

## ***Marginal***

Nessia Frank

Calligraphy on paper, 27 ½" x 20"

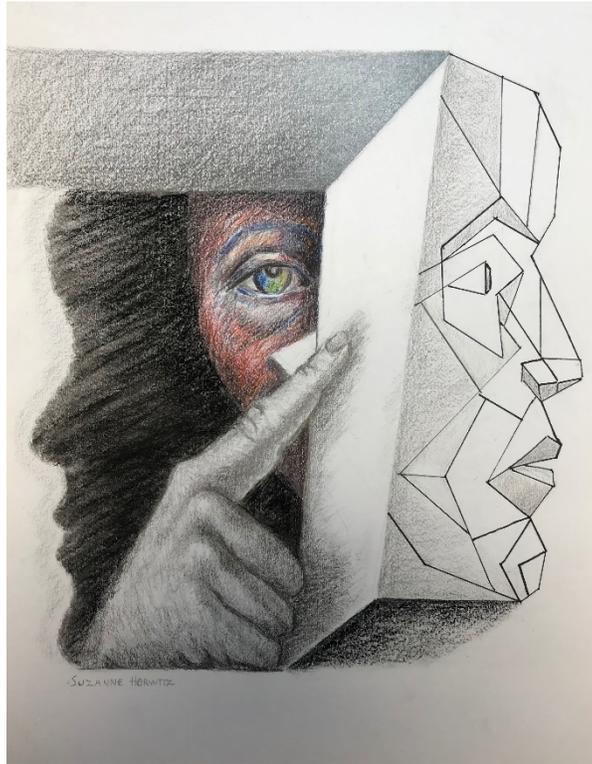
**Nessia Frank** was born and raised in Israel. She studied for two years at the Bezalel School of Art in Jerusalem, where she focused on graphic design and learned calligraphy. She came to the U.S. in 1963. She completed her bachelor's degree at Spertus College. Her artistic career included hand-lettered *ketubot* and hand-built ceramic work.

Nessia was married to Ed Frank (z"l). Together, they had a son, daughter and four grand-daughters.

### **Artist Statement:**

In the early seventies, I listened to a lecture by Dr. Abraham Twerski, a psychiatrist. He opened his lecture by declaring "welcome to the age of the Nursing Home". He talked about the fact that for prior generations, parents raised children and supported them to adulthood. When the parents got old, many homes became multi-generational dwellings.

Today, it is quite expected that older parents move to live in nursing homes. I found it disturbing that older parents became marginal, and caring for them became entirely the business of the nursing homes' staff. The language in my work was taken from a disturbing TV commercial for a personal injury lawyer.



## ***Our Eyes***

Suzanne Horwitz

Drawing, 18" x 12", 2020

**Suzanne Horwitz**, a second- generation artist, studied at the Art Students League of New York, received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Michigan.

Suzanne’s sculpture won recognition at the Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, New Jersey. Her work has been exhibited in numerous venues nationally and locally and represented in corporate and private collections. Horwitz was selected to be a Fellow of the Covenant at The Spertus Museum of Jewish Learning in Chicago, Illinois. Her work is represented in the newly published book, *CAST: Art and Objects Made using Humanity’s Most Transformative Process*, from Schiffer Publishing.

Although primarily a figurative sculptor, she has produced a diverse and extensive body of work. Her pieces range from intimate portraits to large room sized installations and outdoor work. Horwitz is on the faculty of the Evanston and Highland Park art centers.

### **Artist Statement:**

The texts we studied this session confirmed my long held thought that although “we” as Jews have been citizens of innumerable countries, made major contributions to our adopted cultures, “we” are outsiders and always will be outsiders.

Throughout history, the Jewish people have been traditionally targeted for discrimination. As a targeted people, we are often the first to sympathize and come to the aid of other groups discriminated throughout the world. However, those efforts seem to be quickly forgotten or erased from memory.

The past two years has seen an open rise of white supremacy and a tremendous number of anti-Semitic incidents around the world. Currently, we are being attacked from the right and from the left. Because history repeats itself, we have are wary of what's next.

I question why we aren't at "the table" and protest this discrimination as we have seen other groups do? Why?

Jewish people can never be comfortable in a place, but need to remain on high alert all the time. Why?



