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The Seventh Day: Revisiting Shabbat
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum, New York

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Front Cover:
Ruth Weisberg
Gathering, 2013
Oil and mixed media on unstretched canvas, 65⅛” x 55”

Back Cover:
Dorit Jordan Dotan
Observing, Washoe, 2013
Digital photograph, 17” x 28”

The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum seeks to explore the enduring values and traditions of our heritage through the lens of contemporary experience.

In recent years, our exhibitions have looked at a broad range of themes, rooted in Jewish text, to reveal how the visual arts can be a bridge to a deeper understanding of one’s self and the larger world. These themes have included the celebration of Jewish time as expressed by innovative ritual objects; the sanctity of all lives created in the image of God within the context of the sexuality spectrum; the sanctity of all lives created in the image of God within the context of the sexuality spectrum; the sanctity of all lives created in the image of God within the context of the sexuality spectrum; the sanctity of all lives created in the image of God within the context of the sexuality spectrum; the sanctity of all lives created in the image of God within the context of the sexuality spectrum; the sanctity of all lives created in the image of God within the context of the sexuality spectrum. The Seventh Day: Revisiting Shabbat follows in this line of inquiry by inviting the public to consider one of the pillars of Jewish practice and belief: the sanctity of the Sabbath. Faced with a rapidly changing Jewish community, characterized by increasing ethnic diversity, interfaith families, challenges affecting the organized institutions of Jewish life, and an unprecedented acceptance in the fabric of North American life, what does the seventh day mean to contemporary Jews who may or may not choose to adhere to traditional observance?

Contemporary artists have tackled this question through provocative works of art, born out of an era where technology and culture have eroded the boundaries separating work, play, and repose. Their works engage our imagination and invite us to delve into the possibilities and new definitions of renewal symbolized by the ‘day of rest.’

Through the crucible of their creativity, the artists in this exhibition offer new ways to imagine Shabbat and reflect the profound insights that Abraham Joshua Heschel observed in The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man:

The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation, from the world of creation to the creation of the world.

Ayana Friedman
Legend of the Soiled Shabbat Dress, 2013
Digital photograph, 19½” x 82”
The Seventh Day: Revisiting Shabbat
Laura Kruger, Cantor
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum

One of the many privileges of Judaism is the celebration of the Sabbath. We are encouraged to consider the deepest meaning of that day; the ‘seventh day’, and fulfill its potential openly with understanding. The scholar and artist gathered here to create this exhibition have mined their thoughts, feelings, and scholarship. They share their insights to achieve a rich interpretation of the ‘seventh day – a day of rest.’

Genesis 2:2-4 of the Torah states: “On the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, and God ceased on the seventh day from all the work God had done. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the work of creation.”

The Ten Commandments revealed to Moses at Mount Sinai as the ultimate code of moral behavior confirms the celebration of the Sabbath. Over millennia, the interpretation and the practice of Shabbat has evolved, changed, and expanded to meet the needs of people, meditate, to achieve serenity, ease, peace.

The Jewish celebration of the seventh day, the Sabbath, encourages the following actions: Welcoming the moment, Giving charity, Blessing loved ones, Illuminating the dark, Acknowledging the fruits of the land, Sustaining life and the environment, Connecting with others, Savoring intimacy and sexuality, Continuing spiritual education, Awakening the senses, Impressing generational memory, and Pausing to meditate, to achieve serenity, ease, peace.

Charity! Tzedakah comes in many guises – anonymously through financial aid, physical help, sharing personal sustenance. Such outreach may support a broad range of causes: one’s synagogue, endangered species, expansion of knowledge through the preservation of books, and the generational imperative of passing on with understanding of the giving of charity, so that tzedakah becomes instinctive.

Blessing and acknowledging valued relationships, including spouses, parents, children, and extended family and friends, is inherent in this day. It acknowledges diversity of relationships, the embrace of shared traditions, and inclusivity.

Renewal is encouraged through the reading of Torah, joining Havurah study groups, meditation, connecting with nature, and caring for those impacted by ill health and diminishing abilities.

