

Gallery Guide

# What is the meaning of light?

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This installation of Hanukkah lamps from the Jewish Museum collection is made possible by the Norman E. Alexander Family G Foundation.

Digital guides supported by



Hear from curators and artists and discover the stories of Hanukkah lamps from around the world

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Light is fundamental to human experience, meeting a basic need for illumination and carrying symbolic meaning across cultures and generations. Light marks the passage of time, the rhythm of seasons, and life's transitions—from celebration to remembrance. A powerful example is Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, celebrated in winter, when nights are longest and light is a symbol of hope and resilience.

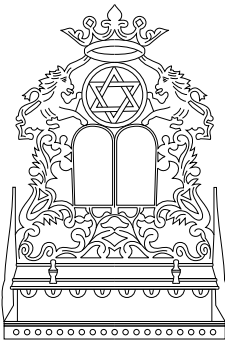
In the mid-second century BCE, Jews in ancient Israel faced persecution under Seleucid Greek rule. Their religious practices were banned, and the Temple in Jerusalem was desecrated. A priestly family known as the Maccabees led a revolt, ultimately reclaiming and rededicating the Temple. Tradition holds that they found only enough oil to light the Temple's menorah—a seven-branch candelabrum—for one day, but it miraculously lasted eight days. To commemorate this event, Jewish communities worldwide light Hanukkah lamps (also called *hanukkiyot* or *menorot*), which have eight branches plus a ninth for the shamash, the candle used to light the others. One light is kindled on

# The Netherlands

The Netherlands, in contrast to much of Western Europe, afforded Jews relative freedom as minority citizens. Both Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal and Ashkenazic Jews with roots in Eastern and Central Europe settled there. Though the two communities maintained separate traditions and synagogues, both used Hanukkah lamps that incorporated a blend of Sephardic customs and Dutch design.

Such lamps were typically made from copper-alloy sheet metal, a material widely used in the Netherlands during the 1700s. The lamps were designed to hang on walls and resembled Dutch wall sconces of the period; their placement also echoed early Jewish tradition, especially maintained in Sephardic communities, of placing of Hanukkah lamps on or near doorways. The decoration frequently combined motifs common in Dutch art—tulips, hearts, and a variety of birds—with symbolic imagery drawn from Jewish tradition and folk art, including lions, seven-branch menorahs, and Stars of David.

1



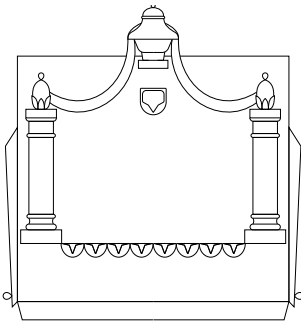
**Hanukkah lamp, 1874**  
The Netherlands  
Pierced, traced, punched, and repoussé copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2955

each of the eight nights of the holiday, with the lamp often placed in a window or doorway to share a family’s intimate celebration with the wider community.

This installation features more than 130 Hanukkah lamps from the Jewish Museum collection of more than one thousand lamps, one of the largest in the world. These lamps, crafted around the globe—from Asia to the Americas—and from ancient times to today, reveal how Jewish communities have upheld their heritage while engaging with surrounding cultures.

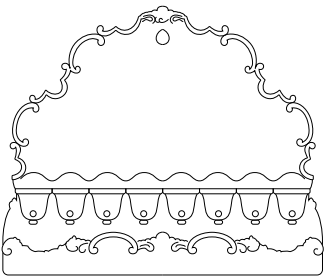
Each lamp—whether passed down through generations, salvaged from upheaval, or created by contemporary makers—tells a story. All unite in purpose: bringing light to darkness, illuminating not only space but also the enduring spirit of a people connected throughout time and place.

2



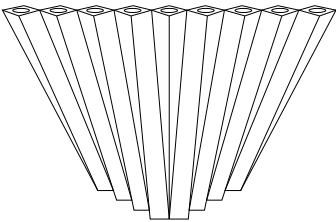
**Hanukkah lamp, 1800s**  
Probably the Netherlands  
Hand-worked, appliqué, and cast copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3477

3



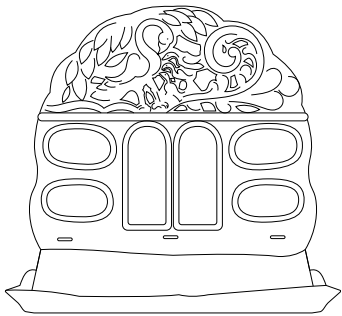
**Jan de Koning**  
Active c. 1750, Amsterdam  
**Hanukkah lamp, mid-1700s**  
Amsterdam  
Hand-worked, appliqué, chased, and cast pewter  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1287

4



**Eduard Hermans**  
Born in 1959, Leveroy, the Netherlands  
**Hanukkah lamp, 1988**  
Amsterdam  
Glazed stoneware  
Purchase: Judaica Acquisitions Fund, 1989-67

5



**Hanukkah lamp, early 1700s**

Probably Amsterdam

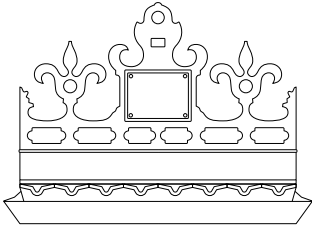
Repoussé, pierced, engraved, punched, and silver-plated copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4201

The unusual imagery of a mother pelican piercing her breast to feed her young decorates this lamp. This symbol was widely known in early Christianity to represent Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection. In 1639 the pelican was adopted as the emblem of Amsterdam’s Portuguese Jewish synagogue, Talmud Torah, newly formed through the unification of three congregations. For Jews of Iberian descent who had fled persecution in Spain and Portugal, the pelican may have represented resilience and renewal after generations of forced exile.

Beneath the pelican appear the Ten Commandments, flanked by biblical verses in Dutch rather than Hebrew. This use of the vernacular suggests engagement with the context of the surrounding Dutch society. Whether signaling the hand of a Christian silversmith or the input of a Jewish patron, this design speaks to a moment of cultural adaptation.

6



**Hanukkah lamp, 1756 or 1757**

Probably the Netherlands and Jamaica

Cast, appliqué, and sheet-metal copper alloy and engraved silver

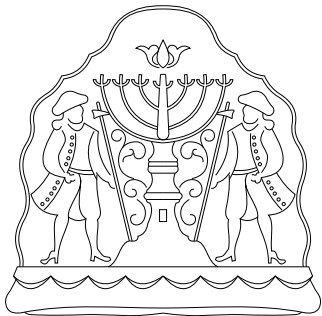
Gift of Dr. Harry Friedenwald, Baltimore, JM 13-47

Provenance: probably made in the Netherlands; imported to Jamaica (via London or Curaçao), 1700–1750; donated by Yaakov (Jacob) Israel Bravo to the synagogue in Jamaica, around 1750 (dedication plaque added after Bravo’s death in his memory, 1756 or 1757); probably shipped as scrap brass to Baltimore, 1850; probably Mendes Cohen (died c. 1914), Baltimore; by descent to his cousin Eleanor Cohen, Baltimore, until 1918; Dr. Harry Friedenwald, Baltimore, until 1947; donated to the Jewish Museum, 1947

This lamp, with its fleurs-de-lis (stylized flowers) and pierced backplate, echoes Dutch Sephardic lamps from the 1630s. This formal connection reflects the lasting influence of Amsterdam’s Sephardic community (Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal) across the Atlantic.

The donor, Jacob Bravo, was a member of a prominent Jewish merchant family with ties to Jamaica, part of a broader diaspora linking Amsterdam, Curaçao, and other Dutch colonial centers with the English-speaking Caribbean. As with many merchants of the time, Bravo’s commercial success was connected to the system of enslaved labor that underpinned the Atlantic economy.

7



**Hanukkah lamp, 1700s**

The Netherlands

Repoussé, chased, and punched copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 5773

The two men depicted on this lamp, holding long tapers for lighting the Temple menorah, are clean-shaven and dressed in tricorne hats, wigs, skirted coats, and breeches. This ensemble was the fashion for Dutch gentlemen, including members of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish (Sephardic) community, in the 1700s. While Jews in many parts of Europe and the Middle East were required to wear distinctive clothing, no such requirements were enforced in Holland.

8



**Hanukkah lamp, probably 1800s**

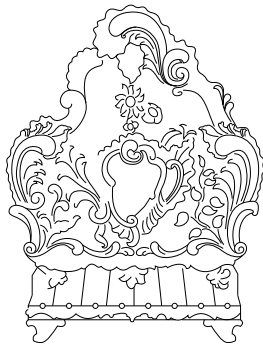
Probably the Netherlands

Cast copper alloy

The Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, M 323

Provenance: Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, Warsaw, Poland; sent to the United States for consideration to be exhibited in the 1939 New York World’s Fair, but instead was exhibited in part at the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1939; sold by Rose Mintz to the Jewish Museum, 1947

9



**Reynier de Haan**

Born in 1712, the Hague, the Netherlands, died in 1783, the Hague, the Netherlands

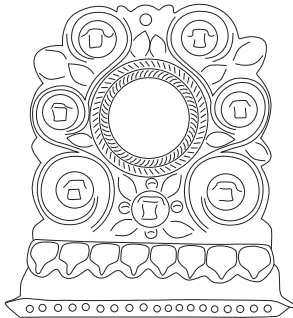
**Hanukkah lamp, 1752**

The Hague, the Netherlands

Repoussé, engraved, traced, punched, appliqué, and cast silver

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3693

10



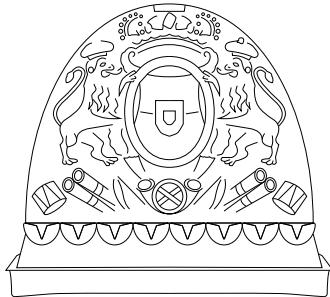
**Hanukkah lamp, 1700s**

The Netherlands

Repoussé, traced, punched, and cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 169

11



**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1730–70, with later additions**

The Netherlands

Repoussé, traced, and cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, by exchange, F 2765

# Italy

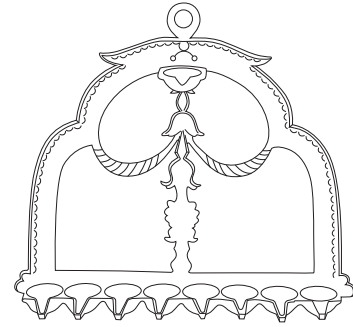
The Jewish community in Italy is one of the oldest in the world, dating back to the second or first century BCE, when Jews arrived as merchants, diplomats, and prisoners of war following Roman conquests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Over time the community grew as Jews from Eastern Europe, Spain, and Portugal settled in Italy following waves of persecution and expulsion.

Although Italian Jews faced periods of restriction, many rulers offered relative safety and economic opportunity, enabling Jewish involvement in trade, banking, and medicine. Between the early 1500s and 1800s, however, Italian Jews were required to live in segregated neighborhoods known as ghettos, which limited their rights and access to broader society. Yet within these confines, vibrant religious and artistic life flourished.

During the Renaissance (fourteenth–seventeenth century) and Baroque (seventeenth–early eighteenth century) periods, Jewish communities commissioned ceremonial objects—including Hanukkah lamps—for synagogues and homes. Because Jews were barred from metalsmithing guilds, Christian artisans crafted most of these ritual objects with designs from Italian decorative arts of the time.

In the mid-twentieth century antisemitic legislation and persecution increased under the Italian Fascist leadership of Benito Mussolini; in 1943 Nazi authorities rounded up thousands of Jews in major cities—including Rome, Milan, and Florence—and deported them to transit, concentration, and death camps. In some outlying Italian-controlled territories, local authorities resisted Nazi orders, contributing to the survival of a significant number of Jews.

**12**

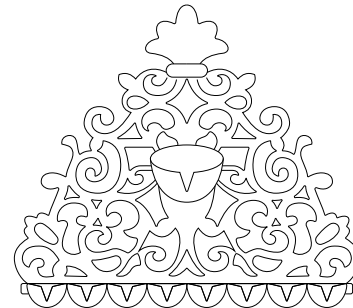


## Hanukkah lamp, late 1700s–early 1800s

Italy

Cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 5080



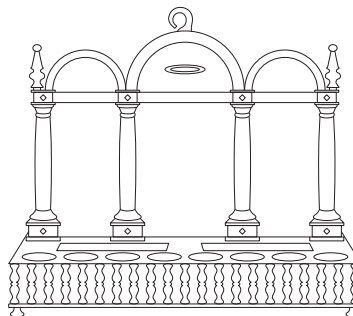
**13**

## Hanukkah lamp, 1700s

Probably Italy

Cast and hand-worked copper alloy

The H. Ephraim and Mordecai Benguiat Family Collection, S 113



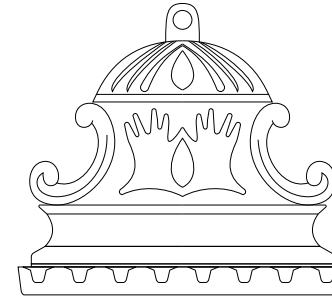
**14**

## Hanukkah lamp, probably 1700s

Italy

Sheet-metal, appliqué, and cast copper alloy, wood, and iron

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2125



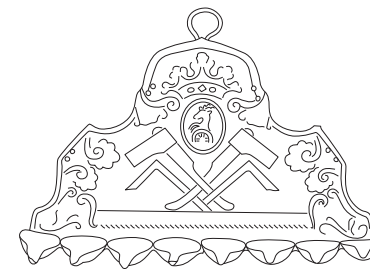
**15**

## Hanukkah lamp, 1747 or 1748

Italy

Traced copper alloy, sand cast after lost-wax original

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2965



**16**

## Hanukkah lamp, 1700s, with later additions

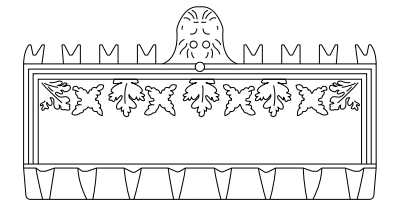
Italy

Repoussé, traced, and punched copper alloy

Probably Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3752

This lamp is emblematic of the popular eighteenth-century trend of transforming brass plaques, possibly former civic or guild emblems, into Hanukkah lamps by attaching a row of oil containers to them. The central coat of arms, featuring crossed axes, a deer, a wheel, and woodworking tools, likely signals local or regional affiliations rather than military ones.

These emblems are associated with the noble Erdödy family of Austria and the Bavarian town of Behringersmühle (now in Germany), whose name means “mill.” The long-spouted oil cups are typical of Italian Hanukkah lamps. Repurposing plaques in this way suggests practical reuse and the connection to local craft traditions within Jewish communities.



**17**

## Hanukkah lamp, 1500s

Italy

Copper alloy, cast using lost-wax technique

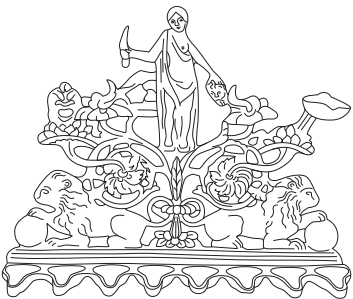
Gift of the Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. List Family, JM 100-73

The Italian Renaissance, a period of vibrant artistic and technical innovation, was the period during which this Hanukkah lamp was made. Jewish ceremonial objects from this era often are often influenced by surrounding culture, in this case the new methods of lost-wax casting. In this process a wax model is encased in a mold, melted away, and replaced with molten metal to create a detailed cast.