## ***La Corona***

Judith Joseph

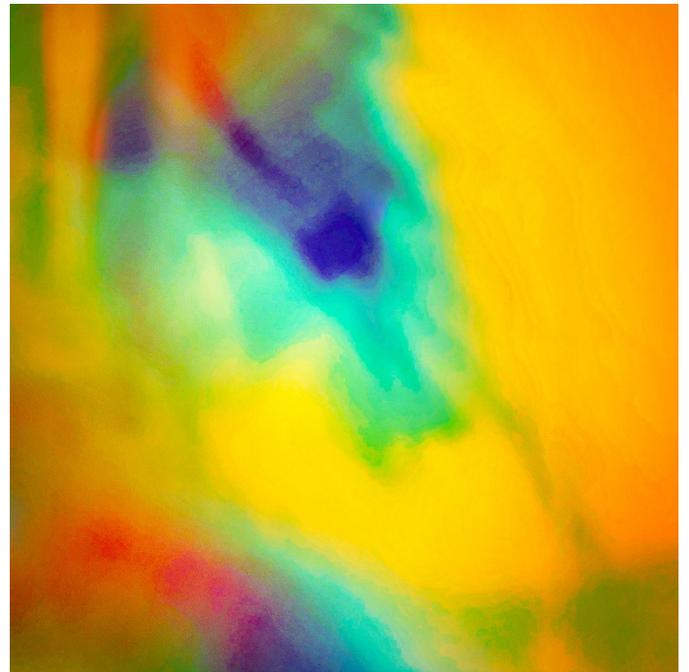
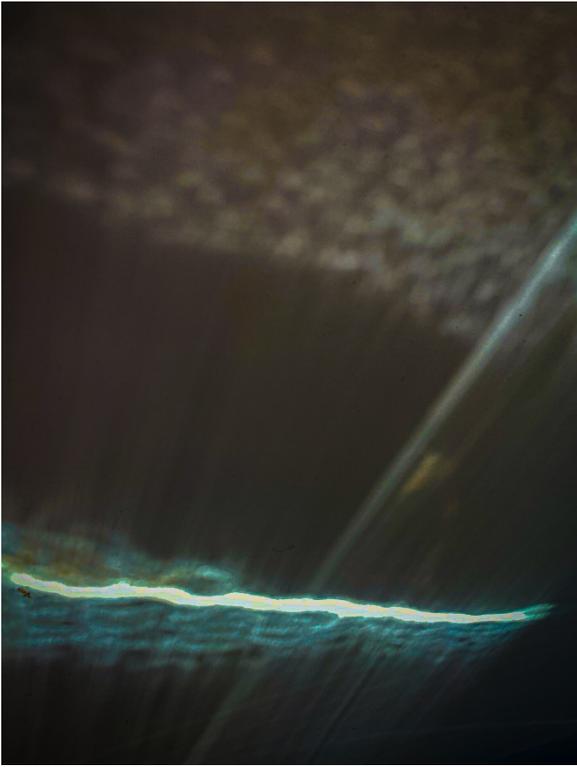
Woodblock print, 20" x 16", 2020

**Judith Joseph** is a Chicago based visual artist. She works in several media: woodblock prints, calligraphy, painting and installation. She has had numerous solo exhibitions and her art is in many private and public collections, including the Chicago Public Library, the Milwaukee Museum, Archives of MOMA, the Musée de la Poste in Paris and ARTPOOL in Budapest, Hungary. She exhibits widely, including solo and group exhibitions across the U.S. and recently in Amsterdam, Berlin, Vancouver and Douro, Portugal. She is on the faculty of the Chicago Botanic Garden, The Art Center, Highland Park and Orot Center for New Jewish Learning. With Jane Shapiro, she has taught the Artists' Beit Midrash for seven years. Her work may be seen at [www.judithjosephstudio.com](http://www.judithjosephstudio.com).

### **Artist Statement:**

*La Corona* is a visceral response to the pandemic. It expresses my feeling of horror, of claustrophobia, and fear of death. I also find a glimmer of hope: because people are staying home, nature is rebounding in many ways. The dolphins in the piece were inspired by news stories that the canals of Venice, murky and choked with pollution for centuries, are running clear now that the boat traffic has ceased to churn up the waters. Dolphins from the ocean have been seen swimming into the newly clear canals for the first time. The air in many cities is cleaner, due to less traffic.

The pandemic, as it forces us indoors and out of public places, highlights interiority, contemplation and introspection; as we paradoxically contemplate our society and dream of venturing out.



