

Women's Division — F

In Celebration of Judaic Arts

By Louise Bernstein

"In celebration of Judaic Arts" sponsored by the Women's Division of the Charlotte Jewish Federation, provided Women's Division major donors with a rare and exciting opportunity to view examples of Judaic art from local private collections. Assembled with a view towards variety and significance, the exhibition contained work by Jewish artists as well as ceremonial objects both antique and modern.

The oldest piece on display was a ceramic oil lamp, authenticated by the Ministry of Antiquities of the State of Israel and dated circa 3500 B.C.E. Its simple, natural shape contrasted eloquently with a 2½ foot brass menorah, traditional in form with its eight candle holders adorned with a Mogen David and surmounted by the shamas, attributed to an Eastern European synagogue of the late 19th century. These two pieces spoke of a time quite different from, but a feeling quite similar to that evoked by a group of contemporary silver filigree ceremonial objects handcrafted in Israel. The delicate tracery of their polished forms, set atop clear lucite pedestals, brought the flavor of ancient tradition into the mainstream of contemporary Jewish life.

One of the most interesting ceremonial objects was a mini "kosher" Torah of unknown date and origin. Handwritten on parchment only 5½ inches high, the exquisitely crafted scroll was rolled on silver spindles with silver handles and complemented by the crown, pointer (yad) and breastplate. The hand-made brocade mantle was included in the display as well as the black lacquer case, the slightly Oriental appearance of which caused some speculation as to whether it was part of the original work.

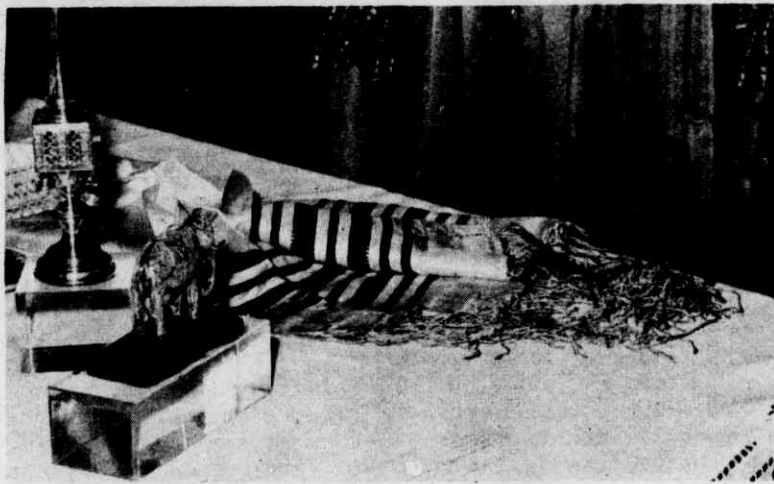
The musical portion of this "Evening of Jewish Art" echoed throughout the graphic display. One could



Fiddler on the Roof, color etching of Caesarea, Torah



Lady praying over Shabbat Candles



Old Talit and Havdalah Set



Miniature Kosher Torah

almost hear the melancholy strains produced by Rubin's Musician playing a soft counterpoint to the poignant ironic gaiety of the delightful shtetl violinist in a watercolor by Ilya Shor or a charming Fiddler sculpted in wood. And over and over

again, reminders of our beloved homeland: Ohaly's brooding Jerusalem in smoldering russet tones vying with Katz's sparkling view of that same City of Gold, surprisingly touched with the same autumnal hues; Florence Jaffa's soft-

toned Arches of Caesarea standing in front of a menorah fashioned of Jerusalem stone to resemble the Wall.

The paintings, prints and sculptures in the exhibition demonstrated the astonishing variety of media and techniques being used by 20th Century Jewish artists. However, as one moved from a tiny, graceful silver rendering of Daniel and the Lions to Ben Ezra's soaring copper angel reaching out to a huddled Abraham and Issac, from the delicate pastel gaiety of Sharir's Spring, where whimsical flowers blossomed alternately with bearded rabbinical faces, to the spinning emerging worlds of Ben Zvi's jewel-toned Bereishis (In the Beginning), the same message shone through. Our heritage — Biblical, spiritual and historic — lives on vibrantly and relevantly in the creative mind of the Jewish artist.

Surrounded by these beautiful and evocative works of art, the viewer couldn't help but wonder why Jewish artists are not more widely known in the general community. We hear frequently about Jewish writers and musicians. The name of Chaim Potok or Pinchus Zuckerman is immediately recognized by anyone who has the slightest contact with the worlds of literature or music. The same cannot be said of Samuel Katz or Ben Ezra. Perhaps we were late starters in the world of painting and sculpture because of the ancient orthodox prohibition against the representation of living things. Perhaps subconsciously, we are still inhibited by that prohibition. But the creative energies of our people cannot be denied. The concrete evidence of Jewish artistic genius in this exhibition was moving and prophetic. May we continue to express to the world the depth of our faith, the value of our tradition and the love of our heritage with which we were surrounded on this memorable "Evening of Jewish Art."

Solicitor Train



Federation women at Solicitor Training Workshop. Doris Edelstein, Rhoda Gleib, Nancy Polinsky, Cary



Federation women at Solicitor Training Workshop. Florence Jaffa, Ann Abel, Janet Jaffa, Pearl Kier

Sandi Simon, from Miami, Florida, led a Solicitor Training Workshop for Charlotte Jewish Federation Women's Division on January 9 at the Jewish Community Center.

Gail Bienstock, co-President of Women's Division and the Chairwoman of Solicitor Training, introduced the speaker. Sandi Simon, who was recently elected to the National United Jewish Appeal Women's Division Board, serves on the Executive Committee of the Regional UJA Board. She is emigrating to Israel this summer. Sandi is the sister of Dr. Jay Jacoby of Charlotte.

The women were taught methods of solicitation and campaign techniques. Those who attended were: Ann Abel, Bobbi Bernstein, Cary Bernstein, Gail Bienstock,

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GERDA KLEIN

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