The lamp’s form echoes bronze wall sconces found in affluent Renaissance homes. The crenellations, which became a decorative motif on Hanukkah lamps as early as the 1400s, recall medieval castle architecture.



18



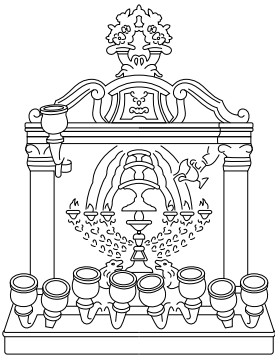
**Hanukkah lamp, probably 1800s**

Italy  
Cast and chased copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3777

Hanukkah lamps from Italy often position Judith as a central figure with a sword and the decapitated head of Holofernes, illustrating her popularity during the Italian Renaissance. According to the apocryphal Book of Judith, the heroine saves her city and people from conquest: gaining the trust of the enemy general Holofernes, Judith seizes the moment to behead him and sends his army into retreat. This tale resonates with Hanukkah’s celebration of survival against all odds. Her seminude draped clothing reminiscent of Greek and Roman sculptures, furthermore, link Hanukkah and her story to the virtues and heroism of Classical mythology.

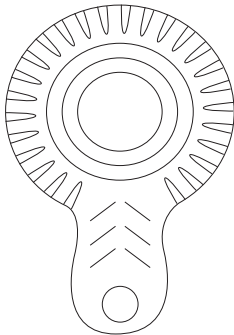
19



**Hanukkah lamp, 1700s, with later additions**

Italy  
Repoussé, traced, punched, and cast copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2663

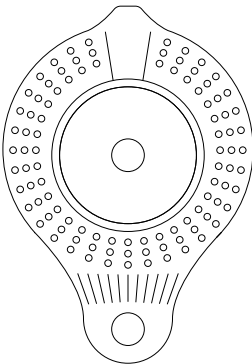
20



**Lamp, 100–c. 10 BCE**

Eastern Mediterranean  
Mold-formed and fired clay  
Gift of Bernard and Tzila Weiss, 1994–672

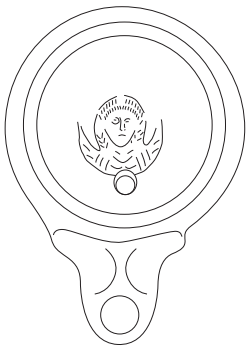
21



**Lamp, 100s–300s CE**

Eastern Mediterranean or North Africa  
Mold-formed, slipped, and fired clay  
Gift of Bernard and Tzila Weiss, 1994–675

22



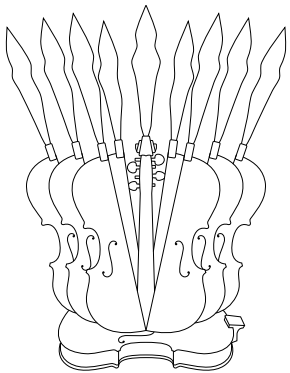
**Lamp, c. 50–100 CE**

Eastern Mediterranean  
Mold-formed, slipped, and fired clay  
Gift of Bernard and Tzila Weiss, 1994–676

Jews arrived in Italy around the second or first century BCE following Roman conquests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Mold-formed clay lamps like this one were widely used across the Roman Empire for everyday lighting. Their simple forms, organic patterns, and colored clay slips reflect the utilitarian style of ancient household ceramics.

The story of Hanukkah, which celebrates the 164 BCE survival of Judaism in the face of persecution, was still recent history for Jews living under Roman rule when these lamps were made. The custom of lighting eight flames in a single lamp possessing multiple branches had not yet been standardized, but individual oil lamps may have been used for celebrating Hanukkah.

23



**Arman**

Born in 1928, Nice, France, died in 2005, New York

**Hanukkah Lamp, 1997**

Origgio, Italy  
Brass  
Collection of Camilla and Isa De Benedetti, Casale Monferrato, Italy



Arman, a French American artist, transformed everyday objects into powerful works of art. In this reimagining of a Hanukkah lamp, he uses deconstructed violin shapes—a tribute to his father, a cellist—for the body of the piece. At the top of the lamp, a single violin neck holds the shamash (the helper candle used to light the others during Hanukkah). The instruments take on new life, their gleaming brass surfaces evoking movement, light, and celebration.

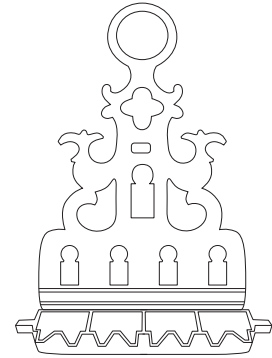
# North Africa

Most Jewish communities in North Africa were part of the Sephardic (descendants of Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal) or Mizrahi (origins more broadly in the Middle East and North Africa) traditions. While customs vary based on family origins, there is often shared religious practice and heritage.

Living within Islamic-majority countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia, these communities preserved Jewish traditions and blended with local cultures. They retained distinctive rituals, languages, and religious practices while integrating regional artistic influences.

Jewish artisans and metalsmiths in these regions crafted Hanukkah lamps usually in silver or copper alloy. Typically designed to hang on walls, these bench-style lamps feature a flat backplate and a line of oil reservoirs. Their decoration draws heavily on Islamic art: pierced or openwork backplates with pointed arches, arabesque scrolls, and abstract geometric motifs.

24



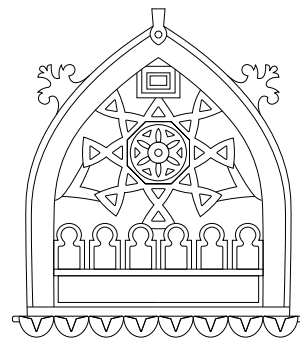
## Hanukkah lamp, 1800s

Central Anti-Atlas Mountains, Morocco

Cast and enameled copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3804

25



## Hanukkah lamp, 1850–1900

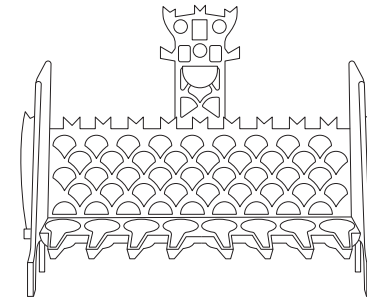
Fez or Meknès, Morocco

Cast and appliqué copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3274

The small, rounded ornament at the center of this lamp is part of a floral motif, recalling decorative details found on jewelry from Fez or Meknès. The lamp's classic bench form is intended to hang on a wall. Its pierced decoration, row of horseshoe arches, and etched arabesques (scrolling, interlaced vegetal forms) are characteristic of Islamic art.

26



## Hanukkah lamp, 1800s–early 1900s

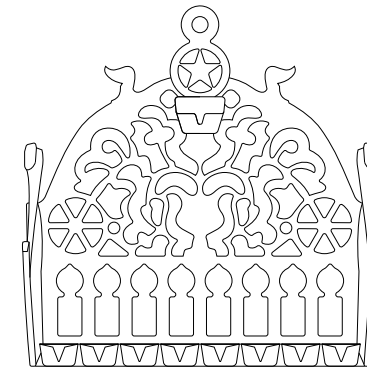
Coastal North Africa

Cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 152

This Hanukkah lamp exemplifies a fusion of artistic practices that was shaped by trade between Jewish communities in North Africa and Italy. The fish-scale backplate, turreted side elements, and visible metal rivets are hallmarks of North African design. In contrast, the rectangular backplate with rooftop crenellations and the rounded oil containers echo Italian forms. These elements taken together suggest the lamp was likely made in North Africa by an artisan familiar with Italian forms that were circulating in the Mediterranean.

27



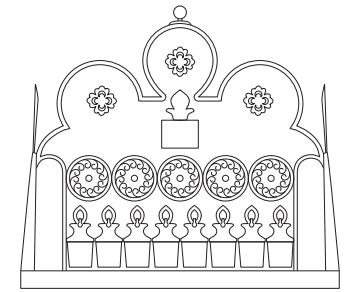
## Hanukkah lamp, late 1800s–early 1900s

Probably Tunis, French Protectorate of Tunisia (now in Tunisia)

Cast copper alloy

Gift of Samuel and Lucille Lemberg, JM 47-61

28



## Hanukkah lamp, 1800–early 1900s

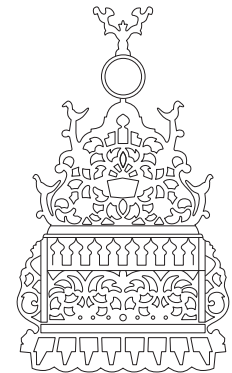
Possibly Essaouira, Morocco

Traced, appliqué, parcel-gilt, and cast silver

Purchase: Judaica Endowment Fund and the Nash Aussenberg Memorial Fund, 1996-46

▶ 403

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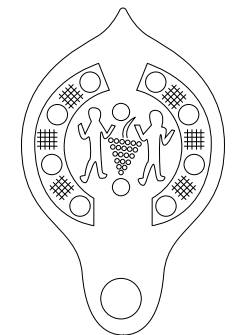
## Hanukkah lamp, 1800s

Anti-Atlas Mountains, Morocco

Cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3400

30



## Lamp, 400–600s CE

North Africa

Mold-formed, stamped, slipped, and fired clay

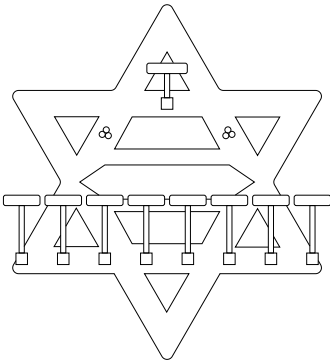
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4349



# Asia

Jewish history in Western and Eastern Asia dates from the late 700s to early 600s BCE, when the Assyrian Empire conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the ancient Kingdom of Israel. In 586 BCE the Babylonian Empire captured Jerusalem, destroyed the First Temple—the ancient center of Jewish worship—and began the exile of Jews to Babylonia (now in Iraq). This event marked the beginning of a major phase of the Jewish Diaspora, initiating centuries of dispersion across empires, including later settlement in Persia (now Iran). Over time, Jewish communities spread even farther east, forming networks across Asia.

Jewish merchants in Asia transported goods such as textiles, spices, and precious metals between the Islamic and Christian worlds. Jewish ceremonial objects from these regions reflect cultural and artistic exchange, featuring, for example, classic Persian motifs or Chinese decorative patterns. In the 1900s the rise of Communism and Nazism in Russia and Europe altered political dynamics in Asia, contributing to the decline of some established Jewish communities. During the 1800s and 1900s new communities formed in cities including Tokyo, Bangkok, and Shanghai, many of which continue to thrive today.



31

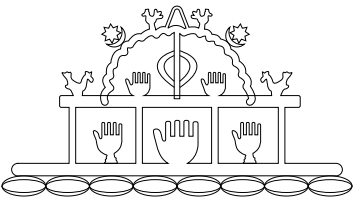
## Hanukkah lamp, 1800–early 1900s

Probably Bombay (now Mumbai)  
Pierced, engraved, traced, punched, and cast copper alloy  
Purchase: Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney L. Quitman, by exchange, 1998-57

Lamps in the form of the Star of David were common in the Bene Israel Jewish community, located around Mumbai on the western coast of India. Bene Israel traces its origins to Jewish ancestors who were said to have been shipwrecked on India’s western coast around the second century BCE. Over time the group developed unique cultural and religious practices blending Jewish and local Indian influences.

The flat, geometric form, pierced decoration, and symmetrical composition of this lamp are representative of the modern style from the late 1800s and early 1900s. Created by local metalsmiths, such lamps meld Jewish symbolism and Indian craftsmanship.

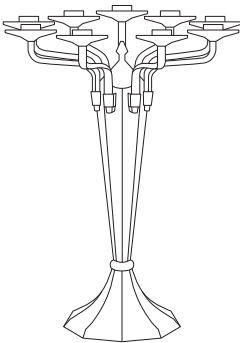
The Star of David became popular in Jewish ceremonial art during the 1800s and was later adopted as the emblem of the Zionist movement in 1897. Its presence here—alongside the Hebrew word for “Zion”—may express the Bene Israel community’s aspiration to connect with their ancestral homeland.



32

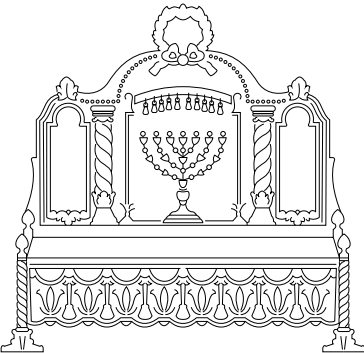
**Hanukkah lamp, 1800–early 1900s**  
Baghdad, Ottoman Empire (now in Iraq)  
Cast copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2919

▶ 404



33

**Hanukkah lamp, 1940**  
Baghdad, Iraq  
Repoussé, punched, and cast silver  
Gift of Sun Soffair, 1996-153



34

**Hanukkah lamp, early 1800s**  
Probably Ottoman Empire  
Repoussé, traced, engraved, punched, appliqué, and cast silver  
Gift of Mrs. Wolf Wolfinson, JM 95-52



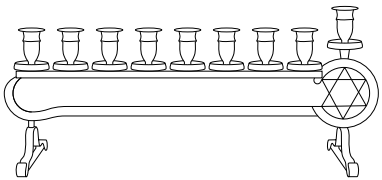
35

**Donald E. Kooker (designer)**  
**Joy B. Steward, Robert J. Creato, and**  
**Rene A. Vidaurri (fabricators)**

**Hanukkah lamp, 1951**  
Republic of Korea, inscriptions added in Japan  
Chased and punched bullet casings and artillery shell  
Gift of Chaplain Meir Engel, JM 59-52

A rare piece of trench art (objects made from military gear, often by soldiers), this piece offers a striking instance of interfaith cooperation during wartime. In 1951, as Hanukkah approached, United States Army Chaplain Meir Engel, stationed in Korea with the X Corps, was unable to find a lamp to celebrate the holiday with Jewish soldiers. A fellow officer referred him to First Lieutenant Donald E. Kooker of the First Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company, who designed a Hanukkah lamp that army craftspeople fashioned from bullet casings and an artillery shell. A friend of Chaplain Engel later brought the lamp to Japan, where its inscriptions were added. Engel used the ritual object that year in Korea and soon after donated it to the Jewish Museum.

▶ 405



36

**Hanukkah lamp, early 1900s**  
India  
Cast, engraved, and enameled copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4029

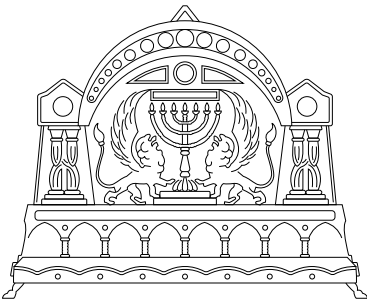
# Israel

For thousands of years, what is now Israel has been home to many cultures and traditions. Its artistic production demonstrates this diversity, shaped by groups including ancient Canaanites, Israelites, Palestinian Arabs, Jewish communities from around the world, and other populations.