***Coming Out of the Dark***

Andrea Kamen

Digital photography and [video montage](#), 2020

**Andrea Kamen** is an avid photographer. In 2017, she earned a Fine Art Focus on Photography Certificate of Merit from the Chicago Botanic Garden and is currently completing her Master's certification. Andrea's photos have been displayed at the Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe Festival of Arts, Black Box Gallery and The Rissman Kol Ami Collection exhibit.

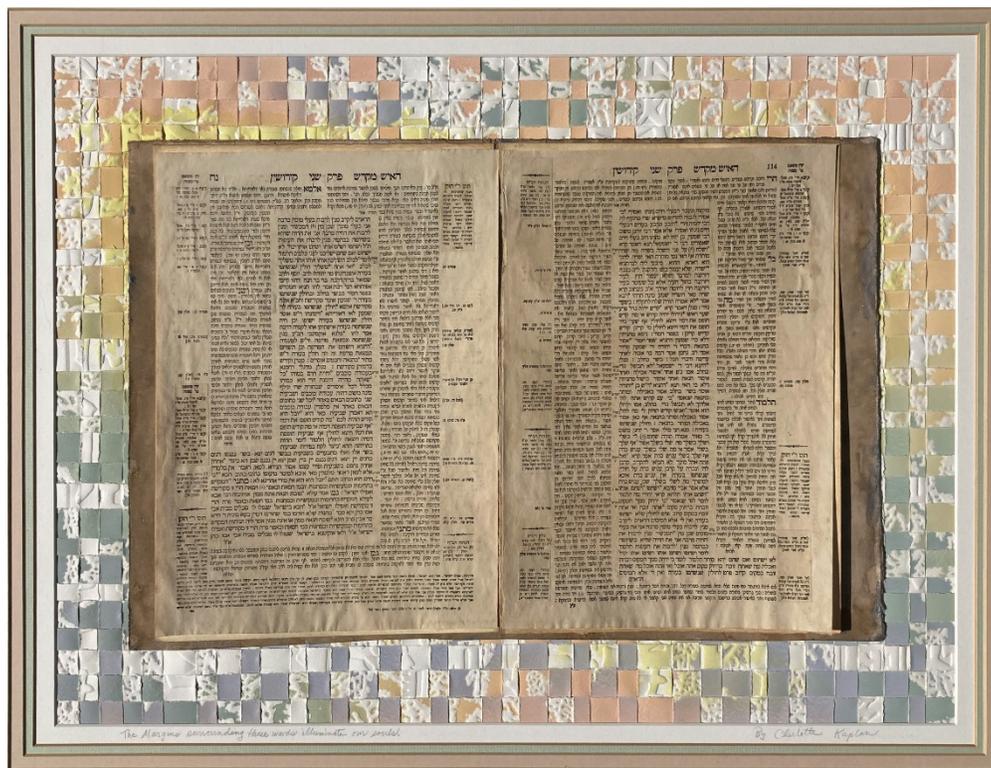
**Artist Statement:**

*Coming out of the dark, I finally see the light now  
And it's shining on me  
Coming out of the dark, I know the love that saved me  
Sharing with me*

*(Gloria Estefan - Out of the Dark)*

Shadows exist at the edge. They are mere undetailed reflections of our presence and society itself. A colorful existence still remains with the people who fall within these shadowy margins. I was inspired to compose by looking within the shadows to bring out life.

I use the changing light at dusk to arouse the mood. Out of the dancing shadows, color appears in my work, bringing vibrancy to the black and white images. I force myself to use my camera lens and aim it at my perceptions - to peel beneath the layers and find the spectrums they are made of.



