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-43

This collar was among Ginsburg's favorites. She had a special affinity for the constitution of South Africa. Authored in 1994, the charter of the country's first multiracial democracy explicitly protects abortion rights and health care and seeks to minimize income inequality.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Dissent Collar (2012), 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-49

Late in her career, as the Supreme Court shifted politically to the right, Justice Ginsburg became renowned for her meticulous—and often searing—dissenting opinions. "There has been a tradition in the United States of dissents becoming the law of the land," she noted. "You're writing for a future age, and your hope is that, with time, the court will see it the way you do."

Made by Banana Republic, Ginsburg's famous Dissent Collar was included in a gift bag she received at the 2012 *Glamour* Women of the Year Awards. In 2014 she publicly acknowledged the association between this collar and her dissenting opinions: "It looks fitting for dissent."

Amuletic necklace, late nineteenth–early twentieth century

Probably made in Kurdistan

Engraved silver and coral beads

Jewish Museum, Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4879

The swooping swords decorating this necklace feature amuletic inscriptions in Hebrew. The one on the sword at left bears the forty-two-letter name of God, consisting of seven groups of six letters. The inscription begins on the scabbard and continues onto the blade. The second sword is inscribed with the names of the archangels Uriel, Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, and Nuriel, who are often summoned for protection in amulets.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

A Lace Collar, Gift of Ruth Bader Ginsburg to ANU, the Museum of the Jewish People, Tel Aviv, Israel, 2021

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York

Stiffelio Collar, the Metropolitan Opera, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-41

The lower collar is a copy of one worn by the famed opera singer Plácido Domingo, among Ginsburg's favorite tenors, in a production of the composer Giuseppe Verdi's *Stiffelio* at the Metropolitan Opera House. Famous for her measured temperament, Justice Ginsburg was utterly unrestrained in her passion for opera. This bond she shared with Justice Antonin Scalia, her ideological opponent and close friend. The two appeared onstage as supernumeraries, or extras, in several productions and were also the subjects of a 2015 comic opera by the American composer (and lawyer) Derrick Wang.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

International Women's Forum at the New Mexico Supreme Court Collar, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-46

This necklace was a gift from the New Mexico chapter of the International Women's Forum. Commissioned from Gerard and Mary Calabaza, the jewelry incorporates stones and shells from around the world in a design that draws on the artists' Santo Domingo Pueblo (Kewa) heritage.

Pride Collar (2016), 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-32

At San Francisco's ninth annual Gay Pride Parade in 1978, a group of artist-activists debuted the rainbow flag as a symbol for the burgeoning gay liberation movement. This rainbow collar was a gift to Justice Ginsburg in 2016, one year after she sided with the majority in Obergefell v. Hodges, which enshrined marriage rights for same-sex couples in federal law. In the years leading up to the decision, Ginsburg had officiated several wedding ceremonies for same-sex couples, becoming the first member of the high court to do so.

Shmuel Habib

Nationality unknown, birth and death dates unknown

Amulet, 1827–28

Made in the Middle East

Ink on paper

Jewish Museum, Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4537

On this mystical drawing, the Hebrew inscription—located beneath the arches at the bottom—indicates that it was used as an amulet. The text reads, "All who each day painstakingly recite this hymn, in the form of the menorah, with its flowers and buds and calyces, and with the seven branches issuing out from it, suggest the seven planets; it is certain that he will not be harmed and he will find favor in the eyes of God and men. Since our Temple was destroyed, all who say it are as if they had truly lit it." At upper left is the same biblical injunction to "pursue justice" that Justice Ginsburg prominently displayed in her chambers.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Donald Trump's Inauguration Day Collar (2017), 2020

Oral Arguments Collar, 2020

Archival pigment prints

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-50, 2021-51

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Wild lace collar from Johannesburg by artist Kim Lieberman, 2021

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York

The artist who made this collar noted that the Hebrew word for lace, "tachrah," carries the value of 613 in Hebrew numerology. This number, which corresponds to the number of commandments given in the Torah, has myriad mystical associations in Jewish tradition.

"Wild lace" refers to the way that the geometric patterns that hold together a piece of lace are made. Instead of using pins to fix the pattern, the lace's twists and knots simply build on themselves. The resulting organic effect offers a dynamic contemporary counterpoint to Ginsburg's more traditional lace collars.

2015 State of the Union Address Collar, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-48

This collar was a 2013 gift from the Women's Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program and the Leadership and Advocacy for Women in Africa Fellowship Program at the Georgetown University Law Center. Ginsburg wore it during Barack Obama's 2015 State of the Union Address.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Collar worn in official photo of all nine justices after Justice Kavanaugh joined the Court (2018), 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-47

Justice Ginsburg wore this collar in the group portrait of the Supreme Court justices in 2018, made after Justice Brett Kavanaugh joined the court. When Kavanaugh, the second member of the court appointed during the presidential tenure of Donald Trump, replaced moderate Justice Anthony Kennedy, the court swung decisively to the political right.