The Hanukkah lamps on view display a range of styles: intricate Islamic patterns and calligraphy; Ottoman domes and arches; the flowing, organic lines of German Art Nouveau (known as Jugendstil); and the bold colors and floral designs of Eastern European folk art. These aesthetics emerged over centuries of changing rulers, including the ancient Egyptians, British, Byzantines, Crusaders, Islamic caliphates, Ottomans, and Romans, who left distinctive marks on the region’s visual language.

Following the British Mandate (1917–48) and the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, artists at the New Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts in Jerusalem sought to forge a modern style. They drew on biblical themes and Hebrew lettering while incorporating contemporary movements, such as Art Nouveau, and regional elements, including Middle Eastern arabesques and native flora and fauna. Ceremonial objects like these Hanukkah lamps illustrate the vibrant cultural landscape that links ancient traditions with Israel’s diverse contemporary communities.

37



**Ze’ev Raban**  
Born in 1890, Łódź, Russian Empire (now in Poland), died in 1970, Jerusalem

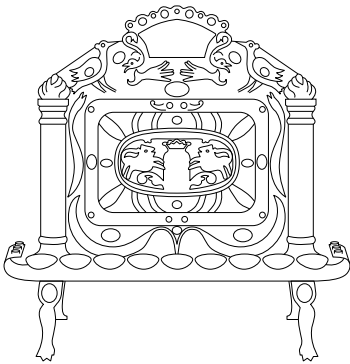
**Sharar Cooperative Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts**  
Founded in 1906, Jerusalem

**Hanukkah lamp, early 1920s**  
Jerusalem  
Die-stamped copper alloy  
Probably Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 478

At the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts, a distinct decorative art style developed—known as the Bezalel style—characterized by flowing lines, natural imagery, and graphic symbolism. This style drew inspiration from Ottoman architecture, Islamic design, and German decorative arts, as seen in this lamp’s polished circular details and bold graphic motifs.

At center, lions frame a seven-branch menorah executed in high relief (carved deeply from the background). Across the top and at center, bold Hebrew typography, which was popular among Bezalel School artists, references traditional hymns and prayers sung on Hanukkah. Discs on either side of the elegant arch imitate ancient Jewish coins from Roman and Hellenistic periods, symbolizing Jewish independence and the bounty of the land.

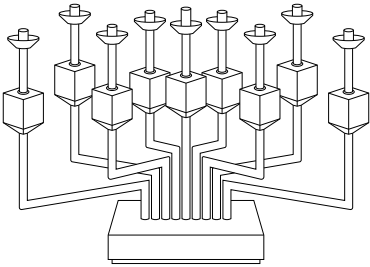
38



**Moshe Smilovici**  
Born in 1912, Romania, died in 1962, Israel

**Hanukkah lamp, 1950s**  
Tel Aviv, Israel  
Repoussé, engraved, traced, punched, and appliqué silver, gold, plastic, and glass  
Probably Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3611

39

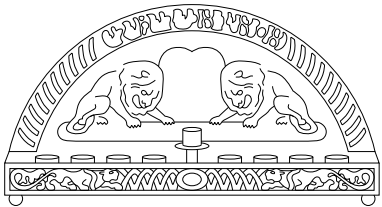


**Yaacov Agam**  
Born in 1928, Rishon LeZion, British-Mandate Palestine (now in Israel)

**CandelabrAgam (Hanukkah lamp), c. 1980**  
Paris  
Cast copper alloy and ball bearings  
Gift of The Noon Foundation, Cecilia and Samuel Neaman, 1981-307a-j

Part sculpture and part ritual object, this Art Deco-inspired lamp features mobile arms and dreidel-shaped candleholders that rotate and spin on their axes. Art Deco, a style popular in the early twentieth century, is known for its bold geometric shapes, symmetry, and sleek, modern materials. Created by Yaacov Agam—who studied at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem—this lamp conveys the artist’s view that Judaism values life as a “dynamic, creative, changing process,” a quality he believes should be embodied in ritual design.

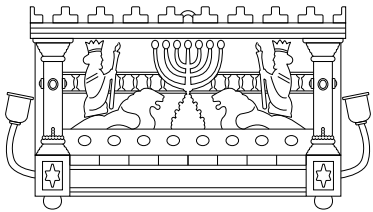
40



**Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts**  
Founded in 1906, Jerusalem

**Hanukkah lamp, 1909–29**  
Jerusalem  
Repoussé, traced, and pierced copper alloy and semiprecious stones  
Gift of the Estate of Prof. and Mrs. Richard Gottheil and Eva Leon, JM 26-54

41



**Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts**

Founded in 1906, Jerusalem

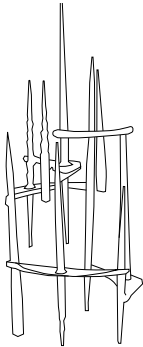
**Hanukkah lamp, 1908–29**

Jerusalem

Cast, filigree, and pierced silver, turquoise, and carnelian

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4904

42



**David Palombo**

Born in 1920, Jerusalem, died in 1966, Jerusalem

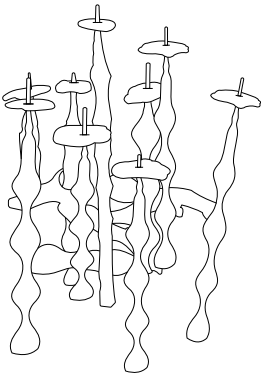
**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1960–66**

Jerusalem

Painted wrought iron

Gift of the Rivka and Zvi Tenenbaum Collection in memory of Leonard Bernstein on the centennial of his birth and in honor of his dedicating the nocturne “HaLil” to their son the flutist Yadin Tenenbaum, 2018-72

43



**David Palombo**

Born in 1920, Jerusalem, died in 1966, Jerusalem

**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1960–66**

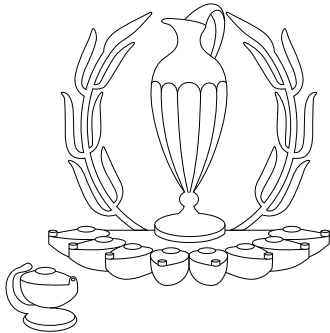
Jerusalem

Painted wrought iron and stone

Purchase: Contemporary Judaica Acquisitions Fund, 2015-7

The combination of dark wrought iron and smooth, light-colored stone creates a striking contrast in this Hanukkah lamp by David Palombo. Its highly sculptural form reflects the artist’s abstract, expressive style. The twisting arms convey a sense of tension and resilience, evoking the collective trauma of the Holocaust and the hope surrounding the establishment of modern Israel—events that deeply shaped Palombo’s generation.

44



**Maurice Ascalon**

Born in 1913, Hungary, died in 2003, Cuernavaca, Mexico

**Pal-Bell Company (manufacturer)**

Founded in 1939, Tel Aviv, British-Mandate Palestine (now in Israel), closed in 1956

**Hanukkah lamp, 1950**

Tel Aviv, Israel

Cast and patinated copper alloy

Jewish Museum, JM 6-54

45



**Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts**

Founded in 1906, Jerusalem

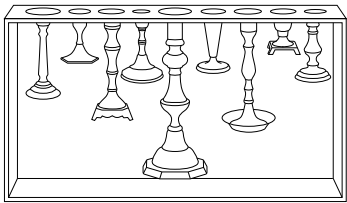
**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1929–32**

Jerusalem

Cast and die-stamped copper alloy and glass

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1882

46



**Naama Steinbock (designer)**

Born in 1975, Israel

**Idan Friedman (designer)**

Born in 1975, Israel

**Reddish Studio**

Founded in 2002, Tel Aviv, Israel

**Menorah (Candlesticks United Hanukiyah) (Hanukkah lamp), 2011**

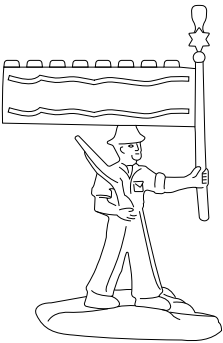
Tel Aviv, Israel

Painted steel with metal candlesticks

Purchase: Contemporary Judaica Acquisitions Committee Fund, 2011-21

In this unique interpretation of a Hanukkah lamp, nine candlesticks from different regions, periods, and styles are mounted on a white steel frame. Sourced from various homes and flea markets where they once sat unused, the candlesticks illustrate the broad diversity of Jewish life, united within a shared cultural and historical framework. The designers at Reddish Studio reference the menorah—the seven-branch candelabrum from the ancient Jewish Temple in Jerusalem—often interpreted as a symbol of unity. This lamp, in turn, expresses togetherness in multiple ways.

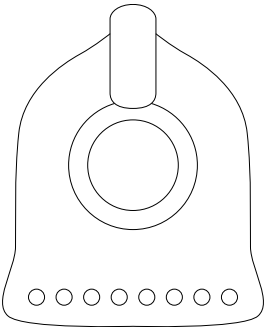
47



Hanukkah lamp, 1950s

Israel  
Cast and patinated copper alloy  
Gift of Manfred and Judith Anson, 1992-152

48



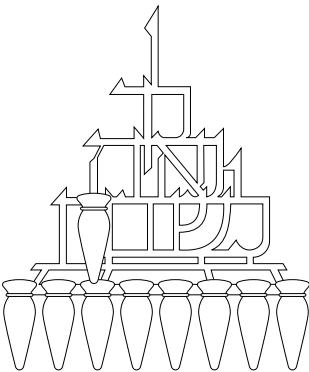
Lamp, 250–500 CE

Eastern Mediterranean  
Mold-formed, slipped, and fired clay  
Gift of the Betty and Max Ratner Collection, 1981-75

In the year 70 CE the Roman Empire conquered Jerusalem, destroying the second Jewish Temple and solidifying a period of Roman rule that lasted more than seven centuries. Jewish communities continued to live in the region and gradually incorporated aspects of Roman material culture in their daily lives, including lamps like this one. This ancient lamp, with its eight wick sockets, is an unusual early version that may align with the Hanukkah custom of kindling eight lights. The now-standard Hanukkah lamp with eight lights plus a shamash (helper light), however, did not appear until the Middle Ages. Lamps like this one were likely used for daily illumination and holiday

observance alike. Its organic decoration resembles patterns found on contemporary household vessels, suggesting how Jewish ritual practices were embedded in the rhythms of everyday life.

▶ 406



49

Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert

Born in Hildesheim, Germany, 1900, died in 1981, New York

Hanukkah lamp, c. 1955

Jerusalem  
Nickel silver and glass  
Purchase: Dr. Abram Kanof and Frances Pascher Fund, JM 10-58a-b

50



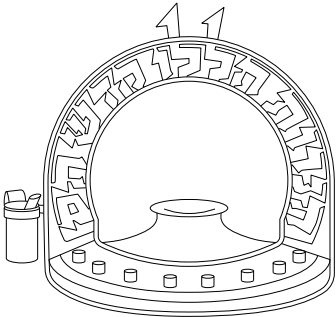
Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert

Born in Hildesheim, Germany, 1900, died in 1981, New York

Hanukkah lamp, c. 1950

Jerusalem  
Cast copper alloy  
Purchase, JM 51-64

51



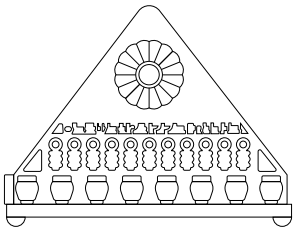
Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert

Born in Hildesheim, Germany, 1900, died in 1981, New York

Hanukkah lamp, 1935–48

Jerusalem  
Pierced silver  
Purchase: Judaica Acquisitions Fund, 1984-56a-c

52



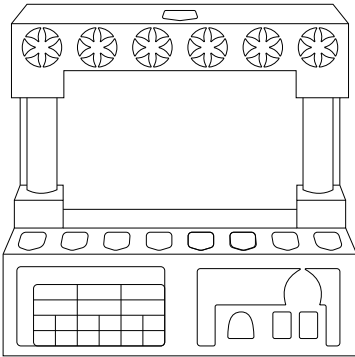
Possibly Sharar Cooperative Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts

Founded in 1906, Jerusalem

Hanukkah lamp, 1913–29

Jerusalem  
Die-stamped copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3393

53



Hanukkah lamp, c. 1880–1930

Ottoman Empire or British-Mandate Palestine (now Israel)

Chiseled, incised, and painted limestone

Gift of the Collection of Oscar and Regina Gruss, 1994-706

Stone Hanukkah lamps are known from Morocco and Yemen. This example has rowboat-shaped oil wells, typical of both ritual and everyday lamps produced in Yemen. Its rosette decorations and architectural design are unusual for Yemenite lamps and may have been inspired by Roman-period tombs that dot the rocky hills around Jerusalem. At the base are a wall—likely the Western Wall, a remnant of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem—and a domed structure, probably the tomb of the biblical matriarch Rachel.

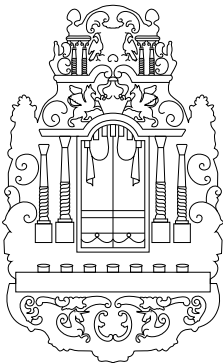


# Eastern Europe

Beginning in the 1700s most Eastern European Jews were forced to live in the Pale of Settlement, a vast area under Russian Empire control that included parts of present-day Belarus, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, and Ukraine. By 1900 the Pale was home to nearly five million mostly Yiddish-speaking Jews.

Hanukkah lamps from this region represent the largest group in the Jewish Museum’s collection—many gathered, salvaged, and donated—reflecting the region’s once-flourishing Jewish life and subsequent immigration to the United States. These lamps are distinctive in style, often incorporating folk art motifs such as birds and deer, as well as references to Torah arks and seven-branch menorahs inspired by lavishly painted wooden synagogues throughout the Pale. Their intricate design exemplifies Eastern European craftwork, particularly filigree—tiny wires twisted into delicate patterns.

Shifts in regional authority and policies over the years have repeatedly affected Jewish rights and freedoms. For example, Jews were at times excluded from metalsmithing guilds and at others allowed to participate, making it difficult to determine whether Jewish craftspeople or Christian artisans were responsible for many of these lamps.



54

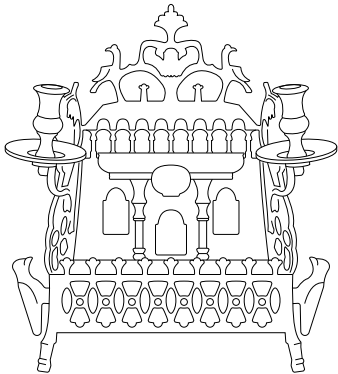
**Hanukkah lamp, 1787**

Brody, Galicia, Habsburg Empire  
(now in Ukraine)

Repoussé, pierced, appliqué, parcel-gilt, and cast silver and copper alloy, marked ZK

The H. Ephraim and Mordecai Benguiat Family Collection, S 260

During the 1700s, many elaborate Eastern European synagogues were built featuring lavish wooden Torah arks, ornamental cabinets meant to house the Torah scrolls. This lamp mimics the architectural design of one of these arks, especially in its folk art motifs of birds and animals, stacks of arches, European Solomonic (twisted) columns, and balconylike stands for the oil cups. The lamp is notably designed to hang on the wall, a style originating in Sephardic (Iberian) or Mizrahi (Middle Eastern and North African) tradition, evincing trade between Ashkenazic Jews in Brody and the Sephardic community in Venice.



