Question: Chat question: Ask them to write the answer in chat.

Question: They can raise their hands or give a reaction. For thought. No requirement to write in chat.

| In this column you will find your film times.    POST CARD OF SIMCHAT TORAH https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=535d8088b5&attid=0.4&permmsgid=msg-f:1740598786160817343&th=1827d95fb99774bf&view=att&disp=safe  Hallelujah film  0:00-0:45  Hallelujah Film, Warsaw  6:32-6:50  6:21-6:31  7:08-7:19  6:32-8:01  7:15-7:27  7:28-8:01  BELT FROM GALACIA  https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=535d8088b5&attid=0.2&permmsgid=msg-f:1740598786160817343&th=1827d95fb99774bf&view=att&disp=safe  9:07-9:17  9:07-9:17  9:17-9:32  9:07-9:46  9:46-9:59  Portuguese  3:18-3:28  3:18-3:28  2:58-3:18  2:58-3:55  Curacao  3:56-4:11  3:56-4:11  4:12-4:17  3:56-5:06  4:12-4:17  Touro  9:59-10:32  9:59-10:32  9:59-11:36  11:23-11:36  ETROG BOX OF EMMET LEADER  https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=535d8088b5&attid=0.3&permmsgid=msg-f:1740598786160817343&th=1827d95fb99774bf&view=att&disp=safe  Highlights full film:  Yom Kippur video from Hallelujah gallery | **Hallelujah Tour**  Hello and welcome to ANU, the Museum of the Jewish People located on the beautiful campus of Tel Aviv University in Israel. We are so excited to have you with us for an Online tour of our beautiful Hallelujah gallery. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be showing you around. This tour will last around 40-45 minutes, with time for questions throughout and at the end of the tour. Thank you to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (client organization) for having us on today.  Before we begin the tour, there are a few important logistic points to review:  In just a moment, I will be sharing my screen and we will figuratively walk through the museum together. Just like our in-person tours, our online tours are filled with questions and opportunities to share our own stories and learn from others in the group. I will be asking you questions throughout the tour, and you are welcome to answer them, or ask questions of your own as we go along. If you feel comfortable doing so, please write your questions and answers in the chat, which can be found by clicking the ‘chat’ button at the bottom of the screen. If you prefer to ask a question anonymously, you can send me a question directly instead of to the whole group.  Please keep yourself on mute throughout the tour for the convenience of others.  Now, let’s get started!  Question: Raise your hand if you have been to Israel before? Now raise your hand if you have been to ANU, which was previously called Beit Hatfutsot or Diaspora Museum, before?   Question: If you have been to our museum before, write which year you were here in the chat.  Our new museum opened to the public in March of 2021 after a ten year, $100 million-dollar renovation with over 72,000 square feet of exhibition space with countless artifacts from around the globe and displays of the unique as well as the everyday, modern and ancient Judaica, and art. We have 54 specially produced films and 25 interactives across 4 wings spanning 3 floors waiting to welcome you.  So, without further ado, let's start exploring! Let’s celebrate some of the beautiful synagogues that we have in our Hallelujah gallery like these children are celebrating Simchat Torah! Let’s rejoice in the beauty that these buildings hold, the ritual objects they house, the holidays they bring us together for and the life events we celebrate inside. Let’s dance down their isles and celebrate them!  Let’s move inside our Hallelujah gallery and look at some of the amazing models built by British architect James "Leslie" Gardner. Leslie Gardner is responsible for more than just our beautiful synagogue models, he was also the Chief Deception Officer of the British army during World War II. He was the genius behind inflatable tanks and planes that made the Germans believe that the allied forces were stronger than they were. He also made these beautiful models for our museum which were put on display for the first time in 1978.  The first thing I would like to do is to teach you to read these buildings; to pull from them the story of the community that built them. When we look at these models, the first thing I want you to do is to look at the outside of the buildings, to get an idea of the wealth of the community. We can tell from the structure's size and decoration if the community had money or if they were lacking.  