



Passover Landscapes: Illuminations on the Exodus

Featuring work by visiting artist Rabbi Matthew Berkowitz

APRIL 4–MAY 30, 2019

GALLERY RECEPTION: APRIL 4 • 6–8 PM • SABES JCC



FAMILY PASSOVER PROGRAM: APRIL 7 • 10:30 AM–NOON • SABES JCC

The 4 Children Unmasked – A hands on, community art event geared towards children in grades 2–5 and their families, but all ages are welcome! Create a meaningful piece for your seder table.

This event is free. Registration is required at besyn.org

Passover Landscapes: Illuminations on the Exodus features work by visiting artist Rabbi Matthew Berkowitz. Through *Passover Landscapes*, Berkowitz hopes to recapture a spirit of creativity and spontaneity experienced around the seder table. His work continues the tradition of passing collective memory from generation to generation but invites today's voices to join in.

"I am driven by a passion and love for Judaism and Israel. I continually seek to convey these treasures in a meaningful, substantive and real way. My profession is educating adults, but my avocation is painting and the visual arts. Wedding the two loves of art and text is a vital necessity in my life, a wellspring of creativity and wholeness. As such, I think of painting as visual prayer mirroring the prophetic experience of ancient Israel. The artist senses a message within that desires to be expressed. Translating biblical and rabbinic text through art breaks down barriers to meaning, inviting the viewer to respond. Rather than being experienced as a daunting, parochial, and fundamentalist force, my art mirrors the humanistic and constructive core of the religious experience."

From a close reading of sacred text, Matt turns to the palette and paper as he creates a composition that reflects the moral, ethic, or principle latent in the written word. An example of his approach may be found in the interplay between traditional scribal letters juxtaposed to modern styles in some of the pieces. Such lettering reflects his essential view of Judaism, rooted in a four thousand year old tradition yet also responsive to contemporary culture and issues.

Rabbi Matthew Berkowitz is the Director of Israel Programs for The Jewish Theological Seminary of America and co-founder of *Kol Ha-Ot*, a Jerusalem-based venture devoted to exploring the arts and Jewish learning. An accomplished artist, Matt was formally trained in Jewish scribal art in Jerusalem and completed the writing of *Megillat Esther*, the illumination of several ketubot. Also included in his work are *The Lovell Haggadah*, a series of notable tzedakah boxes, and major commissions. Matt lives in the Arnona neighborhood of Jerusalem and takes great pride in raising three Israeli children.

MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE FUND-A-NEED APPEAL AT THE 2018 HEILICHER ANNUAL BENEFIT

In partnership with Beth El Synagogue and Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School.