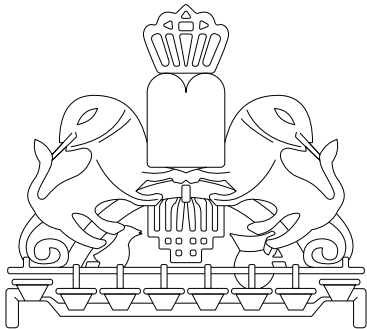
55

**Hanukkah lamp, mid-1700s–mid-1800s**

Eastern Galicia or Western Ukraine

Cast, traced, punched, and appliqué copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3032



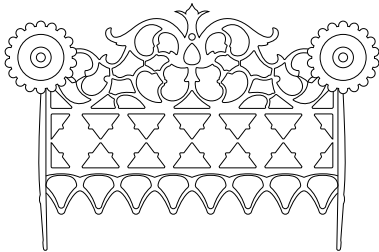
56

**Hanukkah lamp, 1800–1900**

Probably Galicia (now in Poland or Ukraine)

Cast, pierced sheet metal, and silver-plated copper alloy and iron

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 804



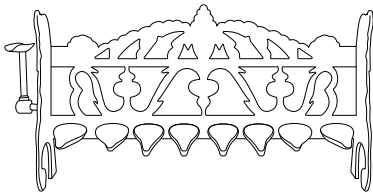
57

**Hanukkah lamp, mid-1700s–mid-1800s**

Eastern Galicia or Western Ukraine

Cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3652



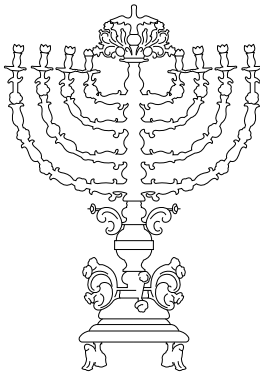
58

**Hanukkah lamp, 1800–early 1900s**

Probably Eastern Galicia or Western Ukraine

Cast and traced copper alloy

Jewish Museum, JM 8-54



59

**Hanukkah lamp, 1867–72**

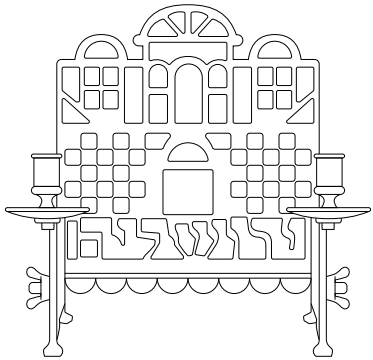
Lwów, Galicia, Austria-Hungary (now Lviv, Ukraine)

Cast, engraved, and traced silver, marked *BD*

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman in memory of Adele Friedman, F 5119

Provenance: potentially one of three Hanukkah lamps from the Great Suburban Synagogue in Lwów, Galicia (now Lviv, Ukraine); the synagogue was badly damaged, first by Soviet occupation then by the Nazis beginning in 1941, one of the lamps was still in place (per photographs), June 1943; unknown owner; Dorotheum Kunstabteilung, Vienna, September 16, 1960; E. Pinkus, New York; purchased by Harry G. Friedman for the Jewish Museum, 1960; on loan to the White House residence and lit by President George W. Bush in its first-ever official Hanukkah celebration, December 2001





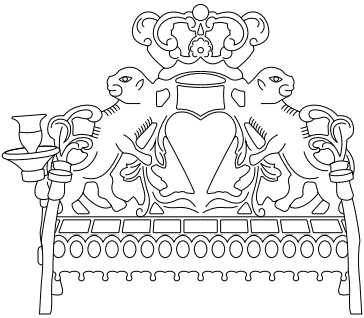
62

**Hanukkah lamp, 1700–mid-1800s**

Eastern Galicia or Western Ukraine

Cast copper alloy

The H. Ephraim and Mordecai Benguiat Family Collection, S 114



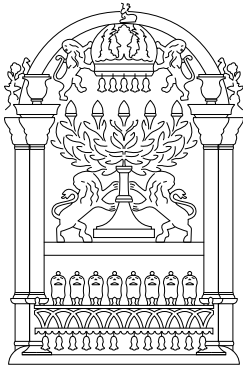
60

**Hanukkah lamp, mid-1800s–early 1900s**

Probably Eastern Galicia or Western Ukraine

Cast copper alloy

The H. Ephraim and Mordecai Benguiat Family Collection, S 116



61

**Hanukkah lamp, early 1800s**

Kingdom of Poland or Russian Empire

Repoussé, parcel-gilt, appliqué, and cast silver

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, in memory of Dr. Paul Romanoff, Curator of the Museum of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America from 1931 to 1943, F 1965

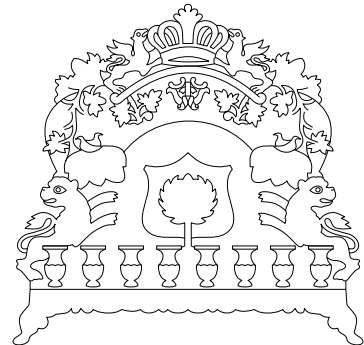
63

**Hanukkah lamp, 1865**

Russian Empire

Parcel-gilt, repoussé, appliqué, pierced, and cast silver

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 100



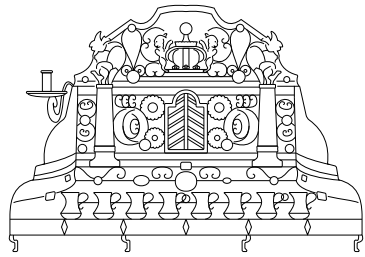
64

**Hanukkah lamp, 1800–1850**

Poland or Russia

Parcel-gilt, repoussé, appliqué, and cast silver

Gift of the Danzig Jewish Community, D 206



65

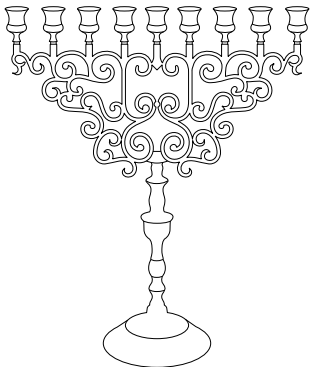
**Hanukkah lamp, 1800–1850**

Poland or Russia

Filigree, appliqué, and cast silver, semiprecious stones, and glass

Gift of Mrs. H. Pereira Mendes, S 1020

Using a bent-wire technique called filigree, the craftsperson of this lamp evoked the form of a Torah ark. Looping wires form hearts and ovals that allude to other early nineteenth-century Eastern European Hanukkah lamps. Colorful glass was often used to imitate precious stones, likely because genuine gems were expensive and vulnerable to theft, whether at home or on the road. Lamps of this style are sometimes called “Baal Shem Tov Lamps” after the legendary founder of Hasidic Judaism, Israel ben Eliezer, or the Baal Shem Tov (“Master of the Good Name”), who lived and taught in Ukraine in the 1700s.



66

**Hanukkah lamp, 1906 or 1907**

Eastern Europe

Cast and traced copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1305

67

**F. Sussman**

Active in 1876–1920

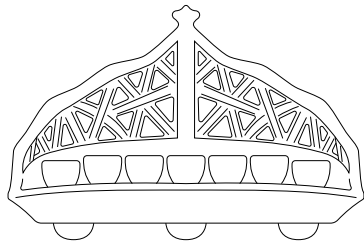
**Hanukkah lamp, 1880–1920**

Horodnitsa, Austria–Hungary (now in Ukraine)

Glazed, painted, and gilt porcelain

The Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, M 74

Provenance: Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, Warsaw, Poland; sent to the United States for consideration to be exhibited in the 1939 New York World’s Fair, but instead was exhibited in part at the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1939; sold by Rose Mintz to the Jewish Museum, 1947



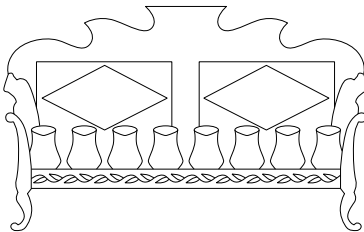
68

**Hanukkah lamp, 1872**

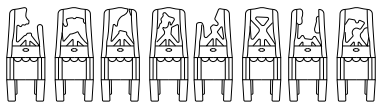
Zhytomyr, Russian Empire (now in Ukraine)

Cast silver, marked *B Sh Sh*

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4871



69



**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1885**

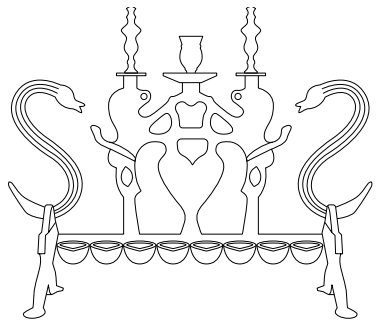
Stolin, Russian Empire (now in Belarus)

Cast lead and tin

Gift of the Chernick Family, JM 102-73a-h

The tradition of creating Hanukkah objects by pouring molten metal into molds existed in Eastern Europe, Germany, and Bohemia (now in the Czech Republic). Children created lead dreidels (spinning tops) this way, playing Hanukkah games with the tops, which were melted back down after the holiday into raw material. Hanukkah lamps like this one, designed to look like a set of chairs, were made more permanent with pewter, a metal that requires a higher temperature to melt. The chair shape may have been a whimsical take on the popular bench-form lamp, which resembled a flat seat or couch.

▶ 407



70

**Hanukkah lamp, 1700–mid-1800s**

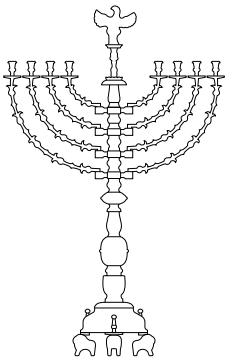
Eastern Europe

Cast copper alloy

The Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, M 188

Provenance: Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, Warsaw, Poland; sent to the United States for consideration to be exhibited in the 1939 New York World's Fair, but instead was exhibited in part at the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1939; sold by Rose Mintz to the Jewish Museum, 1947

71



**Hanukkah lamp, 1750–1800**

Eastern Galicia, Austria-Hungary

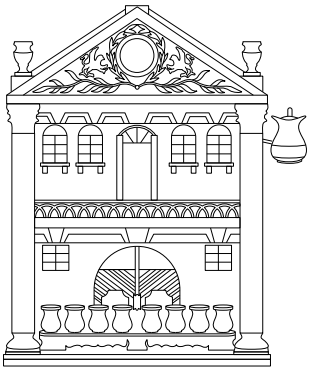
(now in Ukraine)

Cast and engraved copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3418

Throughout the 1700s and 1800s, grand candelabrum-form lamps like this one were key fixtures of Eastern European synagogues, typically placed at the front of the synagogue sanctuary. The flowers on the lamp's arms, the lion feet at its base, and the eagle at its top are motifs recognizable from the decorated synagogues of the region. The alternating flowers and buds, on its arms, which can also be seen in the small yet magnificent silver version nearby (no. 73), were also inspired by biblical descriptions of the seven-branch menorah built for the Tabernacle (the portable sanctuary). The eagle finial at the top suggests that the lamp may have been created in Poland after the Russian partition, as an eagle was often featured as an important imperial or royal emblem.

72

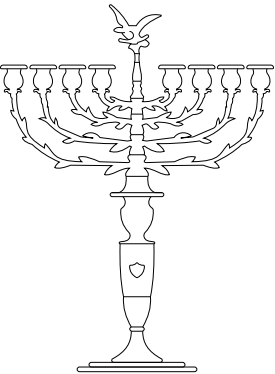


**Hanukkah lamp, early 1800s**

Kingdom of Poland or Russian Empire

Repoussé, engraved, traced, punched, pierced, appliqué, and cast silver and wood with enamel clock

Gift of Samuel and Lucille Lemberg, JM 3-53



73

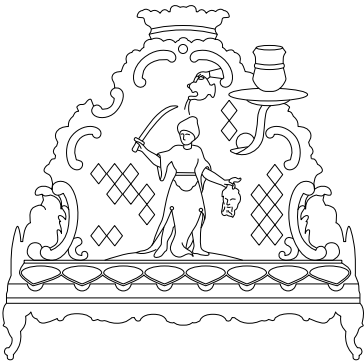
**Hanukkah lamp, late 1800s–early 1900s**

Probably Eastern Europe, with elements made in the United States

Cast, appliqué, and silver-plated copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 180

74



**Christian Gottlieb Muche**

Born in 1717, died in 1772, active in Breslau, Habsburg Empire or Kingdom of Prussia (now Wrocław, Poland)

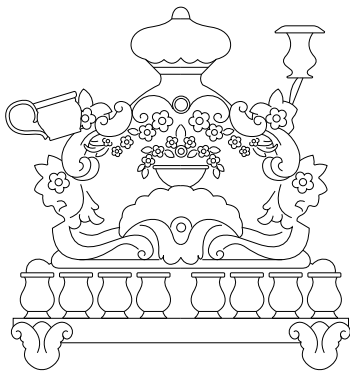
**Hanukkah lamp, 1761–72**

Breslau, Habsburg Empire or Kingdom of Prussia (now Wrocław, Poland)

Repoussé, engraved, traced, punched, parcel-gilt, and cast silver

Purchase: Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Klingenstein, JM 26-64

Provenance: probably Brno, Moravia (based on restamp marks), 1806 or 1807; probably collection of Privy Counselor Pinkus of Neustadt, Austria, c. 1906; Mr. and Mrs. Michael M. Zagayski Collection, between 1940 and 1951; sale, Parke-Bernet, New York, March 18-19, 1964, lot 307; purchased by the Jewish Museum



75

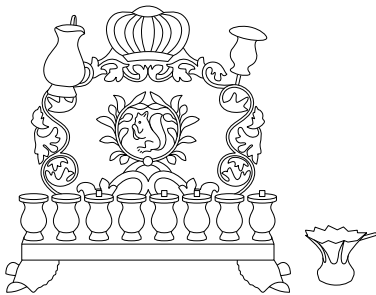
**Hanukkah lamp, 1883**

Warsaw, Russian Empire (now in Poland)

Die-stamped and traced silver, marked *M. Vrona*

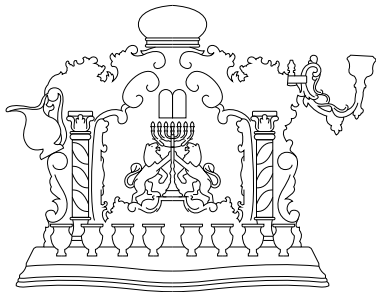
The H. Ephraim and Mordecai Benguiat Family Collection, S 115

76



**Jankiel Kelmer**  
Active in 1870–80, Warsaw, Russian Empire  
(now in Poland)

**Hanukkah lamp, 1876**  
Warsaw, Russian Empire (now in Poland)  
Repoussé and die-stamped silver  
Gift of Rosalie Klein Adolf, 1989–151

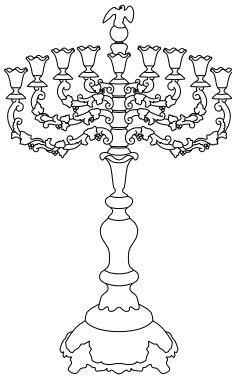


77

**Norblin and Company**  
Founded 1809, Warsaw, Russian Empire  
(now in Poland)

**Hanukkah lamp, late 1800s**  
Warsaw, Russian Empire (now in Poland)  
Die-stamped, parcel-gilt, appliqué, and cast silver  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 975

78



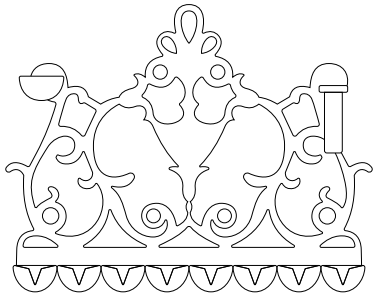
**Jan Pogorzelski (designer)**  
Born in 1819, died in 1875, active in Warsaw,  
Russian Empire (now in Poland)

**Hanukkah lamp, 1893**  
Warsaw, Russian Empire (now in Poland)  
Repoussé, traced, engraved, punched, and cast  
silver  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 192

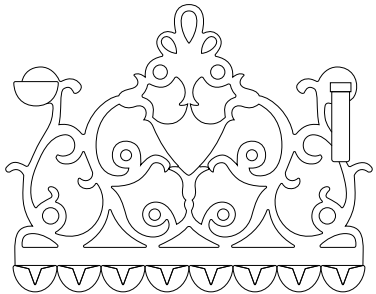
By the mid-1800s converter lamps like this one—consisting of an upper section of a Hanukkah lamp that could be placed atop any standard candleholder—became popular among Eastern European Jews. The design undoubtedly allowed manufacturers to sell lamps more cheaply. This version has decorations of grape clusters and leaves entwining its arms, which are characteristics of lamps by Jan Pogorzelski, and an eagle, often featured as an imperial or royal emblem, at its top.

