

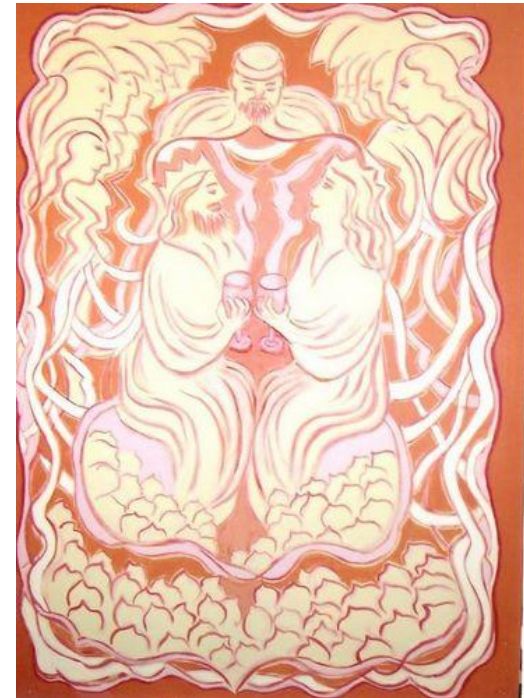
# *I Remember Purim: A Visual Narrative*

## **by Molly J. Schiff**

January 12 - March 26, 2012

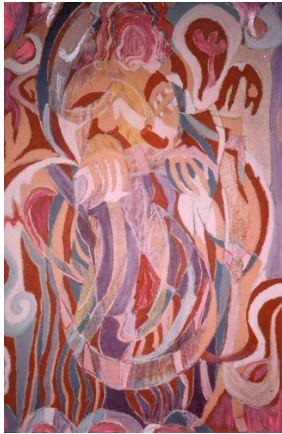
The Arnold Rissman Family Kol Ami Museum is a unique collection of Jewish art, artifacts and ritual objects. In addition to preserving significant objects for posterity, the museum seeks to develop programs and exhibitions that are designed to educate the congregation and promote an appreciation for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

Artwork from the "I Remember Purim" exhibit is available for purchase. Contact Rachel Kamin at [rkamin@nssbethel.org](mailto:rkamin@nssbethel.org) or 847/432-8903 x 242 for more information.



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The Arnold Rissman Family  
Kol Ami Museum



The exhibition features paintings based on the Purim story. Often using pure oil sticks and acrylic techniques, the artist **Molly J. Schiff** works figuratively and abstractly on both paper and canvas. A bright palette of traditional spring colors, each work is playful in its depiction of biblical figures and reflects Purim as one of the most joyous celebrations on the Jewish calendar. ***Remember Purim: A Visual Narrative*** illustrates not only the story of Esther but also the continued celebration of the queen's heroic story.



### About the Artist

Molly J. Schiff, a native Chicagoan, draws inspiration from her extensive travels within the United States and to 90 countries throughout the world. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Fine Art and a master's in Education from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has taught at New Trier High Schools, Governor's State University, and private institutions. Her artwork has been exhibited at the Loyola University Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Illinois State Museum, Art Heritage Gallery-India, Spertus Museum, Balzekas Museum, Freeport (Illinois) Art Museum, the Chicago Cultural Center, the University of South Carolina, Stanislaus State College, and the United States Art in the Embassies program sponsored by the U.S. State Department. Molly is Past President (2004-2006) and current member of the American Jewish Artists Club and a member of the Chicago Society of Artists. Her studios are in Evanston, Illinois, and Mesa, Arizona.

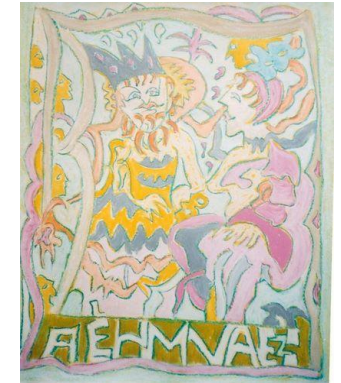


### About Purim

Purim (Adar 14) celebrates the victory of Mordechai and Esther over wicked Haman. The story is related in the Book of Esther, which is read during the holiday. The name Purim means "lots," for

Haman used a lot (*pur*) to decide when to kill the Jews. The lot fell on the month of Adar. Therefore the rabbis stated: "*Mi-shenikhnas adar marbim be-simhah* – With the start of the month of Adar we greatly increase joy."

The story in the Book of Esther is a melodramatic tale of court intrigue. In the first part of the book, the stage is set by the banishment of the proud Queen Vashti and the choice of Esther in a beauty contest to be the new queen. The courtier, Haman, becomes grand vizier, but Mordechai, Esther's protector, refuses to bow down to him. Haman decides to take out his fury on all the Jews and convinces the rather silly king, Ahasuerus, to consent to a decree calling for the massacre of the Jews throughout the kingdom. Mordechai and Esther go to work to counteract this scheme. Esther entrances the king, wines and dines him, and then reveals that she is Jewish and pleads for her people. Haman is hanged and the Jews are allowed to turn the tables on their enemies. Mordechai and Esther live happily ever after—after instituting Purim as an annual holiday.



(Adapted from ***The Jewish Holidays*** by Michael Strassfeld)