For many, Kavanaugh's appointment signaled that Roe v. Wade—the landmark 1973 case that legalized abortion in the United States—was in danger. Though Ginsburg was critical of Roe's legal arguments, she understood its importance. In her confirmation as Supreme Court justice, she testified: "The decision whether or not to bear a child is central to a woman's life, to her well-being and dignity. It is a decision she must make for herself. When Government controls that decision for her, she is being treated as less than a fully adult human responsible for her own choices."

Woman's amulet, late nineteenth–early twentieth century

Made in Kurdistan

Engraved, traced, filigreed, and cast silver and glass beads

Jewish Museum, Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 5319

The square medallion at the center of this necklace has Hebrew inscriptions on both sides. On the front, twenty angels are invoked by name, accompanied by the forty-two letter name of God; on the back are the eight-letter name of God and the names of the angels Sanoi, Sansanoi, and Samangalaf, believed to protect women from Lilith during pregnancy and childbirth.

Lilith, who exists in mythology throughout the ancient Near East, is often interpreted as Adam's first wife. She is regarded as a demon in Jewish tradition, a force to be trapped, tamed, or protected against, particularly menacing expectant mothers and newborns. As a safeguard, the prophet Elijah forced her, when the names of the three angels are inscribed near a childbed, to desist in her evil inclinations.

Amulets like this one and others in this exhibition attest to the mortal peril of pregnancy and childbirth; Ginsburg argued forcefully that this danger should never be faced involuntarily.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Columbia Law School Twenty-Fifth Anniversary on the Supreme Court Gift, 2020

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York

Columbia Law School, Justice Ginsburg's alma mater, commissioned this collar as a gift for her in 2018. Elena Kanagy-Loux, a founder of the Brooklyn Lace Guild and a renowned lace historian, designed and created the textile. The shape incorporates the number 25, commemorating Ginsburg's quarter century on the Supreme Court.

Amuletic necklace, late nineteenth century

Made in Yemen

Engraved, cast, stamped, and filigreed silver with granulation

Jewish Museum, Gift of Mrs. Rachel Kandil Bengelsdorf, 2000-37

This amuletic necklace was worn by several generations of women in the donor's family, who came from Sharaf, Yemen, and immigrated to Israel. The necklace incorporates eight coins depicting the Austro-Hungarian empress Maria Theresa. The custom of adding coins to jewelry or clothing was popular among Yemenite women of all faiths. A symbol of prosperity, the coins could also be removed in times of need—an example of how jewelry can function as portable wealth for migrants. The two cylindrical containers may have enclosed scrolls or amulets.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was the daughter of immigrants. Her father moved to New York from present-day Ukraine at thirteen, while her mother's parents left Central Europe just before their daughter's birth and resettled on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Both families spoke Yiddish, and both worked hard to provide for their families in their new homes.

Elinor Carucci

Israeli, born in 1971

Weddings Collar, 2020

Archival pigment print

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Fund, 2021-40

Ginsburg was given this collar in September 2017 as a thank-you gift for officiating the wedding ceremony of a member of her staff. She subsequently wore it to more weddings.

Beads from a marriage necklace, late nineteenth–early twentieth century with later addition

Beads: made in Sana'a (in present-day Yemen); chain: probably made in Kurdistan

Filigreed, gilt, and handworked silver

Jewish Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore R. Racoosin, JM 38-79

The five filigree beads on this necklace originally belonged to a larger necklace typically worn by brides in Sana'a, Yemen. At some point, the beads were made into a shorter necklace, to which a silver chain was probably added later.

Marriage necklaces, late nineteenth–early twentieth century

Made in Kochi, India

Gold and tortoiseshell

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Judaica Acquisitions Committee Fund, 2009-28; Bequest of Johanna L. Spector, 2008-158

In the period during which these objects were made, Kochi Jewish brides were heavily bedecked with gold earrings and necklaces that covered their bodies from neck to waist. The short tortoiseshell-and-gold necklace, of a type deemed essential for a wedding costume, would have been worn closest to the bride's neck.

Fibulae with pectoral, late nineteenth–early twentieth century

Made in Ida Ou Semlal, Morocco

Cast and engraved silver, cloisonné enamel, glass cabochons, and coins

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Henry Herzog Family and Friends Fund in memory of Ruth Herzog, 1999-58

Fibulae, late nineteenth–early twentieth century

Made in Ait Baha, Morocco

Cast and engraved silver

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Judaica Acquisitions Fund, 1999-60a-b

In Morocco silversmithing was for centuries a common profession among Jews. A Jewish silversmith in the western Anti-Atlas mountain range made these fibulae—brooches worn to hold a cape or cloak in place. Each lobe of their cloverleaf shape is an abstracted finger of the hand-shaped *hamsa*.

Fibulae with pectoral, late nineteenth–early twentieth century

Made in Tamegroute or Taliouine, Morocco

Cast, filigreed, and engraved silver with granulation, carnelian, and leather

Jewish Museum, Purchase: Judaica Acquisitions Fund, 1999-61