

Art at the Rosenzweig Gallery

By Dr. Daniel J. Green
For The Atlanta Jewish Times

As I often go through the community court of Judea Reform Congregation, I am always welcomed by the exhibits of the Rosenzweig Gallery. The current show through November presents the works of 21 Southern artists of the American Guild of Judaic Art. What you will find is a thoughtful and thought-provoking exhibit of about fifty pieces of art representing the "Jewish Spirit." There are several works that really spoke to me, so I thought I would share some thoughts with you so you could go see them for yourself.

Looking at Flora Rosefsky's wall hanging, "Personal Sanctuary," you get a sense of Jewish home life - a sense of calm and family and also the reality of outside certainties. The piece, constructed from a vintage 1940's tablecloth, newspaper collage, paint and ink, depicts ordinary life of prayer, meal, service, enjoyment and peace with tiled drawings and stitching. You feel the understanding of everyday life through caricatures in black and white, routine. However, once outside the grid, you are surrounded by newspaper clippings with headlines depicting strife, natural disasters, and difficulties in the world. It's interesting to see Rosefsky's technique of combining the lace of the Sabbath table alongside contemporary issues and a hope for peace and refuge.



PHOTO/Courtesy American Guild of Judaic Art
Barbara Ladin Fisher's "Mt. Sinai."



PHOTO/Courtesy American Guild of Judaic Art
Simone Soltan's "May the Light of Judaism Shine Brightly in your Heart."

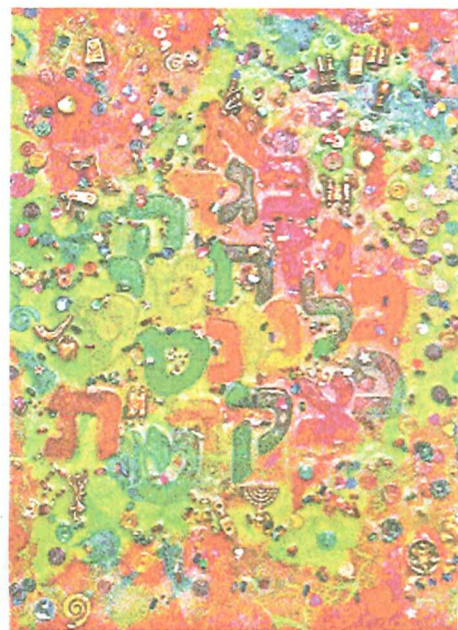
The mixed media pulp-painting piece, "Creation," by Judith Segall is extraordinary. On that day when God created earth, what occurred? What I see in this work is a pinpoint of a black hole surrounded by the evolution of the earth or as the artist says, "Bereshit - the Nebula." Like the eye of a hurricane, the power of the center spins counter-clockwise to develop the winds, the skies, the gases, the minerals, the ice, and living things. To me, Segall with paper techniques depicts a snapshot of the chaos in that moment when the earths and the heavens were created.

The whimsical piece, "Alef Beis," by Ellen Filreis uses handmade papers, charms, alphabets and other embellishments in a very colorful encaustic collage. Many of the Jewish holidays are represented by the icons of the day (e.g., Purim, grogger; Rosh Hashanah, shofar; Chanukah, dreidel). The piece presents the simple symbols of Judaism and invites you to look very closely and carefully at the many pieces that compose the work. You could spend quite a long time, especially in competition with others, to see how many symbols you can identify. Can you find the Star of David?

There are some other pieces not to miss, like Barbara Ladin Fisher's "Mt. Sinai," which uses ultra-suede and stitching to depict the awesome imagery of Moses bringing down the Ten Commandments. Simone Soltan's "May the Light of Judaism Shine Brightly in your Heart" is a multi-media collage work that

brings together the symbolism of the light of the menorah and the love in the spirit of Judaism. Susan Big's quilts are fun, especially, "Gefelted Fish." Get it?

The American Guild of Judaic Art, Southern States Membership Exhibit runs through Nov. 30, 2011 at the



PHOTO/Courtesy American Guild of Judaic Art
"Alef Beis," by Ellen Filreis.

Judea Reform Congregation in Durham, N.C.

Editor's note: Dr. Daniel J. Green is Associate Vice-President for Enrollment Management, Meredith College, Raleigh, N.C.; Member, Board of Trustees, Judea Reform Congregation, Durham, N.C.

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This program is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly. GCA is a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

November 4 • 2011