

Artist Statement

I make religious, cultural and geographical references in my art. My upbringing was unusual as I was raised on bedtime stories of Holocaust survival by my parents, and was shaped while sitting in an air raid shelter during the Israeli Six Day War. It was further influenced by my experience as a young immigrant coming to America. Whichever influence prevailed, the result is storytelling in many forms, expressed through painting, art books, drawing, sculpture and most recently woodcuts.

My process begins with written concepts on which I build visual images. My woodcuts range in topics from my personal fables which depict the female struggle, to religious topics which wrestle with contemporary Judaism. I have a fascination with the simplicity of printmaking in black and white. The stark imagery, the concision of line and the need for a taut narrative are challenges that I embrace. Most of my prints are created as series, I find a theme and develop the narrative visually.

The Rissman Kol Ami Collection is a unique collection of Jewish art, artifacts and ritual objects. In addition to preserving significant objects for posterity, the museum seeks to develop programs and exhibitions that are designed to educate the congregation and promote an appreciation for works of Judaica.

For more images and information about the artist and her work, please visit Gabriella Boros' website at www.gabriellaboros.com.

North Suburban Synagogue

Beth El
בית כנסת בית אל

Rissman Kol Ami Collection

1175 Sheridan Road, Highland Park 60035

REINTERPRETING FREEDOM

GABRIELLA BOROS



January 10 – March 9, 2020

**The Rissman Kol Ami Collection at
North Suburban Synagogue Beth El**

About the Artist



Gabriella Boros has shown her prints, paintings and multimedia works nationally and internationally. Currently focusing on woodblock prints and handmade books, Gabriella also does nature photography, paints in acrylic on wood panel, and makes drawings, sculptures and found-object cheese boxes. Born in Israel, Gabriella immigrated to the United States as a child. Her narratives reflect her European parentage, Israeli childhood and American influences. She holds a Bachelor's in Fine Arts from the University of Michigan School of Art. In 2016, Gabriella was chosen to participate in a year-long Midwest Jewish Artists Lab, and she was selected to participate in several artists residencies. Her work has appeared in numerous venues throughout the Midwest and the East Coast as well as in Europe and Israel. She currently lives and works in Skokie, Illinois.

The Four Daughters

The Four Daughters series is an egalitarian spin on the sages' discussion of the Four Sons in the Seder. The four children ask four different questions regarding the Seder. The prints depict the girls' relationship to Judaism as expressed by their questions. The Wise Daughter asks "What are the traditions?" The Simple Daughter asks "What is this?" The Wicked Daughter asks "What does this Seder mean to you?" The Daughter that Doesn't Know How to Ask is shut off from the questions, and ultimately from the richness the answers can provide.



Echad Mi Yodeah (Who Knows?) Series



This song is one of the last sung in a traditional Passover Seder. In this series of prints inspired by the song, I have assigned a botanical element to thirteen important tenets of Judaism each of which is a cumulative stanza in the song.

Chad Gadya (One Only Kid) Series

Chad Gadya is the last song in the Passover Seder. It is cumulative like *Echad Mi Yodeah*, but is darker in meaning. The language is a mix of Hebrew and Aramaic while the tune has its origins in medieval German folk music.

I have chosen to set the scene in the Judean hills. In each print (except for the first), the background has a foreshadowing of the action to come. For example, in the second print the money is paid in the foreground while the goat is seen in the distance.



Or Panecha (Light of God's Countenance)

I became interested in exploring repetition in Judaism. Research shows that repetition is calming and healing for the brain. I met with rabbis and educators, discussing why they thought repetition was important in Judaism. Perhaps the reason for these repetitions is that we aspire to let God's light into our souls. In exchange, we offer God our light and prayers.

Tu B'Shvat Trees

Shevet Achim/Community: As Jews, we have survived by our deeply held belief system; helping each other in the community has kept the Jewish people alive. Trees also thrive better as a community. **Shorashim Amukim/Deep Roots:** Our families' roots are what hold us to the faith and keep us tethered together. The root system of trees is the most important part of the tree. **Imahot/ Mothers:** We admire and learn from the mothers of the Torah and in our own families. In the forest there are trees that can be designated as "mother" trees for their nutritive, supportive and maternal role to younger seedlings and trees. **Modeh Ani/Dormancy:** In our morning prayer we thank God for returning us to the earth for another day after a night of sleep. Trees also have a period of sleep from which they return yearly.



Esh: Sanctity of Fire

Fascinated with the theme of fire (*esh*) in Judaism, I chose eighteen manifestations of fire which wove a narrative from cosmic to intimate.