Blessings over wine and challah are repeated throughout the Sabbath’s meals. At the closing of Shabbat the Havdalah ceremony reawakens the senses with aromatic, fragrant, and scented herbs for the coming six days.

The Seventh Day: Revisiting Shabbat includes art works based on Sabbath texts, functional ritual objects, including wine goblets, decanters, candle sticks, prayer books, challah plates and covers, havdalah spice containers, and a Sabbath throne. Concepts from mishnah and the Talmud, reflecting mystical spirituality, include welcoming the Sabbath Bride and the gift of an additional soul, the neshamah yeteirah.

The fully realized Shabbat experience is enhanced by these tactile and diverse works. The artists meet serious challenges with the use of potent symbolism expressive of their individual aesthetic and spiritual sensibilities.

With their consent, I quote the contemporary Sabbath Manifesto, created by Reboot, a non-profit Jewish community in 2010, in search of a modern way to observe the weekly day of rest: Avoid technology, Connect with loved ones, Nurture your health, Get outside, Avoid commerce, Light candles, Drink wine, Eat bread, Find silence, and Give back.

A dam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden at the end of the Sixth Day of Creation. However, since the Sabbath is blessed by being a day of all light, Yom she-barai ve’er, as the Rabbis said, a taste of the World to Come, the sun never set on that first night in the real world outside of Paradise. The light persisted for thirty-six hours, twelve on the eve of the Sabbath, i.e., the Sixth Day, twelve during the night of the Sabbath and twelve on the Sabbath day. Adam and Eve were warmed by the light and felt protected.

However, just picture the moment as the sun began to set at the end of this first Sabbath outside the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were terrified of the darkness, so – what did God do? Some midrashim suggest that God provided Adam with two flints, which he struck together causing light to come forth.

The Tradition emphasizes that fire/light was created for the first time at the conclusion of the Sabbath by Adam in a Promethean act, and he then extended his hands towards the light and uttered a blessing, “Praised are You, Adonai, Ruler of the universe, who creates the flames of fire (ne-ore ha-esh).” Thus began the tradition of the Havdalah ritual.

How ironic, though, that while we praise God, the Creator, it was Adam, the first human being, who was given the capacity and the necessary elements by the Divine to actually create fire. Human beings have the ability to recreate the light of the Sabbath and illuminate the darkness of our world, and all who recite Havdalah witness the human role in co-creation and perfecting the world.

In the Havdalah ritual, which concludes the Sabbath and distinguishes between the Sabbath and the rest of the week, when the blessing is recited over the flame, we, like Adam, extend our hands towards the flame and gaze at our fingers, which are bent towards us. Yet, the Tradition also suggests that we should focus on our fingertips. It was understood as a reminder that in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were originally covered by God with a protective garment of Divine light (or, which can also mean ‘skin’ if written with an ’alef), and that all that remains of this protective garment is what we carry with us on the tips of our fingers. Each week at the conclusion of the Sabbath, we, the progeny of Adam and Eve, gazes at our fingertips, realize that we carry with us the hope of ultimately returning to the Garden through the fulfillment of God’s commandments. There is also the tradition of dipping one’s finger into the lighter wine used in the first blessing and touching our eyes, thereby underlining what the Psalmist wrote, “The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes” (Ps. 19:9)

Havdalah requires that we utilize all of our senses. We hear the blessings recited, taste the wine, feel the heat of the flame, and smell the spices. Following the departure of the Sabbath, the experience of the holy, we are reanimated – enlivened by the potential we possess to extend the perfection of the Sabbath into our mundane lives.

We first experience hearing the Kiddush, the first blessing of Havdalah, which sanctifies the next six days in the week in which we are called upon to help perfect, complete our world.