# Greece

79



**Hanukkah lamp, 1850–1900**  
Greece  
Cast, wrigglework, traced, and tinned  
copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4374



80

**Hanukkah lamp, 1867 or 1868**  
Greece  
Cast, wrigglework, traced, and tinned copper  
alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1267

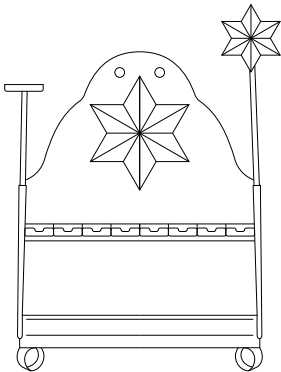
The sinuous scrolls, scalloped oil wells, and floral motif at the top of this lamp are Italian attributes, introduced by Jews who immigrated to Greece from Italy beginning in the 1400s. The tin material, flat openwork backplate, and decorative wrigglework reflect Greek metalworking styles, which favored durable materials, hand-tooled surfaces, and practical construction suited to household use.

After the arrival of Sephardic Jews fleeing Spain and Portugal in the late 1400s, Thessaloniki, on the Aegean Sea, became a

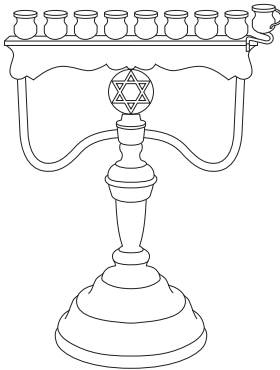
major center of Jewish life and trade that connected East and West. By the 1800s, political unrest and the struggle for Greek independence led many Jews to flee to the Greek island of Corfu or to Cairo.

# Switzerland

81



**Hanukkah lamp, early 1900s**  
Probably Upper Rhine (now in Switzerland,  
France, and Germany)  
Engraved and punched tin plate  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3468



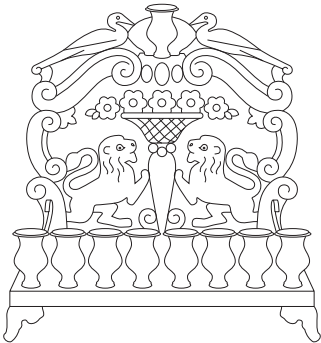
82

**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1921–65**  
Switzerland  
Cast, engraved, and silver-plated copper alloy  
and music box  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 5788

The balanced, symmetrical form of this object suggests a modern reinterpretation

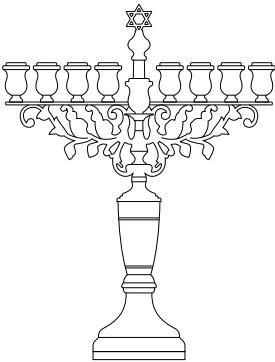
of traditional motifs, shaped by early to mid-twentieth-century European modernist movements, particularly the restrained and refined Swiss approach to Art Deco, evident in its clean geometric lines and simplified, stylized details. By this time the Star of David, seen on the central stem, was a widely recognized Jewish symbol, including in Switzerland. The lamp’s base hides a music box that plays “Ma’oz Tzur” (“O Fortress, Rock of My Salvation”), a hymn customarily sung after lighting the Hanukkah candles.

# United Kingdom



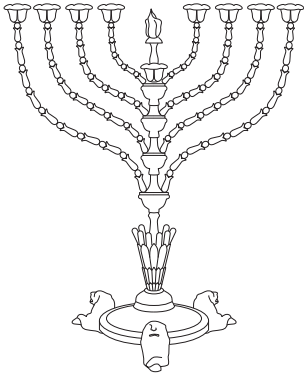
**83**  
**Hanukkah lamp, 1918–19**  
London  
Repoussé and cast silver, marked *J R*  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4415

**84**



**Joseph Zweig**  
Active in 1910–25, London  
**Hanukkah lamp, 1921–22**  
London  
Cast, traced, and punched silver  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, S 783

Joseph Zweig was a prolific maker of Jewish ceremonial objects such as this lamp, which blends Jewish tradition and British history. Embedded in the underside of its base is a coin bearing the profile of Queen Victoria. Though the object was made two decades after her death, the inclusion of her image demonstrates the enduring gratitude many British Jews felt toward Victoria. During her reign Jews gained significant civil rights, including the ability to serve in Parliament and in the British military.



**85**  
**Hanukkah lamp, early 1900s**  
England  
Cast, traced, and silver-plated silver  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 899

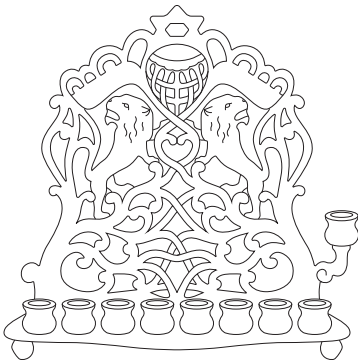
**86**



**Frederick J. Kormis**  
Born in 1897, Frankfurt, died in 1986, London  
**Hanukkah lamp, 1950**  
London  
Cast and engraved copper alloy  
Gift of Karl Nathan, JM 22-50

▶ 408

# Denmark



**87**  
**Barukh Shlomo Griegst**  
Born in 1889, Gargždai, Lithuania, died in 1958, active in Copenhagen, Denmark  
**Hanukkah lamp, 1924**  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
Cast and hammered silver  
Purchase: Judaica Acquisitions Fund and Gift of Bjorn Bamberger, 1994-6

This Hanukkah lamp blends traditional and modern styles in a manner personal to its

creator. Barukh Shlomo Greigst was born in Lithuania, where he experienced widespread persecution of Jews and pogroms (state-sanctioned massacres of Jewish people). After spending time in Paris, Dresden, and Berlin, Griegst arrived to the relative safety of Denmark in 1902, joining its small but well-established Jewish community in Copenhagen. Denmark became known during the Holocaust for its extraordinary rescue effort: in 1943, Danish citizens helped ferry more than 7,000 Jews to safety in Sweden, sparing nearly the entire Jewish population from deportation.

Among the many influences he encountered Griegst was particularly drawn to Jugendstil, the German and Central European form of Art Nouveau popular in Berlin during the early 1900s. Characterized by flowing, organic lines and stylized natural forms, Jugendstil emphasized elegant, curving shapes and decorative motifs, visible here in the dynamic design and the swirling Star of David at bottom center. The artist combined modern forms in this lamp with familiar Eastern European Judaica motifs—a seven-branch menorah (below the Star of David), rampant lions, and scalloped edges often found on nineteenth-century Eastern European tombstones.



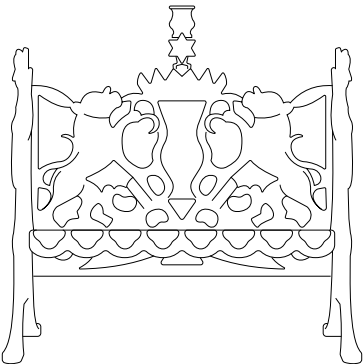
# Hungary

With roots in the area tracing back to Roman times, Jewish people experienced vibrant and dynamic lives in nineteenth-century Hungary. Jews actively participated in public life and major religious and cultural movements, including Hasidism, the Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment), and early Zionism. Although antisemitism intensified in the early twentieth century, Hungary was seen by many as a relative haven until 1944, when the government aligned with Nazi Germany. In just a few months, hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews were deported and murdered. Some survivors and émigrés later rebuilt communities abroad—especially in Brooklyn, where Hungarian Hasidim continue to thrive today.

88

**Hanukkah lamp, 1918–42**

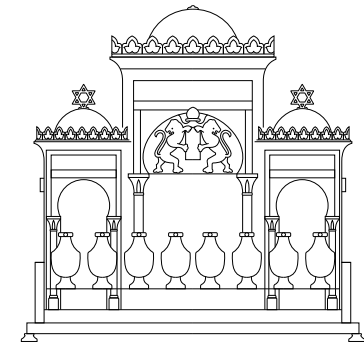
Hungary  
Cast copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1225



89

**Hanukkah lamp, 1850–1900**

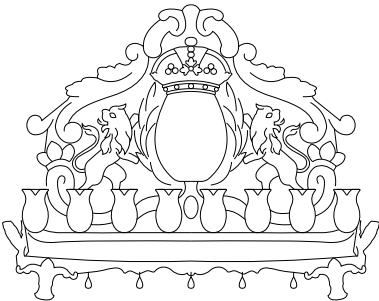
Austria-Hungary or United States  
Cast, silver-plated, appliqué, and repoussé copper alloy  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1922



90

**Hanukkah lamp, 1867–71**

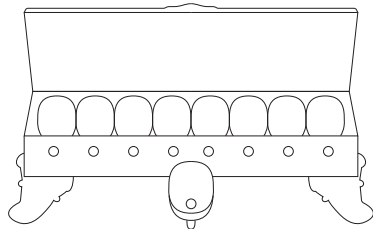
Austria-Hungary  
Repoussé, traced, punched, and cast silver, marked *B R*  
Gift of Henry L. Moses through Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3275



91

**Hanukkah lamp, 1800s**

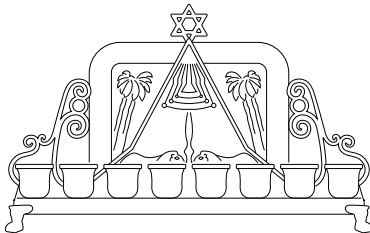
Probably Austria-Hungary  
Sheet-metal and die-stamped silver  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2423



92

**Hanukkah lamp, 1867–72**

Budapest, Austria-Hungary (now in Hungary)  
Die-stamped and cast silver, marked *J S*  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4912



93

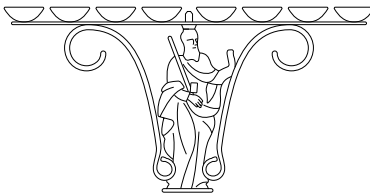
**Fridericus Becker Jr.**

Active in 1831–44, Pozsony-Vátelek, Kingdom of Hungary (now Bratislava, Slovakia)

**Hanukkah lamp converter, 1839**

Pozsony-Vátelek, Kingdom of Hungary (now Bratislava, Slovakia)  
Hand-worked and cast silver  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2788

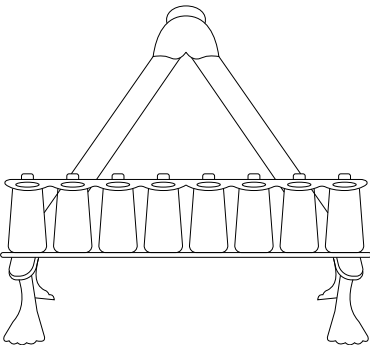
At the center of this Hanukkah lamp converter, designed to fit onto an existing candleholder, stands a sculpture in the round of the biblical figure Moses. His flowing robes, staff, and tablets are symbols often associated with his role as a leader and prophet. While Moses is not part of the Hanukkah story, his presence here may evoke broader themes of leadership and faith central to Jewish tradition. Fridericus Becker Jr. came from a multigenerational Jewish silversmithing family in Pozsony-Vátelek (now Bratislava). Although Jewish artisans had long worked in the city, they were not officially admitted to local guilds until Becker’s era.



94

**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1850**

Probably Igló, Kingdom of Hungary (now Spišská Nová Ves, Slovakia)  
Punched and cast silver, marked *I P B*  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 947



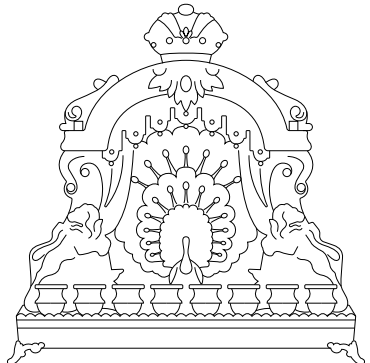
95

**E. Kapelus**

Active in late 1800s–early 1900s, Austria-Hungary

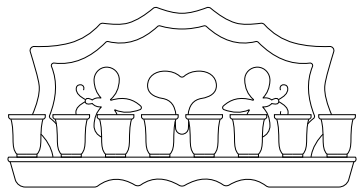
**Hanukkah lamp, late 1800s–early 1900s**

Austria-Hungary  
Die-stamped, pierced, cast, and silver-plated copper alloy, marked *E. Kapelus*  
Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1583





## Romania



96

### Hanukkah lamp, 1906–37

Romania

Repoussé, traced, and punched silver, marked *M C*

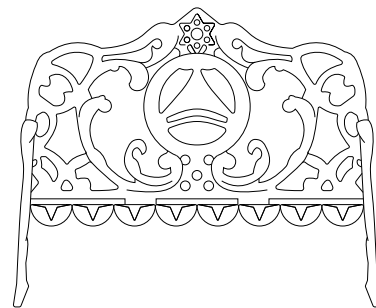
Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, X1952-38

Provenance: unknown owner; heirless object salvaged from post-Nazi Europe by the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR); transferred to the Jewish Museum, 1952

This backplate—typically the visual focus of a Hanukkah lamp—features punched decoration, stylized birds, and a cut-out heart, motifs rooted in Eastern European Jewish folk art. The heart and bird forms reflect Romanian metalworking techniques, while the symmetrical layout and delicate punched details show the influence of Austro-Hungarian design, which shaped decorative arts in regions of Romania until 1918. Often working outside official guilds, Jewish artisans in these communities produced a wide range of ritual objects for local use. Despite legal restrictions and recurring discrimination, they helped sustain vibrant communal life until the Holocaust brought near-total destruction.