## ***The Margins surrounding these words, illuminate our souls***

Charlotte Kaplan

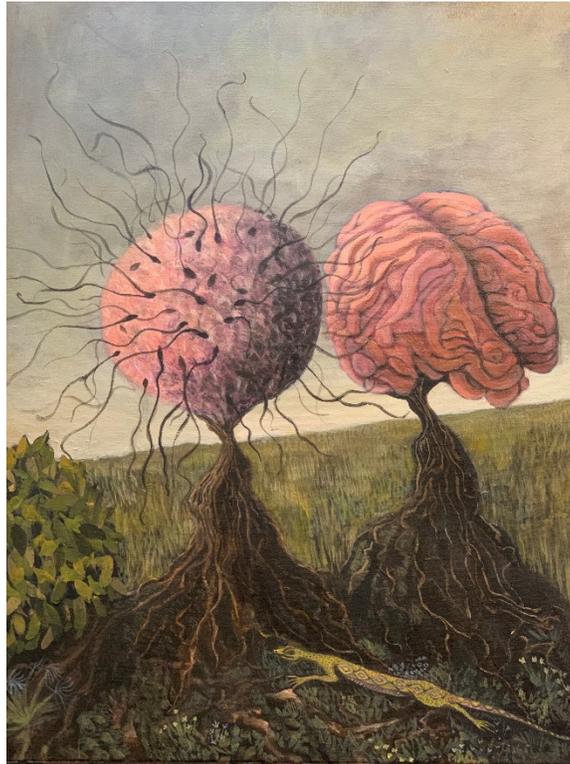
Watercolor on colored paper, paper images of the Gemora on paper, 27" x 33" framed

In my career as an Art Director for corporations, my best guide was to keep the message and design simple, and to the point. There was so much to put into an annual report for corporations, the graphics were there to complement the message. That knowledge keeps my message succinct.

Today I work in watercolor and fabric. I love simplicity and texture. My work may be seen at [enjoytheknots.com](http://enjoytheknots.com).

### **Artist Statement:**

This image came as a true connection between our cherished books of the rabbis and scholars throughout Jewish History, and the narrative of this project. It is an expression of my background in design, graphics, advertising and layout. Every page corresponds to an interpretation, idea or detail to the script. If you squint your eyes, you will see how the beautiful Hebrew, Aramaic and Rashi text fill in the pages, unlocking our heritage.



## ***The Garden II***

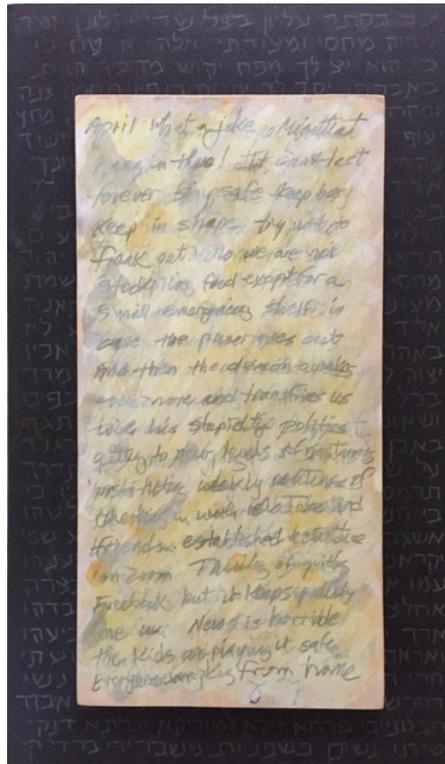
Ruti Modlin

Acrylic on canvas, 28"x22", 2020

**Ruti Modlin** is an independent artist who lives and works in the Chicago area. She grew up in Holland, Italy, Belgium and Israel. Modlin studied Graphic Design and Fine Art at the Johannesburg Technikon Art School in South Africa. She has solo and group shows in North America and internationally. Many of her paintings have sold to private collections. She's a Board member and Secretary at ARC Gallery & Educational Foundation Co-op in West Town, Chicago. She exhibits with the Chicago Dialogue and Art Makers North groups. She teaches painting and drawing at the Art Centre of Highland Park and Glencoe Park District.

### **Artist Statement:**

The GARDEN II is a painting about unearthing meaning. Brush in hand, I feel equipped to explore my personal reflections about the text in the Torah. THE GARDEN II is one painting in a series, in which I seek to balance the surreal and mythological story of our human beginnings from a philosophical perspective.



## ***Pandemic April***

Judy Solomon

Pencil, wash on board, 20 ½" x 12", 2020

**Judy Solomon** is a retired art teacher who had been working exclusively in Ceramics since 2011. She is a member of the artists collective Space 900 Gallery in Evanston. She has attended all 7 years of the original Artists Beit Midrash at Beth El.

### **Artist Statement:**

This spring found me unable to follow through with ideas in ceramics as I had in the previous years. I have been very experimental with media and connections since the beginning of the pandemic.