The second blessing is over the spices and it is the only time the sense of smell is used ritually in Judaism. The reason for the use of the spices professed in the Tradition is that we are given an added soul, a neshamah yeteirah on the Sabbath, a symbol of heightened spiritual awareness. When the Sabbath ends, this added soul departs, and on one level, the aroma of the spices is meant to comfort us. When we sniff the spices, it is also our hope that we can carry the sweetness of the Sabbath into the week, thereby waking us to our earthly responsibilities and potential.

This belief in ultimate redemption is framed by the words of the Havdalah ritual itself. The Ashkenazi version of Havdalah begins with the chanting of an introductory paragraph made up of verses from the books of Isaiah, Psalms, and Esther, which emphasize the deliverance of the Jewish people. We believe we will experience light and joy, even as we are enveloped by the darkness of nightfall, the imperfection of the world outside of the Garden. And at the conclusion of the ritual, the participants sing of the eventual coming of the Prophet Elijah who will announce the advent of the messianic era.

Perhaps that is why the Rabbis stress that one who recites Havdalah will experience the World to Come (Olam ba-ba). Not only will we benefit from an abundance of Divine blessings in our lives, symbolized by the overflowing cup of wine in the first blessing, but we will be a vehicle for recreating the Garden of Eden and the ultimate Sabbath.
Shavat Vayinafash: Rested and “Resouled”

Rabbi Nancy Weiner, D. Min., Dr. Paul M. and Trudy Steinberg Professor in Human Relations and Counseling; Director, Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling, HUC-JIR/New York

A respite and a “resouling” – these are the essence of Shabbat. Taking a respite from time and its normative activities and finding a way to reclaim our souls, our true selves.

Going to synagogue, cooking a special meal, cleaning the house may have been the ways in which Shabbat used to punctuate your week, serving as reminders to take a rest and to “resoul.” But perhaps you can’t get out to shul or you can’t sit through a service or your cooking days are over (for good or for the time being) or enjoying food is no longer a possibility or heavy physical exertion is no longer part of your repertoire. You spend the entire week reclining or sitting. How do you take a rest from what you used to categorize as resting? How do you connect with Shabbat and truly appreciate it?

Shabbat is all about refocusing and getting to the essence of things. Was it the cooking itself that brought you pleasure? Or the ability to gather family and friends around you and contribute to nurturing them physically and emotionally.

And to be nurtured by them? What did getting to the synagogue give you? A chance to see and catch up with friends and family? An opportunity to pray with those who shared a history, a heritage, a set of values, hopes and dreams? A chance to offer personal prayer amidst fellow prayers? An opportunity to enter a holy space in which God’s presence is more palpable? A scheduled moment to take a deep breath, to take stock, to remember that all of life isn’t the work-a-day world?

Losing familiar ways of preparing for and celebrating Shabbat is painful and giving yourself ample space to mourn such losses is important. But you need not give up Shabbat entirely.

Midrash refers to our homes as a mikdash me’at, a small sanctuary. Perhaps there can be a spot in your house or a focal point in your bedroom that can be your mikdash, your sacred space… where you go physically, visually, or emotionally to experience the Divine presence. Where you can pray, alone or with others. Or perhaps there is music that can transport your soul to someplace beyond your physical body, linking you with the Jewish community past and present and enable you to welcome Shabbat. Inviting family and friends to come and make music, playing a CD, or just humming or singing to yourself can open you up to welcome Shabbat. You can ask friends and family to visit with you on Shabbat as they are going to or coming from shul. Those who come or call before can be your emissaries to the larger community. Those who come after can catch you up on what went on, who was there, what’s happening in different people’s lives and what the sermon or d’var Torah was about, so that you can participate in the discussion or just ponder the day’s messages.

Heddy Abramowitz
Brooklyn, NY
Arab Bakery, the Jewish Quarter, 2013
Ugat Chen, 2013
Norman Bakery, the Jewish Quarter, 2013
Peer Challah 4, 2013
Photographs, 16” x 20” each

Abramowitz captures the essence of the Israeli culture she lives in through the lens of her camera. Challah, a bread which holds many biblical, folklore and traditional associations, is traditionally blessed and eaten at the Shabbat table.