## Czech Republic

The lands that make up the modern-day Czech Republic—Bohemia, Moravia, and Czech Silesia—were home to a significant Jewish community that flourished despite cycles of expulsions and persecutions throughout the Middle Ages and early modern period. Prague, the capital, was a vibrant center of Jewish scholarship, culture, and trade. After the late 1700s, the city became a hub for the Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment, which promoted secular education and the modern study of Jewish culture. In Brno, Moravia's largest city, Jewish artisans crafted distinctive oil lamps known for their delicate forms, curved legs, and restrained ornamentation.



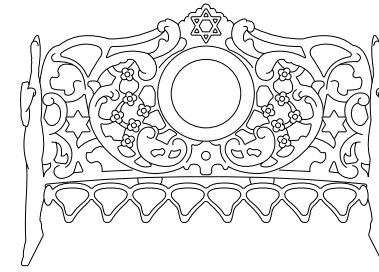
97

### Hanukkah lamp, late 1800s

Bohemia (now in the Czech Republic)

Cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3391



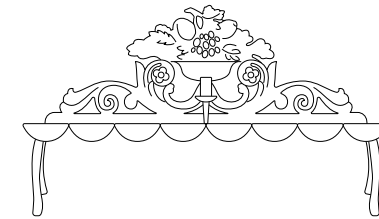
98

### Hanukkah lamp, 1850–1900

Bohemia (now in the Czech Republic)

Cast copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3363



99

### Josef Ruhmann

Born in 1880, died in 1885, active in Brno and Boskovice, Austria-Hungary (now in the Czech Republic)

### Hanukkah lamp, 1826

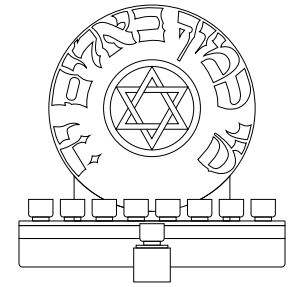
Boskovice, Austria-Hungary (now in the Czech Republic)

Die-stamped and pierced silver

The Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, M 384

Provenance: Rose and Benjamin Mintz Collection, Warsaw, Poland; sent to the United States for consideration to be exhibited in the 1939 New York World's Fair, but instead was exhibited in part at the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1939; sold by Rose Mintz to the Jewish Museum, 1947

Josef Ruhmann was a Jewish silversmith who worked in the cities of Brno and Boskovice, Moravia (now in the Czech Republic). He also served in the Jewish burial society, which provided assistance to the sick and prepared the dead for burial according to Jewish law. This lamp's design incorporates a delicate cornucopia of fruit, vines, and vegetables gathered in a silver basket—a motif common in Moravian and Bohemian design. The spoon-shaped oil containers and sharp details, however, show Austrian influence in form.



100

### Arnold Zadikow

Born in 1884, Kolberg, Prussia (now Kołobrzeg, Poland), died in 1943, Theresienstadt, Czechoslovakia (now Terezín, Czech Republic)

### Leopold Hecht

Czech, born in 1912, died in 1994

### Hanukkah lamp, 1942

Theresienstadt, Czechoslovakia (now Terezín, Czech Republic)

Carved wood

Purchase: The Abraham and Mildred Goldstein Memorial Fund, 2018-78

Provenance: Arnold Zadikow, helped by the woodcarver Leopold Hecht, Theresienstadt ghetto-camp, 1942; found at the campsite after World War II; Marianne Zadikow May, the artist's daughter and Lori Zadikow May, the artist's granddaughter; purchased by the Jewish Museum, 2018

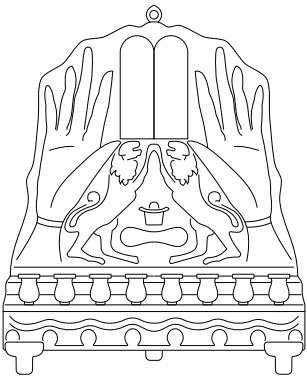
This Hanukkah lamp is nothing short of miraculous: a piece of Jewish ceremonial art created in secret during the Holocaust. In May 1942 the German Jewish sculptor and architect Arnold Zadikow was deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto-camp in northern Bohemia (now in the Czech Republic), where he had to make decorative arts for the Nazis. Leopold Hecht, a young woodcarver also interned at Theresienstadt, snuck wood away from the German soldiers for Zadikow to use. The two men together made the lamp for the boys' residence, allowing them to celebrate Hanukkah and learn about Judaism. Zadikow was eventually killed at Theresienstadt; Hecht survived. The lamp had been hidden and was later found in the camp after liberation.

# France

By the 1700s stable Jewish communities had taken root in the regions of Alsace and Lorraine, primarily populated by Ashkenazic Jews, descendants of Central and Eastern European communities. They maintained the Yiddish language and customs and developed a distinctive style in the design of ritual objects. Hanukkah lamps in France were often made of cast brass or copper alloy. Alsatian lamps, several of which are on display in this installation, typically feature symmetrical rows of oil holders beneath ornate backplates decorated with birds, lions, or architectural arches.

The 1791 emancipation law, passed during the French Revolution, made France the first European country to grant Jews full citizenship. After World War II Sephardic Jews from North Africa reshaped Jewish life in the cities of Paris and Marseille, among others. Today France is home to the largest Jewish population in Europe.

101



**Marek Szwarc**

Born in 1892, Zgierz, Kingdom of Poland (now in Poland), died in 1958, Paris

**Hanukkah lamp, 1920–30**

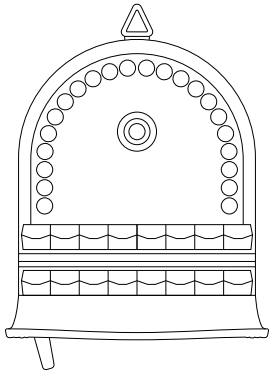
Paris

Cast and gilt iron

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 5351

The artist of this lamp, Marek Szwarc, worked during the 1920s and 1930s, an innovative period that saw the rise of the art movements of Expressionism (focused on emotional intensity and distorted forms) and Art Deco (known for sleek, geometric design and skilled craftsmanship). This rare cast-iron Hanukkah lamp combines stylized graphic shapes with textured surfaces. Two lions support the Tablets of the Law, whose polished surfaces highlight the Ten Commandments, while a pair of hands flanking the ensemble forms the priestly blessing, a sacred gesture in Jewish worship. The carved relief on the backplate recalls the mark making of Szwarc’s woodcuts, reflecting his interest in abstraction and texture.

102



**Hanukkah lamp, 1800s**

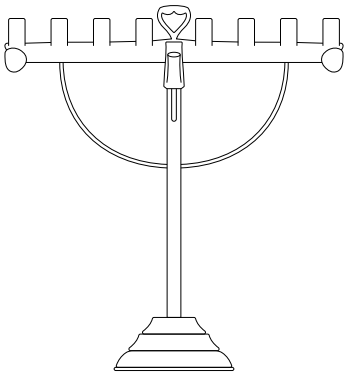
Probably Alsace (now in France)

Die-stamped, chased, and appliqué tin plate

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1974

Tin Hanukkah lamps, perhaps the simplest and least expensive to produce, are known from the areas of Germany, France, and Switzerland that border the Rhine River. The French inscription on this lamp—identifying it as a gift from someone with the surname Baer to a person named Weil—suggests that the object originated in Alsace, then in France, before Germany annexed the territory in 1871. The double set of oil dishes is also characteristic of Alsatian lamps, which sometimes had as many as four sets so that several family members could kindle their own lights, while still using the lamp communally.

103



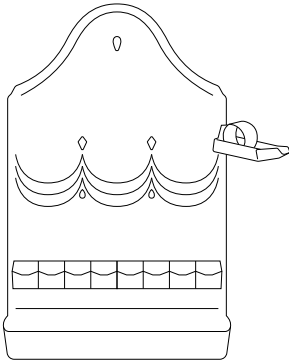
**Hanukkah lamp, 1800s**

France or Germany

Hand-worked tin plate, copper alloy, and cast iron

Jewish Museum, U 7568

104



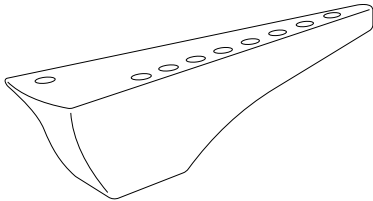
**Hanukkah lamp, early 1800s**

Probably Alsace (now in France)

Die-stamped tin plate

Probably Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3772

105



**Adam Tihany**

Born in Transylvania, Romania, 1948

**Orfèvrerie Christofle (manufacturer)**

Founded in 1830, Paris

**Hanukkah lamp, 2004**

Paris

Cast silver plate

Jewish Museum Centennial Commission; Gift of Christofle, 2004-47

In 2004 the Jewish Museum commissioned the Israeli architect and designer Adam Tihany to create original Jewish ceremonial art. Tihany, who had never designed such objects before, collaborated with the French design house Orfèvrerie Christofle, for whom he had previously designed a line of housewares. Tihany used Christofle’s signature silver-plating in a mezuzah, kiddush cup, and Hanukkah lamp. The lamp has seamless, polished surfaces and an elegant sloping profile, evincing a modern, streamlined style.

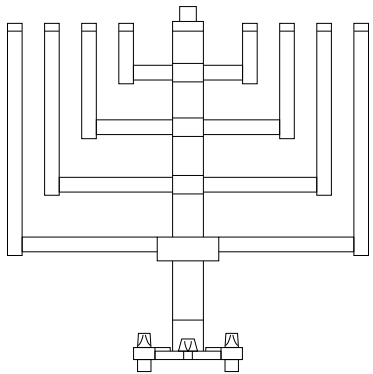
# Germany

Throughout the 1600s and 1700s Jews lived under the restrictive economic and legal conditions of the territories of the Holy Roman Empire in what is now Germany. Most resided in small rural towns or segregated Jewish quarters (Judengassen) and were subject to special taxes, residential restrictions, and prohibitions from many trades and guilds.

Under special legal arrangements such as Schutzbriefe (letters of protection), a small number of families were granted permission to reside and conduct business in cities with official sanction, though usually on a precarious or revocable basis. These more-affluent households commissioned Hanukkah lamps to use at home and Torah ornaments to adorn their community synagogues.

Hanukkah lamps from German-speaking lands were most often made in a standing bench-form style, with a flat, decorative backplate and a solid base. Artisans worked in copper, pewter, silver, and tin alloys and in regional styles and techniques reflecting the materials and practices of local metalworking industries.

In the early 1800s emancipation reforms in parts of the German Confederation and later the German Empire enabled many Jews to migrate to urban centers and participate more fully in public, cultural, and economic life. Antisemitic ideologies, however, resurged in the late 1800s and early 1900s, culminating in the rise of the Nazi Party. By 1933, when the Nazis came to power, Germany had a Jewish population of approximately 500,000. Around 300,000 Jews emigrated during the 1930s; between 160,000 and 180,000 were ultimately deported and murdered during the Holocaust.



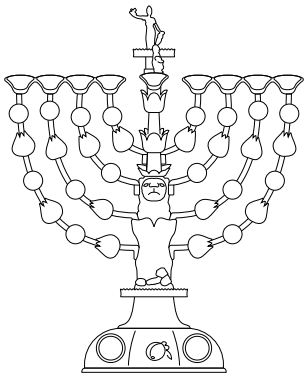
106

**Maurice Farhi**  
Born in 1931, Paris, died in 2017, Royan, France

**Hanukkah lamp, 1946**  
Jouy-en-Josas, France  
Carved wood and ink

Gift of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, JM 8-49

Maurice Farhi was about fifteen years old when he made this Hanukkah lamp. Farhi’s parents had moved from what is now Turkey after World War I, settling by 1940 in France, which was partially occupied by the Nazis at the time. During the Holocaust the Nazis deported and murdered Farhi’s parents; Farhi, along with his two brothers and sister, survived the war by hiding with peasant families who risked their lives to save Jewish people. After the war Farhi and his siblings were sent to a children’s home near Paris, which was sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. There, Farhi created this lamp to celebrate Hanukkah in 1946.

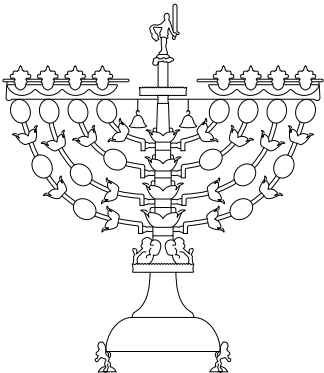


107

**Johann Adam Boller**  
Born in 1679, died in 1732, active in the Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt)

**Hanukkah lamp, 1706–32**  
Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt)  
Cast, filigree, engraved, traced, punched, and parcel-gilt silver and cloisonné and enamel inlays painted on copper alloy  
Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg, S 563

This striking Hanukkah lamp represents a new domestic style developed by Frankfurt silversmiths in the late 1600s. Its candelabrum form, curved arms, and alternating floral and bell-shaped elements evoke the biblical menorah described in the Book of Exodus. Vivid cloisonné and painted enamel accents on the arms and base introduce rare touches of color. The four enameled roundels at the base depict scenes from the lives of Rebecca and Jacob—the biblical matriarch and patriarch—based on imagery from widely circulated seventeenth-century illustrated Bibles. The lion-shaped shaft and engraved shield with a stag and bird may reference the names of past owners, suggesting the lamp was a treasured wedding gift or family heirloom. This lamp was originally owned by Jacob Schiff and then passed down to his daughter, Frieda, a leading philanthropist and the former owner of the Jewish Museum mansion; thus the object profoundly connects Jewish history and communal memory.

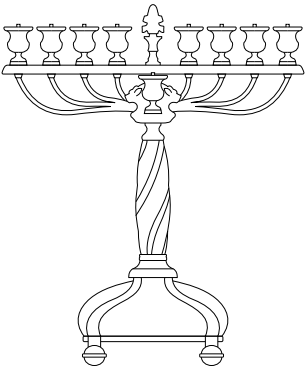


108

**Johann Adam Boller**  
Born in 1679, died in 1732, active in the Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt)

**Hanukkah lamp, 1706–32**  
Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt)  
Cast, traced, wrigglework, and parcel-gilt silver  
Gift of the Estate of Alice B. Goldschmidt, 1983-160

109

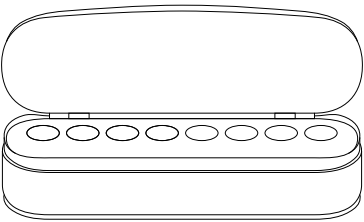


**Gebrüder Gutgesell**  
Founded 1883, Hanau, Prussia (now in Germany)

**Hanukkah lamp, 1903–26**  
Hanau, Prussia (now in Germany)  
Cast, repoussé, spun, and parcel-gilt silver

Gift of Mrs. Jules Lubell in memory of her parents, Regina and Leo Frisch, 1997–39

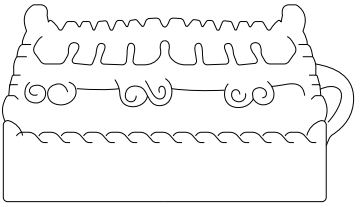
The popular silver manufacturer Gebrüder Gutgesell made this lamp, which has an extraordinary story of survival. Purchased in Germany by the donor’s family in the early twentieth century, the lamp accompanied them when they moved to Belgium. When the family fled Nazi persecution in the 1930s and immigrated to the United States, the lamp was left behind in their Antwerp apartment. It remained miraculously untouched by the German officials who later occupied the home.