The next thing we need to do is to look at the signs and symbols on the outside of the buildings. If we can see from the outside that the building is a synagogue, we know that the community in this place and time were relatively comfortable and secure in their surroundings. If there are no outward signs on the building that it is a building of the Jewish community then we know that there is not a pleasant, or safe environment in the outside, non-Jewish community where they reside.  Another thing that we can learn from looking at the synagogue is the type of congregation that prays in the building. If there are straight rows of seating like we see in a theater or in a church, then we know that we have an Ashkenazi congregation. If the worshipers are seated face to face then we know we have a Sephardic congregation. In the Sephardic tradition the idea of Minyan, or a quorum of 10 for public prayers, requires that the congregants see one another, eye to eye.  We’ll practice our reading of these buildings as we go!  The first synagogue I’d like to introduce you to is the Great Synagogue of Warsaw. Let’s read the outside of the building:  Do you think that this congregation was wealthy? Or not so wealthy? We can use the “thumbs up” for wealthy and “thumbs down” for not so wealthy. I see that most of you chose wealthy! Great job! We can see from the large fancy exterior that this community had money – and lots of it!  Let’s look at the community they live in: Do the Jews of this congregation feel comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish institution here in their midst? Is there anything that tells people on the outside that there are Jews in this building? We can use the “thumbs up” for a congregation that feels comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish community here and “thumbs down” for a congregation that does not feel safe advertising to the outside population that they are there. I see we voted for a comfortable community. The building has a crown on top and a star of David on its spire. These Jews in Warsaw are very comfortable!  Now let’s look inside the building: Are we in a Sephardic synagogue or an Ashkenazi synagogue? Use thumbs up for Sephardic and thumbs down for Ashkenazic. I see that you were correct! The straight rows tell us we are in an Ashkenazic synagogue.  The Great Synagogue of Warsaw was one of the largest and most beautiful synagogues constructed in Poland in the 19th century. The architect was Leandro Marconi, who was at the time the best and the most expensive architect in Warsaw. On September 26th, 1878, on the eve of Rosh Hashana, the synagogue was opened and sanctified. An inscription in Hebrew above the door said: “Let the One who placed His Name in this house place love and brotherhood, peace and friendship among You.” while the following inscription in Polish was put over the main entrance: “For the glory of the One God during the reign of Alexander II, Emperor of All Russia, King of Poland.”  The synagogue had a nave and two aisles, which were separated by two-storied arcades. An innovative cast iron construction was used as well as modern installations such as central heating and gas-lighting. At the time of its opening, it was the largest Jewish house of worship in the world with seats for 2,200 people. It was located on one of the main streets in Warsaw, Tłomackie street in Warsaw.  The synagogue served the wealthiest elite of Warsaw's Jewry. Sermons were delivered in Polish rather than Yiddish, an all-male choir accompanied the service, and an organ had been installed, which was played at weddings.  This is one of the synagogues in our Hallelujah Hall that you cannot visit today. When we hear that it was located in Warsaw, you have an idea of what its end was. Sadly it did not survive World War II, like many of its congregants.  In 1939, German authorities began to concentrate Poland's population of over three million Jews into a number of [ghettos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghettos_in_Nazi-occupied_Europe) located in large Polish cities. The largest of these was the [Warsaw Ghetto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warsaw_Ghetto), where about 400,000 Jewish people were densely packed into a 3.3 square kilometer area of Warsaw. Thousands of Jews died due to rampant disease and starvation even before the mass [deportations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deportation) from the ghetto began. The Warsaw ghetto uprising, which began on the eve of Passover, April 16, 1943 began when the ghetto refused to surrender to the police commander [SS-Brigadeführer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS-Brigadef%C3%BChrer) [Jürgen Stroop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J%C3%BCrgen_Stroop), who ordered the burning of the ghetto, block by block. A total of 13,000 Jews were killed, with German casualties of 110 German soldiers.  