Jan Aronson
American
Kiddush Cup, 2013
Watercolor, 11” x 8½”

Kiddush, the blessing of the wine, is said on many celebratory occasions, particularly Shabbat. This image, evoking the warmth of these occasions, was created for The Bronfman Haggadah.

Helene Aylon
1931, Brooklyn, NY
From My Memoir: Lighting the Candles with My Mother, 2013
Photograph, 14” x 26”

Helene Aylon, a visual, conceptual and installation performance artist and eco-feminist, says: “At candle-lighting time the dazzling white tablecloth covered the large table, making it look like a world unfinished. My mother’s arms would bring the Sabbath light toward her shut eyes in broad arcs… When she lifted her palms from her face, her eyes were invariably moist.”
Debra Band
1957, American
*Kabbalat Shabbat*, 2013
Illuminated with ink, gouache, and gold leaf on slunk vellum
16” x 14” each
*Kabbalat Shabbat* is the Friday evening synagogue service and festive home meal. Band’s illuminated manuscript has the text supplemented by the addition of decoration, such as decorated initials, borders (marginalia), and miniature illustrations.

Will Barnet
1911-2012, Beverly, MA
*Saturday Afternoon, Gramercy Park*
Color photo-lithograph, 1/30/200, 2012
Gift of the Print Club of New York, Inc.
15¾” x 18½”
An autobiographical image of Barnet and his granddaughter, Ellie, in the park. The scene captures the essence of a joyful, generational relationship on a Saturday afternoon.

Henry Bismuth
1961, France
*Kabbalah Shabbat, The Seventh Day*, 2013
Oil, acrylic, emulsion, and ash on canvas, 23¼” x 39¼”
Bismuth explains, “Hebrew is a sacred language. Its letters are not only tools of communication, but carry as well a precise diagram cyphering the principle of Creation…. the Hebrew letters – Shin, Beit, Ta – composing the Hebrew word, SHaBaT. Shin… the fire of the universe, the sacred fire. Beit represents a house. Ta delimits the four seasons.”

Harriete Estel Berman
1952, Harrisburg, PA
*In Your Light, I See Light*, 2002-03
Candelsticks; recycled tin cans, brass, 10k gold rivets and blue plexiglass
14¼” x 5¼”
Candelsticks are the iconic emblem of the Sabbath. Berman appropriates printed tin cans to create beautifully crafted and detailed sculptures that comment slyly on traditional (and contemporary) women’s roles in society and on the domestic front.

Andras Borocz
1956, Budapest
*Measuring the Words, 2009*
Yad Installation
Oak, birch, cedar, walnut, pine, mahogany, and poplar woods
The carved hands are sized from 1” to life-size and the “rulers” are between 3’ - 12’ long:
These sixteen carved hands float lazily in the air, each on the end of a wooden structure much like a foldable ruler, hanging in the air like mobiles that point towards each other and unknown destinations.
They reference the *Yad*, the pointer that is used to follow text when reading the Torah.

Jeff Brosk
American
*Challah Board*, 2012
14¼” x 27” x 1¼”
The *Challah* is treated with respect, often with a special board, knife, and covering. Brosk says, “The process of creating my work is a collaboration between the materials and myself. It deals with creating a harmony of form and material by combining my aesthetic concerns with the character and uniqueness inherent in the material.”
Judy Chicago
1934, Brooklyn, NY

Rainbow Shabbat, 1992
Lithograph, 30” x 45”

The inspiration for the Rainbow Shabbat as an image and message of hope came to Chicago during a memorable Shabbat meal. She chose to depict the Shabbat dinner with the heads of everyone turned toward the woman as she blesses the candles, while her husband raises his kiddush cup and sings his wife’s praises. As Chicago intended, this compresses the actual sequence of Shabbat events, celebrating both the Jewish and the female experience.