110

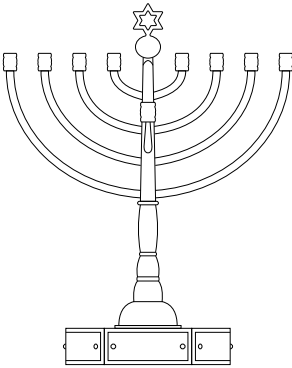
**Hanukkah lamp, 1700s, with later additions**  
Freudental, Duchy of Württemberg (now in Germany) or Freudenthal, Silesia, Prussia (now Bruntál, Czech Republic)  
Traced silver and iron, marked J/  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William Layton, JM 108-73

111



**Hanukkah lamp, 1807**  
Probably Münster, Prussia (now in Germany)  
Slipped, painted, and glazed stoneware, marked CK

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 4939

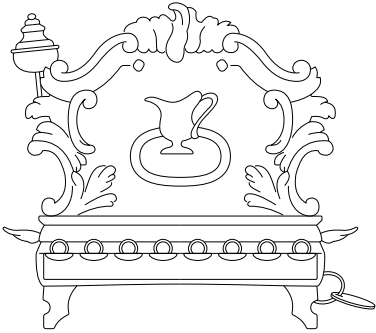


112

**Hanukkah lamp, 1945**  
Landsberg am Lech, Germany  
Cast, engraved, punched, and appliqué copper alloy and wood  
Gift of General Joseph T. McNarney, S 1406

Holocaust survivors and other refugees lived in displaced-persons (DP) camps, including one at Landsberg am Lech, established after World War II. The Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT), an international Jewish organization and trade school, dedicated the lamp to General Joseph T. McNarney, the Commander in Chief of the United States Forces in Europe who led the DP camps in 1945–47. McNarney engineered the publication of the Talmud (the compilation of Jewish laws and rabbinic teachings) to improve the living conditions of Jewish refugees. In 2011 President Barack Obama chose this lamp for the Hanukkah celebration at the White House.

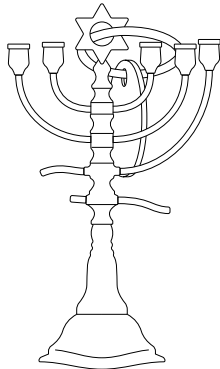
113



**Johann Christoph I Drentwett**  
Born in 1686, died in 1763, active in the Free City of Augsburg (now Augsburg, Germany)

**Hanukkah lamp, 1735–36**  
Free City of Augsburg (now Augsburg, Germany)  
Repoussé, traced, punched, and cast silver  
Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, JM 17-52

Provenance: unknown owner; Siegfried Nauheim Collection, Frankfurt, until his death in 1936; bequest to the Museum Jüdischer Altertümer, Frankfurt; the museum was destroyed in November 1939 and a portion of the collection was moved to the Stadtgeschichtliches Museum, Frankfurt; identified as heirless object salvaged from post-Nazi Europe by the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), the cultural arm of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JSRO); transferred to the Jewish Museum, 1952

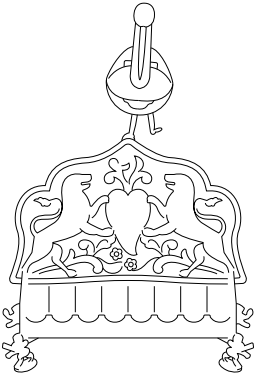


114

**Miniature Hanukkah lamp, late 1800s**  
Germany  
Cast silver

Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, X1952-33

Provenance: unknown owner; heirless object salvaged from post-Nazi Europe by the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), the cultural arm of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JSRO); transferred to the Jewish Museum, 1954



115

**Conrad Hieronymus May**  
Active in 1719–79, Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt)

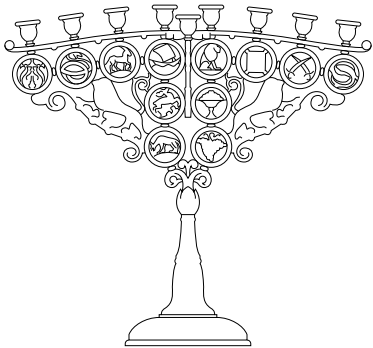
**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1769–79**  
Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt)  
Repoussé, pierced, traced, punched, and cast silver

Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, JM 18-52

Provenance: Emanuel Fürth Collection, Frankfurt; bequest to the Museum Jüdischer Altertümer, Frankfurt, after 1937; the museum was destroyed in November 1939 and a portion of the collection was moved to the Stadtgeschichtliches Museum, Frankfurt; identified as heirless object salvaged from post-Nazi Europe by the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), the cultural arm of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JSRO); transferred to the Jewish Museum, 1952



116



**Arnold Zadikow**

Born in 1884, Kolberg, Prussia (now Kołobrzeg, Poland) died in 1943, Theresienstadt, Czechoslovakia (now Terezín, Czech Republic)

**Hanukkah lamp, 1920–30**

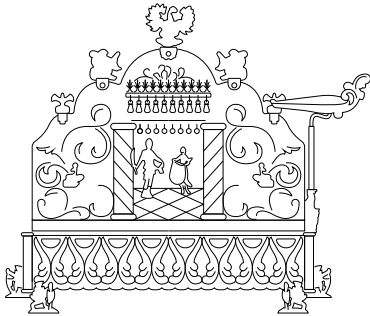
Probably Munich, Germany  
Cast and traced copper alloy

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 1228

The sculptor Arnold Zadikow drew on biblical tradition and modern design in this lamp. At center are circular medallions, each with a symbol of one of the sons of Jacob, who were the patriarchs of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, as described in the Book of Genesis. A lion stands for Judah, a serpent represents Dan, and other animals or objects symbolize the character of the other sons.

The interlocking medallions echo Zadikow’s work on plaques, medals, and small-scale sculpture. The work’s stylized lines, along with the lotus blossom at the top and the flowing curves of the crossbar and arms, show the influence of Jugendstil, the German version of Art Nouveau that was popular in the early 1900s.

117



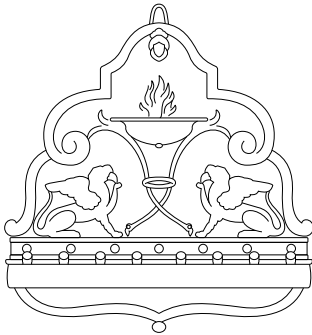
**Johann Valentin Schöler**

Born in 1650, died in 1720, active in the Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt, Germany)

**Hanukkah lamp, late 1600s**

Free City of Frankfurt (now Frankfurt, Germany)  
Repoussé, engraved, traced, punched, appliqué, parcel-gilt, and cast silver

Purchase: Norman S. Goetz, Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Loeb, Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Marx, Ira A. Schur, Lawrence A. Wien, Leonard Block, Gustave L. Levy, and Robert I. Wishnick Gifts, JM 19–64



118

**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1830**

Berlin  
Repoussé, engraved, and appliqué copper alloy and cast, gilt, and painted iron

Gift of the Danzig Jewish Community, D 208

Provenance: unknown owner; Lesser Giełdziński Collection; donated to the Synagogue and Jewish Community of Danzig, 1904; transferred to the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1939; accessioned by the Jewish Museum, 1954

This boldly designed lamp, featuring iron griffins flanking a classical-style altar, demonstrates the European fascination with ancient Greece and Rome in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Inspired by recent archaeological excavations, architects and designers across Europe embraced Classical

forms. In Prussia the Neoclassical style became associated with national pride and cultural refinement, particularly after Napoleon’s defeat. The use of local iron was encouraged to support the economy and highlight modern industry. For Jewish owners such objects mirrored a high level of cultural integration in Prussian society.

Lesser Giełdziński, who helped establish a museum in Danzig’s Great Synagogue in 1904, probably owned the lamp. In 1939 as Nazi persecution escalated, the Jewish community of Danzig (now Gdańsk, Poland) sent their ritual objects—including this one—to the American Joint Distribution Committee in New York. These works were then held at the Jewish Theological Seminary. If the Danzig Jewish community was not reconstituted in fifteen years, the committee was allowed to assume ownership of the works. While many Danzigers escaped, they did not return after the war, and their ceremonial objects formally entered the collection of the Jewish Museum in 1954.

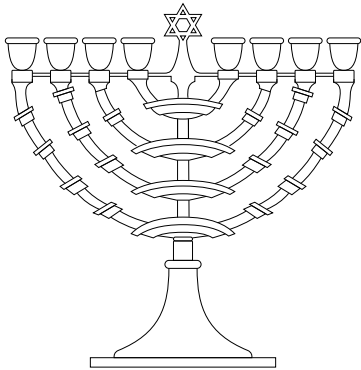
▶ 411

# Austria

Jews received citizenship through reforms enacted by the Habsburg Austrian Empire in the late 1700s and continued under the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the 1800s and early 1900s. Many of the Hanukkah lamps in this collection date from this renewed period of Jewish life.

Vienna was a center of fine metalwork, its Jewish ritual objects demonstrating exceptional craftsmanship. Jews were legally permitted to learn trades starting in 1782, but long-standing social barriers limited their access to Christian workshops. Because of this context, Jewish and Christian metalsmiths alike probably contributed to this distinctive tradition. These lamps often resemble small benches or sofas with scrolled arms and backs and have delicate oil wells shaped like spoons or pitchers.

119



**Josef Haller**

Active in 1902–24, Vienna

**Hanukkah lamp, 1935 (date of inscription)**

Vienna

Engraved silver

Probably Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3150

Provenance: gift to the synagogue Kahilath Jakob, Vienna, 1935; the synagogue was one of a few that survived World War II; possibly acquired by Harry G. Friedman, 1939–41; donated to the Jewish Museum, 1952

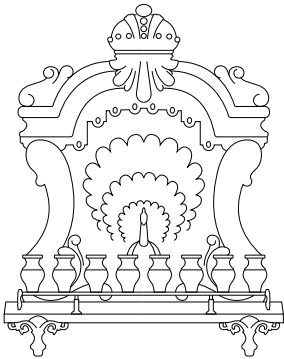
The White House chose this Hanukkah lamp in 2023 to mark the eighty-fifth anniversary of Kristallnacht, “The Night of Broken Glass.” On November 9–10, 1938, Nazi leaders orchestrated violent attacks on German and Austrian Jewish communities, killing hundreds of Jews and destroying Jewish-owned homes, synagogues, and businesses.

The inscription at the lamp’s base, “A token of affection from the synagogue Kahilath Jakob, Vienna, the first of Adar [5695 = 1935],” refers to a small prayer room at Judengasse 11, one of about sixty Jewish houses of worship in Vienna to survive World War II. The recipient, still unknown, would have been able to use the lamp for only a few years before the war started.

Steeped in modernist style, the design possesses a clean surface and geometric angularity, while its form echoes biblical descriptions of the ancient seven-branch menorah.



120



**Josef Kohn**

Active in 1872–1921, Vienna

**Hanukkah lamp, 1872–1921**

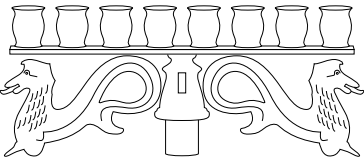
Vienna

Repoussé, traced, punched, and cast silver

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 474

This lamp belongs to a distinctive group of Austro-Hungarian lamps featuring a three-dimensional peacock rendered in extravagant detail behind a row of oil holders. The design exemplifies the Austrian style of the period, with its scrolled legs and base that resembles a sofa. The spoon- or pitcher-shaped oil containers are also frequently found on lamps from Austria and Hungary. Because Jews were often excluded from formal guild training in nineteenth-century Austria, it is uncertain if Jewish or Christian artisans made such lamps.

121



**Hermann Südfeld**

Born c. 1835, Austria-Hungary (now Austria), died in 1915, Vienna

**Hanukkah lamp converter, 1883–1907**

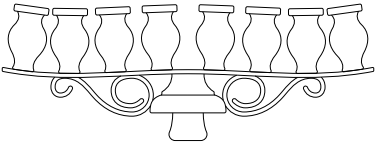
Vienna

Cast silver

Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, X1952-12

Provenance: unknown owner; heirless object salvaged from post-Nazi Europe by the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), the cultural arm of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JSRO); transferred to the Jewish Museum, 1952

122



**Joseph Seidl**

Active in 1875–1910, Vienna

**Hanukkah lamp converter, c. 1890**

Vienna

Hand-worked and spun silver

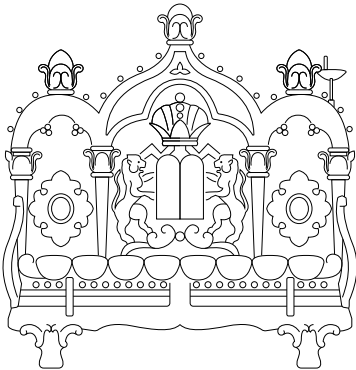
Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, U 9195

Provenance: unknown owner; heirless object salvaged from post-Nazi Europe by the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), the cultural arm of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JSRO); transferred to the Jewish Museum, 1952

In the aftermath of World War II, thousands of Jewish cultural objects were left orphaned: displaced from their communities, stripped of context, and in search of new homes. The objects were rescued and redistributed through the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR) project, a remarkable effort led by Hannah Arendt to preserve Jewish heritage after the Holocaust. Many objects still bear JCR tags, marking their postwar redistribution through the organization.

The United States Army initially gathered these orphaned works from across Europe. The Jewish Museum served as the primary staging ground for JCR distributions in the western hemisphere. Most of the objects assigned to the museum came from Eastern Europe and the Museum Jüdischer Altertümer, the destroyed Jewish museum of Frankfurt. They were selected by Guido Schoenberger, the Frankfurt museum’s former curator, who later joined the staff of the Jewish Museum in New York. They were formally accessioned between 1952 and 1954.