On the last day of the uprising, when the last Jew had departed the ghetto on May 16, 1943 the [SS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schutzstaffel) blew up the synagogue on Tlomzcki street, which was not in the ghetto. It was done for celebration and theater.  The following is an excerpt of what [Jürgen Stroop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J%C3%BCrgen_Stroop) said:  What a marvelous sight it was. A fantastic piece of theater. My staff and I stood at a distance. I held the electrical device which would detonate all the charges simultaneously…. With a thunderous, deafening bang and a rainbow burst of colors, the fiery explosion soared toward the clouds, an unforgettable tribute to our triumph over the Jews. The Warsaw Ghetto was no more….  I don’t want to leave us on such a sad note, so let’s talk about a beautiful survivor of the Tłomackie synagogue. This beautiful Hanukkah menorah and its twin survived thanks to a righteous gentile and an amazing story.  The Hanukkiah that you see is one two Hanukkah menorahs that belonged to the Great Synagogue in Warsaw; we saw them in miniature on the Bima on the right and left of the reader's stand. The beautiful decorative eagle at the top of these brass menorahs is the national symbol of Poland. Jewish ritual objects in Poland often included eagles as a sign of gratitude and allegiance to the regime. The Jews of this synagogue were proud Poles who showed respect for their government and country.  When Poland was conquered by the Nazis in 1939, the synagogues rabbi and secretary protected the menorahs by burying them in a secret hiding place. The menorahs were offered for sale to raise money for members of the community trying to flee from Warsaw. An opera singer from St. Louis, Missouri, who had performed a concert at the synagogue and who had come to know the rabbi and congregants and had seen the beautiful menorahs. She had the means as she had married very well! Her name was Countess Marguerite Wenner-Gren of Stockholm. She was the wife of Axel Wenner-Gren, the founder of Electrolux, the company that today produces Frigidaire, Westinghouse, and Eureka products. After the war she donated these Hanuakhiot to the State of Israel with a beautiful poem in their honor where she speaks about returning to the people of Israel something that belongs to their soul.  Let’s look at another artifact from the Anu Museum collection that is also from this area of the world. Galicia Jews were from the area of what is now Poland and the Ukraine. These Jews spoke Yiddish and contributed to the Yiddish culture of literature and art. In these area of Galicia, on Yom Kippur, it was a customer of the male worshippers to wear a special belt to fasten the "kital" which is a kind of white cotton coat, symbolizing the shroud, which is worn on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and sometimes on Seder night. The clasp on display has an illustration of a goat on it and next to it the inscription "One destiny to the Lord," which refers to one of the ceremonies that were held in the Temple on Yom Kippur. They would bring before the High Priest two goats, and the priest would make a lottery, one goat "to the Lord," who would be sacrificed as a sin offering and a second goat "to hell": the priest laid his hands on him and confessed all the sins of the people, after which they would tie a "tongue of Zoharit" - a red woolen thread to his head, and throw him off a cliff in the desert to his bitter fate, carrying within him all the sins of the Israelites. At the same time, in the temple, the other half of the golden thread was bleached as a sign of atonement.  Had you ever this story before? Did you know about this custom?  Next I’d like to show you an amazing synagogue that you can visit today – far away from where we are - in Morocco. The Ibn-Danan synagogue in the city of Fez.  Let’s read this synagogue like we did before: Let’s read the outside of the building:  Do you think that this congregation was wealthy? Or not so wealthy? We can use the “thumbs up” for wealthy and “thumbs down” for not so wealthy. I see that most of you chose not so wealthy! Great job! We can see from the exterior of the building that it is rather small and not very fancy. It looks rather plain!  Let’s look at the community they live in: Do the Jews of this congregation feel comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish institution here in their midst? Is there anything that tells people on the outside that there are Jews in this building? We can use the “thumbs up” for a congregation that feels comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish community here and “thumbs down” for a congregation that does not feel safe advertising to the outside population that they are there. I see we voted for a community that is not comfortable advertising their presence to the outside word. There is no way to tell from the outside that there is a synagogue here at all. If you go to visit this synagogue today, it is very hard to find the entrance from the street.  