Lewis Cohen
1934, Brooklyn, NY

Friday Night, Nov. 14, 1930
A tabletop tableau (installation)
10” x 28” x 21”

This installation reveals Cohen’s memories of his childhood Shabbats. Cohen says that life is a circle and he takes pleasure in salvaging the old to create something new, asking the viewer to recognize the past while appreciating the here and now.

Marilyn Cohen
1938-2006, New York, NY

Front Porch Memphis, Saturday, May 5, 1928
Watercolor, collage, paper
36” x 41½”

Cohen said, “I have tried to capture, by visually recording the memories of Jewish families across America.” Front Porch Memphis, Saturday May 5, 1928 shows Marilyn’s father, brothers, and grandparents relaxing on a Shabbat afternoon.

Janet Dash
1939, New York, NY

Spice Box, 2012
Sterling silver with inlaid copper pomegranates, 2½” x 1½” x 1”

The close of Shabbat is marked by the brief prayer ceremony, Havdalah. Part of the ceremony includes the sniffing of sweet-smelling spices. Pomegranates are often used as decorations on ritual objects. Midrash refers to 613 seeds contained within the fruit which correspond to the number of mizvot, good deeds, prescribed in the Torah for daily practice.

Luigi Del Monte
Italian

Reflections, Shabbat Candlesticks, 2002
Rhodium plated sterling silver, 20” x 10” x 3”

This handmade work reflects the two lighted candles in a highly polished background. It is an exceptional piece and moves the celebration of Shabbat forward into our present time, echoing generations of Shabbat candles.

Dorit Jordan Dotan
1961, Haifa, Israel

Kehilat HaShachav, 2013
Mixed media photograph, 17” x 28”

Dotan’s camera finds a Kabbalat Shabbat gathering at Kehilat HaShachav, a Reform congregation in Even Yehuda. Closed eyes and open smiles create an inner peace for one or many.
Max Ferguson
1959, New York, NY
*Shabbat Candles*, 1993
Oil on panel, 24” x 17”
Ferguson portrays his mother lighting Shabbat candles in this painting of a highly traditional Sabbath scene. Candles symbolize the divine light or spirit. The lighting marks the transitional moment of the week serving to welcome Shabbat.

Ayana Friedman
1950, Israel
*Legend of the Soiled Shabbat Dress*, 2013 (image on page 1)
Digital photograph, 19½” x 6’10”
This work is based on a popular Israeli legend titled “Hannah and the Shabbat Dress.” The story deals with the preparations for Shabbat, which includes dressing oneself in fresh clothes and scouring our homes to welcome the Sabbath Queen.

Leslie Golomb and Louise Silk
American
*Torah Mantle: Friday Evening*, 2013
Cloth and acrylic, 3’8” x 12”
This Torah mantle is a response to the iconic painting *Friday Evening* by Isidor Kaufmann. The woman in the painting waits patiently for her husband to return home from synagogue and wears a special headdress for the Sabbath dinner.

Grace Graupe-Pillard
1945, Washington Heights, NY
*Plates of Light*, 1990
Pastel on cutout canvas, 79” x 55½”
Survival and vulnerability are recurring themes of the Sabbath and of Graupe-Pillard’s work in general. Saucers of light, reminding us of oil lamps used in biblical times, offer spiritual enrichment.

Laurie Gross
1952, California
*Seven Days of Creation*, 2007
Tapestry, 10’ x 30’
Designed by Susan Jordan
The textile is composed of seven panels and has embroidered imagery depicting God’s creation, beginning with the first day on the far right and ending with the Sabbath on the far left.

Alex Gruss
1957, Buenos Aires, Argentina
*Six Days of Creation*, 2013
Wood, mother of pearl, copper, ink 18” x 38”
Six intricate inlaid mezuzah covers depict the six days of Creation. The seventh day, the Sabbath, has no depiction but a strong red graffiti stamp forbidding all activities on that day. The Torah reads, “On the Seventh Day He Rested” and hence there is no image for the seventh day.
Carol Hamoy
1934, New York, NY

Sabbath Bride, 1992
37” x 15” x 9”

Lace, tulle, beads, candles, feathers, ribbons, thread, bird’s nest
Collection of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum

This ethereal female figure suggests the words of the 16th-century Lechah Dodi, sung on Friday night. It welcomes the Sabbath, who arrives as a bride and on Saturday evening exits as a queen.