123



**Hermann Südfeld**

Born c. 1835, Austria-Hungary (now Austria), died in 1915, Vienna

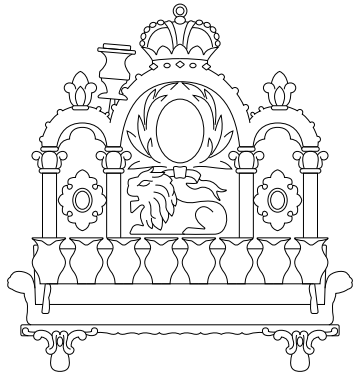
**Hanukkah lamp, 1883–1909**

Vienna

Repoussé, pierced, traced, punched, parcel-gilt, and cast silver

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3484

124



**Theodor Dörr**

Active in late 1800s–early 1900s, Vienna

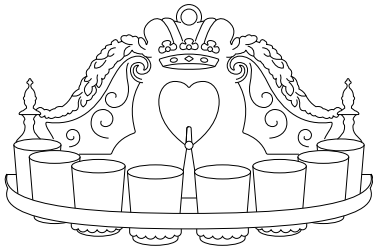
**Hanukkah lamp, 1872–1921**

Vienna

Repoussé, pierced, traced, punched, and appliqué silver

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 2763

125



**Georg Jowanov**

Born in 1772, Panschowa, Hungary (now Pančevo, Serbia), died in 1845, Vienna

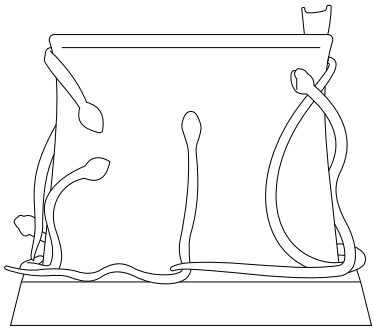
**Hanukkah lamp, 1838**

Vienna

Repoussé, pierced, traced, punched, rolled, and cast silver and glass

Gift of Dr. Harry G. Friedman, F 3463

# Mexico



126

**Rubén Cimet Lerer**

Born in 1922, Poland, died in 2008, New York

**Hanukkah lamp, c. 1980**

Mexico

Bronze with wooden base

Gift of the Cimet Singer Family, 2025-2



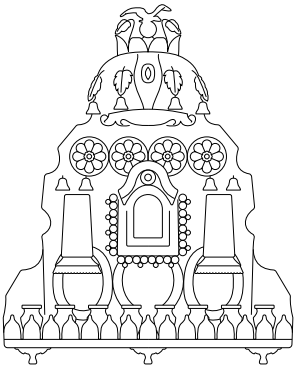
Rubén Cimet Lerer began sculpting in the 1960s, often drawing on Jewish themes in his early bronze work. Made around 1980, this Hanukkah lamp—used by the artist’s family for many years—illustrates key aspects of his practice: bronze and wood materials, architectural forms, and symbolic detail. A central tower inscribed with the Ten Commandments is flanked by stylized snake forms—a motif that resonates in both Jewish and Mexican traditions.

While still a child in 1922, Lerer immigrated to Mexico from Poland as part of a wave of Jewish migration after World War I. He joined a growing Ashkenazic (Central and Eastern European) community that developed alongside an older Sephardic (Iberian) presence in Mexico; the latter were descendants of Jews who had evaded the Inquisition centuries earlier. These Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities, while culturally distinct, yielded a vibrant Jewish life in Mexico, establishing schools, synagogues, and cultural institutions that embraced multiple languages.

# United States

Jewish communities in the United States grew as Jews left Europe in the late 1800s because of repression and pogroms (state-sanctioned massacres of Jewish people) and again in the 1900s to escape the devastation of World Wars I and II. These waves of immigration eventually led to the United States, today home to the second-largest Jewish population in the world.

The United States afforded Jewish immigrants freedoms they had not previously known, though they still faced persistent discrimination. This tension—between inclusion and marginalization, tradition and assimilation—fostered new forms of Jewish expression. The Hanukkah lamps on view that were made in the United States point to this cultural negotiation: traditional in function and symbolism, yet often innovative in material, form, and design. Some incorporate modern manufacturing techniques or patriotic motifs, while others reinterpret European styles in a new context. Together they illustrate how American Jews adopted both continuity and change in their ritual lives to adapt to a rapidly modernizing society.



127

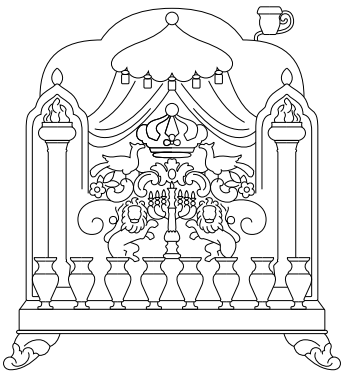
**Hanukkah lamp, 1920s**

United States

Filigree, appliqué, and cast silver and copper alloy

Gift of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, 1985-5

This Hanukkah lamp, made in the United States in the 1920s, curiously resembles a classical eighteenth-century Eastern European example. During this period of high immigration into the United States, businessmen were known to sell fake European originals to immigrants at high prices. Supporting this origin story, a forged Russian silver mark on the bottom of the lamp appears alongside a stamp indicating that it was made in the United States, where established standards for silver content were lower. Before making its way to the Jewish Museum, this lamp was donated to the Brooklyn Jewish Center, a vibrant community space along Eastern Parkway.



128

**Hanukkah lamp, late 1800s–early 1900s**

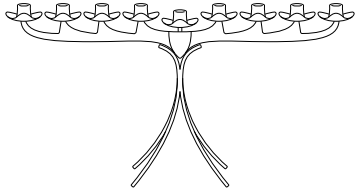
United States

Die-stamped silver

Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg, S 1217

This lamp exemplifies late nineteenth-century revivalism in Jewish ceremonial art, combining elaborate Rococo scrollwork and diamond patterns with Gothic-style niches framing the columns. The presence of a Russian 84 assay mark without the required city and maker’s marks, along with American-style machine-made screws, indicates production in the United States.

Donated by Frieda Schiff Warburg, a prominent philanthropist, the lamp, along with another nearby that she gave to the museum, is part of the Warburg family’s lasting legacy in the social and cultural life of New York. In 1944 Frieda and her husband, Felix, donated their Fifth Avenue mansion, which now houses the Jewish Museum.



**130**

**Kurt J. Matzdorf**

Born in 1922, Stadtoldendorf, Weimar Republic (now in Germany), died in 2008, Kingston, New York

**Hanukkah lamp, 1963**

New York

Hand-worked silver

Purchase: Abram and Frances Kanof Fund, JM 118-65a-b

In 1939 a young Kurt J. Matzdorf escaped the Nazis through the Kindertransport (children’s transport) to England, where he later earned an art degree in London. In 1949 Matzdorf immigrated to the United States, where he established himself as a sculptor, metalsmith, and jewelry designer. A committed educator, he founded the metals program at the State University of New York at New Paltz in 1966, shaping generations of American metalsmiths. Matzdorf is recognized for bringing modernist design to traditional Jewish ceremonial objects, as seen in this elegant Hanukkah lamp.

**131**

**Larry Kagan**

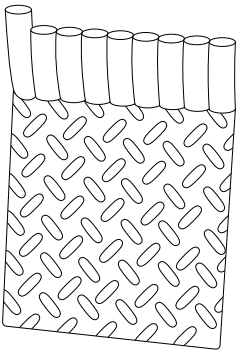
Born in 1946, Germany

**Menora 2, 1980**

New York

Steel diamond plate and steel tubing

Purchase: Judaica Acquisitions Fund, 1986-89



**129**

**Gloria Kisch**

Born in 1941, New York, died in 2014, New York

**Untitled (Menorah II) Hanukkah lamp, 2005**

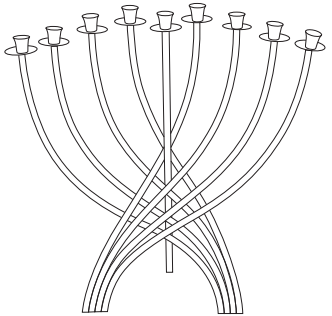
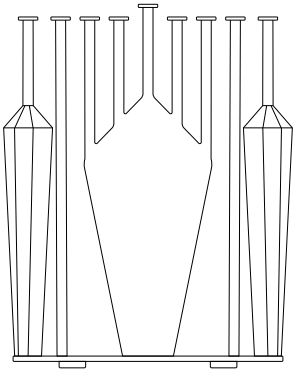
New York

Stainless steel

Purchase: Gift of the Malinsky Family in loving memory of Randie Malinsky, Contemporary Judaica Acquisitions Funds, and Judaica Acquisitions Committee Fund, 2022-82



This imposing lamp is representative of Gloria Kisch’s mature work in metal sculpture, the medium for which she is best known. Drawing on industrial materials and processes, Kisch softens the formal geometry with hand-welded details and elegant proportions. The elevated shamash (helper candle) and linear design reflect rituals and sculptural exploration. Kisch was raised in a Jewish family and by a prominent collector of Jewish ceremonial art. Though not known primarily as a Judaica artist, she made at least two dozen Hanukkah lamps throughout her career, continually reimagining the form while honoring its function. *Menorah II* was displayed in her family’s New York loft, bridging the ceremonial and personal.



**134**

**Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert**

Born in 1900, Hildesheim, Germany, died in 1981, New York, active in Israel and the United States

**Hanukkah lamp, 1958**

New York

Hand-worked copper alloy

Gift of the Tobe Pascher Foundation, JM 51-58

Sleek and sinuous, this lamp exemplifies Ludwig Wolpert’s innovative fusion of foundational technique and modern style. While studying in Germany, the designer was inspired by the geometry and functionality of the Bauhaus design movement. When the Nazis took over the country, he was forced to flee and moved to Jerusalem, where he studied and taught at the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts. In 1956 he relocated to New York to lead the Tobe Pascher Workshop for Modern Jewish Art at the Jewish Museum. He designed and fabricated modern ceremonial objects such as this one for synagogues, museums, and private commissions around the United States that emphasized material and form over decoration.

The workshop became a hub of experimentation and renewal, where a new generation of artists—including Moshe Zabari whose work is on view nearby—reimagined Jewish ceremonial design. Zabari succeeded Wolpert as director, continuing his legacy of minimalist, spiritually resonant forms made from modest, accessible materials such as the copper alloy used in this lamp.

**132**

**Erté (Romain de Tirtoff)**

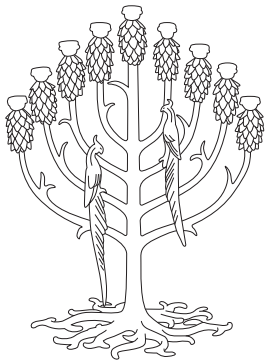
Born in 1892, Saint Petersburg, Russian Empire (now in Russia), died in 1990, Paris

**Tree of Life Hanukkah lamp, 1987**

Farmingdale, New York

Polished bronze

Bequest of Dr. Louise Jacobson, 2004-28



**133**

**Moshe Zabari**

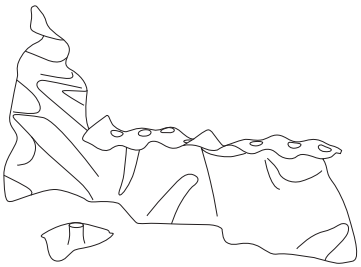
Born in 1935, Jerusalem

**Masada Hanukkah lamp, 1968**

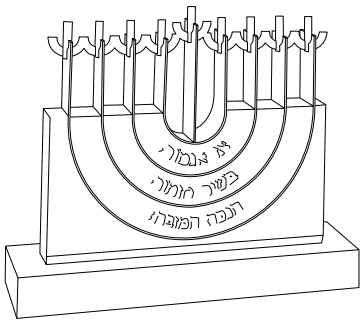
New York

Hand-worked and embossed silver

Gift of the Albert A. List Family, JM 253-68a-c



135



**David E. Davis**

Born in 1920, Romania, died in 2002, Cleveland

**Hanukkah lamp, 1995**

Cleveland

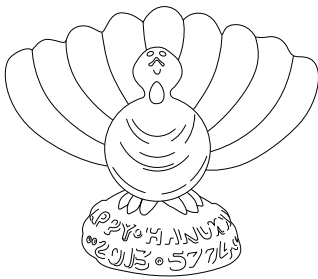
Granite, stainless steel, and foil

Gift of Bernice and David Davis, 1995-122

The sculptor David Davis adapts materials commonly found in his large-scale abstract sculptures—steel and granite—to create this intimate ceremonial object. Trained as a painter and illustrator before turning to sculpture, Davis drew inspiration from grids, architecture, and structured repetition. In 1989 he and his wife, Bernice, founded the Sculpture Center in Cleveland, an organization dedicated to supporting emerging practitioners.

The alternating bands of stone and steel, along with stylized floral elements that cradle the individual candles, convey the influence of modernist sculpture and architecture. The lamp’s inscription is drawn from “Ma’oz Tzur,” the Hebrew hymn most commonly sung after lighting the Hanukkah candles: “Then I will complete, with song of praise, the dedication of the altar,” referring to the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem that is commemorated by the holiday.

136



**Asher Weintraub (designer)**

Born in 2003, New York

**Connie Smith (fabricator)**

Born in 1964, United States

**Menurkey Hanukkah lamp, 2013**

New York

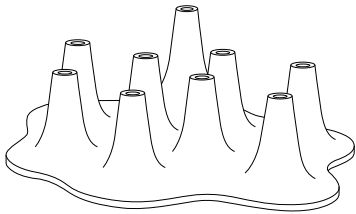
Slip-cast and glazed ceramic

Gift of Ellen Salpeter, 2013-19

A nine-year-old Asher Weintraub created this delightful Hanukkah lamp. The *Menurkey* commemorates the year the American holiday of Thanksgiving and the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah coincided for the first time in more than one hundred years (and will not do so again for another 77,000 years). Weintraub sketched the lamp on a 3D-modeling platform, the ceramic artist Connie Smith helping Weintraub complete the design. The Weintraubs ran a fundraising campaign for the lamp’s production and donated a percentage of the proceeds, in keeping with Asher’s belief that gratitude and charity are at the heart of the holidays. A version of this *Menurkey* was even shown at the White House before this object joined the Jewish Museum permanent collection.

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**Karim Rashid**

Born in 1960, Cairo, Egypt

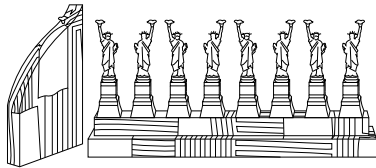
**Menorahmorph Hanukkah lamp, 2004**

New York

Silicone and stainless steel

Jewish Museum Centennial Commission; Purchase: Tobe Pascher Workshop Commission Program Fund, 2004-49

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**Mae Rockland Tupa**

Born in 1937, the Bronx, New York

**Miss Liberty Hanukkah lamp, 1974**

Princeton, New Jersey

Fabric-covered wood and molded plastic

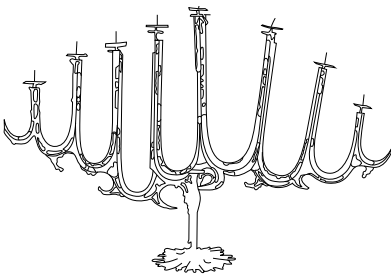
Gift of the artist, 1984-127a-b

Plastic Statues of Liberty and dime-store flags make up this Hanukkah lamp. Its medium recalls the assemblage art movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which used found objects to challenge classical definitions of art. The repeated elements suggest that overexposure and commercialization of even the most potent symbols can undermine their power. Yet, the deeper values of the Statue of Liberty and Hanukkah holiday endure, making this lamp a poignant commentary on American and Jewish identity and experience.

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,” a quotation from Emma Lazarus’s poem “The New Colossus,” appears on the lamp, evoking the artist’s childhood memory of a Hanukkah pageant in the Bronx. The poem, once a source of pride for immigrant families, resonates here as both a tribute to American ideals and a reminder of their fragility.

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**Judith Brown**

Born in 1931, New York, died in 1992, New York

**Hanukkah lamp, 1958**

New York

Iron tubing, copper-alloy solder, gesso, and gold paint

Gift of the Abram and Frances Kanof Collection of Contemporary Ceremonial Objects, JM 63-58





Jewish Museum