Now let’s look inside the building: Are we in a Sephardic synagogue or an Ashkenazi synagogue? Use thumbs up for Sephardic and thumbs down for Ashkenazic. I see that we have a majority that have voted for Sephardic, and you would be correct! In the Sephardic tradition it says that only when we see eye to eye are we together. If we sit in straight rows we don’t see one another.  We can see here a very different Jewish story than what we saw in Warsaw. Let’s look at the Rabbi Shlomo Ibn Danan Synagogue, built and founded by the Ibn Danan family in the 17th century. This synagogue is located in Fez, Morocco, which had a flourishing Jewish community. From antiquity through the 19th century, Fez served as a major cultural and economic hub. There were at one time 250 synagogues and 30 Jewish cemeteries in Morocco. This synagogue was in use until 1948 when the Jews of Morocco moved to Israel. Conserving the synagogue is an important reminder of Jewish cultural heritage in Morocco and it is now a very popular tourist destination in Fez today.  The Ibn-Danan building is influenced by Islamic and Moroccan design, with wooden ark doors tooled with stucco decoration and surrounded by a Moroccan-style patterned tiled border. The Torah ark is a wrought-iron cage beautifully detailed with curlicues and connects to a filigree screen with Moorish arches. The seating in the synagogue is painted with geometric patterns common to Islamic architecture and the turquoise blue seen throughout the synagogue comes from the blue color which is dominant in Muslim houses. The common explanation is that blue repels the evil eye from the house and its inhabitants, and the Jews needed that protection, so they also used the color blue.  We can also see another Islamic symbol throughout the synagogue with the Hamsa hands that suspend the synagogue lights throughout the sanctuary. The Hamsa is an Islamic representation of the hand of God that protects the wearer. This symbol was also adopted by the Jews and is very popular today.  How many of you have a Hamsa? Raise your hands if you wear one.  Did you know that it was a symbol that started in the Muslim culture? Thumbs up for yes, thumbs down for no.  Let’s look at another synagogue from our Hallelujah gallery; the beautiful Portuguese Synagogue, also known as the Esnoga.  Let’s read the synagogue again:  Do you think that this congregation was wealthy? Or not so wealthy? We can use the “thumbs up” for wealthy and “thumbs down” for not so wealthy. I see that most of you chose wealthy! Great job! We can see from the large building and its beautiful exterior that this community had money – and lots of it!  Let’s look at the community they live in: Do the Jews of this congregation feel comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish institution here in their midst? Is there anything that tells people on the outside that there are Jews in this building? We can use the “thumbs up” for a congregation that feels comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish community here and “thumbs down” for a congregation that does not feel safe advertising to the outside population that they are there. I see we voted for a community that is not so comfortable. There are no signs on the outside of this building that show that it is tied to the Jewish people. There is no Hebrew, stars or menorahs or any other signs.  Now let’s look inside the building: Are we in a Sephardic synagogue or an Ashkenazi synagogue? Use thumbs up for Sephardic and thumbs down for Ashkenazic. I see that you were correct! The rows facing one another tell us that this is a Sephardic congregation.  This 17th-century Sephardic synagogue is located in Amsterdam, and was completed in 1675. Esnoga is the word for synagogue in Judaeo-Spanish, the Ladino language of Sephardi Jews. This synagogue is very significant because it will give birth to the next three synagogues that we will visit on this tour.  The Amsterdam Sephardic community was one of the largest and richest Jewish communities in Europe during the Dutch Golden Age, and their synagogue reflected this. You can visit this synagogue in Amsterdam today: It is a 10 minute walk from the Ann Frank annex and a 5 minute walk from the Maritime museum. The Jews who established this synagogue had an amazing history! They came from Spain after the Spanish royal Alhambra Decree in 1492, issued by Ferdinand and Isabella decreeing that all Jews in Spain must either convert to Catholicism, or die or leave Spain. Most of Spain's Jews chose exile, crossing the border west to Portugal. Portugal was a welcoming country until the Portuguese decree against the Jews in 1496. The Portuguese king, Manuel the First, not wanting a similar Jewish flight and brain drain as happened in Spain, blocked the Jews exit, forcing them to convert to Catholicism. It is claimed that today 25% of the Portuguese population has Jewish DNA.  