Tobi Kahn
1952, New York, NY

Shabbat Objects, 2013
Mixed media installation; Wood, acrylic, bronze

A true Shabbat table is set: candlesticks for blessing, challah boards to hold and/or slice the bread, kiddush cups to bless the fruit of the vine, and salt cellars are added to the table.

Susan Kaplow
American

An Additional Soul, 2013
Painted wall hanging, 36” x 36”

The belief that every Jew receives a neshamah yeteirah, an additional or expanded soul for the duration of Shabbat, is first mentioned in the Babylonian Talmud, Melil, Betsah 16b, and later taken up by the Kabbalists in Safed, then in the 18th century by the Hasidim. The painting is a quote in English and Proto-Hebrew.

Linda Karshan
1947, American

Meditation, 2013
Etching, edition 6/17, 17” x 13¼”

Karshan uses a grid as a conceptual base for her work. Precision of execution distinguishes her work. Bowing movement and repetitive gestures characterize the artist’s process and provide a meditative stance as she creates these works. This etching is part of a series of six works leading up to the peace of Shabbat and time for reflection.

Emmett Leader
1954, American

Slonim Revisited II: “Let Justice dwell in the wilderness, righteousness in the fruitful field,” 2012
Tzedakah Box
Earthenware clay, terra sigillata, 22k gold leaf, 17” x 13” x 8”

Tzedakah is a Hebrew word literally meaning justice or righteousness, but commonly used to signify charity. Before the candles are lit on Shabbat, many families put an offering in their Tzedakah box.

Peachy Levy
1930, Providence, RI

Zahor v’Shamor / Remember and Observe
Fabric, mixed media, 63” x 40”

The celebration of Shabbat is an embrace of the Ten Commandments. The first mention is in the Book of Exodus which commands us to ‘Remember,’ zahor, the Sabbath. The Book of Deuteronomy reinforces this by commanding shamor, to ‘Observe.’ Levy enhances a sumptuous parokhet (torah ark cover) with these imperatives.
Margalit Mannor  
1940, Israel

*Shabbat Baby, April 30th, 1966, 2013*  
Photograph, 33” x 56”

A mother ‘labors’ to deliver a baby. A physician ‘works’ to assist and care for the pair. Neither of these activities could be described as ‘rest,’ and yet the Sabbath is an auspicious day to bring a new child into the word. Dana, the Shabbat Baby, born to Margalit Mannor in Tel-Hasomer Hospital, is still called the ‘Shabbat baby.’

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Adam Matsoon  
1962, American

*Untitled from the series The Invisible Thread, 2012*  
Photograph, 20” x 16”

“Shabat is not a day of the week, it’s a state of mind. We can invoke Shabat when we listen to the still sure voice of G-d that resides within our hearts.”

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Jacqueline Nicholls  
1971, Nottingham, England

*The Sabbath Widow, 2013*  
Grosgrain ribbon, embroidery on silk organza, 16¾” x 20¾”

This textile is a multi-layered black on black embroidery piece utilizing fabrics reminiscent of the Victorian mourning dress code for widows who were not fully a part of society. Shabbat Widow alludes to the contrast with the concept of the Shabbat Bride. Nicholls believes Shabbat observance can remove one from the world, alienating a person from socializing with the world.

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Mark Podwal  
1949, Brooklyn, NY

*Sabbath Sandwich, 2003*  
Acrylic, gouache and colored pencil on paper, 12” x 10”

Jewish history, legend and tradition are integral to Podwal’s extensive work as an artist, author and illustrator. In this whimsical painting of a whole fish enclosed in a challah, Podwal celebrates two important symbols of the Sabbath. The *challah*, an essential component of the Sabbath meal and *dag* (fish) are each traditional. In Gematria (numerology) each Hebrew letter is assigned a numerical value. The spelling of fish totals seven, and Shabbat is the seventh day of the week.