This piece references classical Jewish texts that have additional writings around the edges of the original document. But I have reversed the positions of the text and my annotations. As I am trying to process the reality of the pandemic, I find some comfort in the irony of knowing that our anxiety is the same that our Medieval ancestors felt while dealing with the plague. The inner board has fragments of my daily thoughts layered over one another, and the background contains Psalm 91 in Hebrew and an incantation against demons in the bottom ¼ of the board in Aramaic.



## ***Lamentations on COVID-19***

Sandy Starkman

Muslin and digital prints, 43" x 35", 2020

As Jews, we choose life. ("How good it is for people to dwell together." Num 24:5.) For me, that means being deeply involved in my synagogue community, learning Talmud weekly, hosting many Shabbat and yom tov meals in our home and sukkah, visiting the sick and comforting the mourners. Visiting family and friends near and far, and making visits to Israel is a priority. I work in advocacy toward making our world a better place, particularly for those in need and on the margins. We were strangers in Mitzrayim, therefore I try to "Love My Neighbor as Myself" (Lev 19:18). I love movies, museums, plays, sewing, cooking, walking, traveling and having fun, too. Knowing the journey is greater than the destination.

Sandy Starkman brought the ABM program to NSSBE and is pleased to once again participate with her fellow students, who with Dr Jane Shapiro and Judith Joseph, continue to inspire her each summer.

### **Artist Statement:**

During this pandemic, home is not restorative to all, but confining, constraining. Many are isolated, in quarantine, on the margins of life, death and financial ruin. COVID-19 is seen as a captor, causing physical and social distance. There are lots of mental health issues. Kids, teens and young adults are robbed of their milestones. Spirituality may be portable, but zoom *tefilah*/prayer services are not the same. We have memories of what was BC- before Covid-19. My "elbow shake" is now seen as smart. We are learning to be more compassionate, that we have much work to do to make this world better, as we still must choose life.



## ***Migration Shapes our Generations***

Sandy Wasserman

Collage, 30" square, 2020

### **Artist Statement:**

My husband Mel and I often visit Highland Park, and NSSBE where we enjoy spending time with our family, Michelle Wasserman and David Smith and our precious grandchildren, Yael Smith and Ari Smith. I'm a retired teacher. My maternal grandparents left Poland, 'der alter heim'/ the old country, and immigrated to New York at the beginning of the 20th Century, leaving their parents and siblings behind. Forever. Just as today's immigrants do. Immigrants of all ethnicities live part of some of their lives on the margins, as did my grandparents, speaking Yiddish at home in the Bronx for their entire lives here, even to me. Their lives consisted of love for their family, and yet maintaining connection to the family they left behind, in their times, via HIAS... They took with them on the boat they boarded in Hamburg, what was the most important: the small square colorful tablecloth made in Warsaw, a smooth and well used rolling pin for making 'lukshen'/noodles, and a tin box containing 'baynkas' [glass cups]. Should they fall ill in the new land, my grandmother could handle it! I often joke and say that she was the start of my interest in alternative medicine!

I very much enjoyed participating 'virtually' in the Artists Beit Midrash in the summer of 2020, during the pandemic, where it seems, all of us were and remain, 'living on the margins.'



### ***Moonleak***

Chana Zelig

Acrylic and glass beads on muslin,  
20" x 10", 2020



### ***Tzimtzum***

Chana Zelig

Acrylic, gold leaf, glass and mirror shards on canvas,  
36" x 24", 2020

**Chana Zelig** integrates her religious scholarship and spirituality to bring an engaging perspective on Judaism and Jewish art. Her work ranges broadly from paintings and custom Judaica pieces to large installations at synagogues and schools across the US. Chana was raised strictly Orthodox, attended Michlala Jerusalem Seminary for Women and is a graduate of the Wexner Heritage Foundation.

Chana resides in Chicago and has her studio in a converted barn in southwestern Michigan. She is a member of the Jewish Arts Salon and joined the Artists Beit Midrash in the spring of 2020.

#### **Artist Statement:**

Chana Zelig creates visual midrash. A self-taught artist and a soulful, original thinker, she expresses herself in her work and finds insight into Judaism. Zelig combines images and texts to form meditations on sacred literature, ritual, tradition, and history. Her work ranges from small devotional pieces to large installations. Her art is in private collections, synagogues, and educational institutions across the United States.

"Exploring great ideas and making lovely things is what animates me," says Chana Zelig. "My Jewish artwork uses the language of color, symbol, composition and words to discuss the wisdom of Torah and engage the experience of holiness."