The persecutions and trials by the inquisition against conversos lasted well into the late 1800s. Also the legal distinction between the so-called Old Christians and versus the new Christians was maintained for centuries, with a person's pedigree always on record. Many in fact did continue to practice Judaism behind closed doors, while publicly professing to be Catholics.  A substantial migration of conversos from the Iberian Peninsula to Amsterdam took place from the 1600s to the early 1800s. Once in Amsterdam, many returned to Judaism openly and publicly. They called themselves Portuguese Jews, even those who came directly from Spain. They wanted to avoid being identified with Spain, which was at war with the Dutch Republic at the time during the Eighty Years' War.  These Portuguese Jews were major players in the Netherlands cultural and economic development. The congregation produced Rabbis, scholars, theorists, artists, bankers, and founders and managers of leading international trading houses.  The Sephardic Jews in Amsterdam were known as the "first modern Jews" because they were the first to distinguish between religious and secular spheres of their individual and collective lives. Their religious life was focused primarily on the synagogue, the religious calendar of Jewish life, and an eagerness to provide a Jewish education for their children.  During the Holocaust, the facility was slated to become a deportation center for Jews, but a member of the congregation, Juda Leo Palache a professor of Semitic languages at the University of Amsterdam, and a team of volunteers managed to dissuade the Nazis from this plan. Instead, the building concealed Jewish ritual items of the deported Jews in the sanctuary ceiling and under the attic floor. Of the many Jewish synagogues in Amsterdam, this was one of the few to survive. Juda Lion Palache worked tirelessly during the Nazi occupation to preserve Jewish history and in early 1944 he was deported with his whole family deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto and later to Auschwitz for extermination. He was killed with his wife and two children in Auschwitz, but his youngest son, Leo Palache survived. Theirs is a common story of the 120,000 Jews of Amsterdam who were reduced to only 20,000 by the end of the war. Thanks to his efforts this amazing synagogue has been restored to its former glory.  Now I’d like to take you to another synagogue that also has its roots in Amsterdam. It was established with a Torah scroll that came from our Portuguese synagogue, yet we are far from Europe. Lets travel to Curaçao, a Dutch Caribbean island, known for its beaches and coral reefs and the 17th-century Mikvé Israel-Emanuel Synagogue.  Has anyone been to this synagogue?  Let’s read our building again to discover things about our community:  Do you think that this congregation was wealthy? Or not so wealthy? We can use the “thumbs up” for wealthy and “thumbs down” for not so wealthy. I see that most of you chose wealthy! Great job! We can see from the large building and its beautiful exterior that this community had money. They may not be as wealthy as the Jews who built The Great Synagogue of Warsaw, but they still have a large, lovely building here.  Let’s look at the community they live in: Do the Jews of this congregation feel comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish institution here in their midst? Is there anything that tells people on the outside that there are Jews in this building? We can use the “thumbs up” for a congregation that feels comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish community here and “thumbs down” for a congregation that does not feel safe advertising to the outside population that they are there. I see we voted for a community that is not so comfortable. There are no signs on the outside of this building that show that it is tied to the Jewish people. There is no Hebrew, stars or menorahs or any other signs.  Now let’s look inside the building: Are we in a Sephardic synagogue or an Ashkenazi synagogue? Use thumbs up for Sephardic and thumbs down for Ashkenazic. I see that you were correct! The rows facing one another tell us that this is a Sephardic congregation. Do you see the reflection of the Portuguese Synagogue of Amsterdam here? They really look rather similar!  