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Archie Rand  
1949, Brooklyn, NY

*From The 39 Forbidden Labors of the Sabbath, 2006*  
Clockwise from upper left:  
#3 Ketzirah / Removing something from its place of growth.  
#36 Man'ir / Igniting fire.  
#25 Tsadek / Capturing a living thing and withholding its freedom.  
#23 Tifer / Sewing two pieces of cloth together  
Acrylic on canvas, series of 39 paintings, 24” x 18” each

In the Mishnah the Rabbis enumerated 39 major categories (with hundreds of subcategories) of labor that were forbidden on the Sabbath. They are based on the types of work that were related to the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

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Valerie and Steve Resnick  
American

*Jerusalem Decanter, 2013*  
Carved and sand blasted crystal, 11” x 4” x 4”

The Resnicks have been pioneers in the Judaica renaissance of the past two decades. The beauty of these works is derived from the skilful carving of the glass, as well as the sophistication and spirituality of the design imagery.
Joan Roth
1942, Detroit, MI
For Many Souls, 2009
Photograph, 16" x 20"
Joan Roth, a visual poet who has traveled the world in search of the face of female Jewry, has the gift for seeing the significant moment, the meaningful gesture. In this series of photographs, she captures women around the world lighting Shabbat candles.

Claire Jeanine Satin
American
Pentimento, Kodesh Shabbat, 2013
Images, text on acrylic, metallic overlay, gold, crystal beads, nylon thread, 11" x 5" x 4"
The hamsa, or joined hands indicate the gesture of the priestly blessing, uplifted and pointing toward significant Hebrew phrases and words. The word Shabbat is repeated, highlighted, and revered as a day of particular observance.

Ruth Schreiber
Israeli
Mitzvah Night, 2013
Silver plate, wooden challah board, silver knife, candlesticks, lipstick, baked dough and embroidered challah cover installation, 14" x 13" x 11"
Shulchan Aruch, the Code of Jewish Law, urges marital relations on Shabbat. As a woman prepares for the Sabbath by preparing food, challah, and lighting candles, so must she prepare herself for intimacy with her husband on Friday night. After the meal is served and cleared, the guests have left, and the children are asleep, then comes the fulfillment of this mitzvah (commandment).

Emil Shenfeld
Israel
Rorschach, 2006
Anodized aluminum and stainless steel, 13¼" high
The positive/negative values of these Shabbat candlesticks were inspired by Shenfeld’s mother’s experience during her dislocation to Brazil after World War II.

Debby Ugoretz
1952, Milwaukee, WI
Sanctuary, 2010
Paper cut, 27¾" x 17¼" x 6¼"
Shabbat is presented as a white protected space, surround- ed by the chaos of the work week. “The Sabbaths are our great cathedrals, and our Holy of Holies. Shabbat teaches us to live outside of time – to rid ourselves of the daily grind – which, in my opinion, is a time that robs one of the awe-inspiring beauty of nature and the sense of purpose.”

Reeva Shaffer
1945 Winnipeg, Canada
AM I READY, 2013
Triptych of challah covers, silk, embroidery, ribbon, 20” x 20”
The vibrant colors of the first challah cover in this triptych evolves through gradations of color and textures to calm, serene shades of cream and gold.
David Wander
1954, New York, NY

Creation, Shabbat Menorah, 1993
Silver plated aluminum, with mirror, 15” x 9½”

The images embossed on the candle holder symbolize the six days of creation and celebrate the seventh day by the lighting of the candles. Wander uses the reflection of the mirror to multiply the miracle of light.

Joyce Ellen Weinstein

My Private Shabbat, 2013
Paper, foam-core, glass, acetate, and candles 8” x 10”

The very sound of Hebrew and the shapes of Hebrew letters are comforting to the artist, and so she uses a mystical mix of Hebrew in this work.

Ruth Weisberg
Chicago, IL

Gathering, 2013
Oil and mixed media on unstretched canvas, 65” x 58”

Gathering evokes that crucial moment in the Shabbat morning service when we gather the tzitzit (prayer shawl fringes) in preparation for saying the Sh’ma prayer.

Albert J. Winn
1947, Chester, PA

Erev Shabbat, 1993
Silver gelatin print, 18” x 22”

Celebrating the mitzvot of Shabbat is the privilege of all people of belief, regardless of gender, nationality, or cultural identity.

Laurie Wohl
1942, Washington, D.C.

Prayer, 2002
"Unweaving" artist canvas, linen, acrylic 18” x 44”

“We give thanks to you, O G-d, for our lives, which are in your hands, for our souls, which are in your keeping…for the signs of Your presence we encounter every day, and for your wondrous gifts at all times.”

Malcah Zeldis
1931, Bronx, New York

Sabbath in Detroit, 1981
Acrylic on board, 25½” x 25½”

The artist recalls her childhood by painting her grandparents surrounded by their welcoming, traditional home. Her compelling naïve style is a view of time as a simultaneous unfolding rather than a strict, linear progression of events.
Exhibition Checklist

Marilyn Cohen
Front Porch, Memphis, Saturday, May 5, 1928
Watercolor, collage, paper 
36” x 41½”

Jared Dash
Space Box, 2013
Sterling silver space box with mixed copper 
2½” x 9½” x 1”

Luigi Dolente
Vibrations, 2013
Sterling silver 
20½” x 3”

Doron Devorac
Tzitzit Box: Hand-built clay, terra sigillata glaze, gold leaf, red earthenware, 22k gold 
17” x 13” x 8”

Pawley Levy
Zaher v’Shamer / Remember and Observe, 2013
Fabric, mixed media 
63” x 40”

Margaret Mason
Shabbat Baby, April 30, 1966, 2013
Two photographs 
33” x 56” each

Adam Matheson
Unfolded, 2013
Four photographs 
20½” x 42½”

Jacqueline Nichols
The Sabbath Widow, 2013
Grosgrain ribbon, embroidery on silk organ 
16½” x 20¾”

Mark Pedela
Sabbath Sandstorm, 2003
Acrylic, glass, colored pencil on paper 
12” x 10”

Shabbat, 2003
Acrylic, glass, colored pencil on paper 
12” x 10”

Prague Jewish Town Hall
Space Box, 2013
Acrylic, glass, colored pencil on paper 
12” x 8½”

Archie Rand
The 39 Forbidden Labors
2013
Carved and sand blasted crystal 
10” x 6” x 4”

Jean Roth
Generation to Generation, 2007
For Mary Sox, 2005
Max Ringgold Sabbath Lamp, 2009
How They Learn, 2007
Four photographs 
16” x 20” each

Cecelia Hauptman
Shabbat, Kosel Shabbat I, 2013
Images, text on acrylic, metallic overlay, gold crystal break, nylon thread 
11” x 5” x 5”

Ruth Schreiber
Mishnah Night, 2013
Mixed media installation 
14” x 13” x 11”

Suzette Acar
Suzanne Friedman
Suzanne Friedman
Cantor Mimi Frishman
Betty Golombe
Susan Malloy
Nancy Mantell
Cecelia Hauptman
Gail Davidson

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Founded in 1875, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is the nation’s oldest institution of higher Jewish education and the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism. HUC-JIR educates men and women for service to North American and world Jewry as rabbis, cantors, educators, and nonprofit management professionals, and offers graduate and post-graduate programs to scholars of all faiths. With centers of learning in Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York, HUC-JIR’s scholarly resources comprise its renowned Kliba Library, the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, research institutes and institutes, and academic publications. In partnership with the Union for Reform Judaism and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, HUC-JIR sustains the Reform Movement’s congregations and professional and lay leaders. HUC-JIR’s campuses invite the community to an array of cultural and educational programs illuminating Jewish history, identity, and contemporary creativity and fostering interfaith and multiethnic understanding.

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