The Mikvé Israel-Emanuel Synagogue which means The Hope of Israel-Emanuel Synagogue is located in the capital city of Willemstad, in Curaçao, is the oldest surviving synagogue in the Americas. It is commonly known as the Snoa, short for Esnoga, which is what the Portuguese synagogue we just saw is known as! The community was established in 1650 and this current building dates back to 1730. It was founded by the Jews that came from Amsterdam with a Torah scroll that was donated from the Esnoga Synagogue in Amsterdam.  The story of the island of Curacao and its Jewish inhabitants is fascinating! In 1492, the Jews of Spain were expelled. Initially, they sought refuge in nearby Portugal but eventually spread throughout Europe, into places with large Jewish populations, like Belgium, Greece, Italy, Turkey, and Holland. So many of the Sephardic Jews from Spain and Portugal had settled in Amsterdam, that by the year 1700, the city's community was the largest Jewish center in Western Europe. When the Dutch West India Company began efforts to exploit the resources of the Americas and was placed in charge of colonizing, the Sephardim became involved as translators and traders.  The first Jew on the island, Samuel Cohen, was an interpreter to the Dutch commander Johannes van Walbeeck. The first Sephardim began arriving in the 1650s, with about a dozen Jewish families who established the community of Mikve Israel with the plan of farming. They were joined by a group of around seventy colonists arriving in 1659, under the patronage of Isaac da Costa, who brought with them a Torah scroll, as a gift from the Jewish congregation of Amsterdam. A portion of the Jewish population emigrated to Newport, Rhode Island in 1658. We’ll see that synagogue soon!  By 1746, the community was the largest Jewish population in the Americas, containing 270 families. It peaked two years later at 280 families, or around 1,500 people. By the end of the century more than half of the population of Curaçao was Jewish.  Today approximately 350 Jews remain in Curaçao. They maintain the Jewish Cultural Historical Museum, which is connected to the Mikve Israel-Emanuel synagogue. The museum contains religious artifacts including a 1729 mikvah and eighteen historic Torahs.  What is so interesting about this beautiful synagogue is the floor. Yes, the floor! As you can see the floor is covered in sand. I will give you three reasons to choose from for the sand floor; let’s see if we can agree on a reason!  The first reason is because this synagogue is directly related to the Portuguese synagogue in Amsterdam. In Amsterdam the weather can be rainy, which causes people to come into the building with mud on their shoes. It was common to put sand on the floor so that when people came in with muddy shoes the mud would fall off onto the sand. On a sunny day it could be swept outside where the mud would dry and fall off and the clean sand could be put back into the building helping to keep the floors clean.  Reason number two is because it is used to remind the Jewish people of their 40 years walking through the desert with Moses. They walk through sand and the sand floor is there to remind them of their journey.  The third reason is to remind the Jewish people of the times when they were conversos and had to pray silently and in secret. Sand would be spread upon the floor to muffle the noise so that groups of people could meet in secret and not be heard. Sand is used in high rise buildings in Israel to this day to muffle noise from one floor to another.  What do you think the reason is? Raise your hand if you choose reason 1: Raise your hand if you choose reason 2: Raise your hand if you choose reason 3:  There are no wrong answers since no one knows the truth! You are all correct!!!  Let’s look at another synagogue that will tell the story about another community.  We have been all over the world now, Amsterdam, the Bahamas, Poland, and Morocco. Let’s follow the path from the Bahamas and our yellow synagogue in Curacao to the state of Rhode Island and the United States to the year of 1658 when 15 Portuguese Jewish families arrived to what would become the United States.  Has anyone been to the Touro Synagogue in Rhode Island?  Do you think that this congregation was wealthy? Or not so wealthy? We can use the “thumbs up” for wealthy and “thumbs down” for not so wealthy. I see that most of you chose wealthy! Great job! We can see from the building and its beautiful exterior that this community had money.  Let’s look at the community they live in: Do the Jews of this congregation feel comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish institution here in their midst? Is there anything that tells people on the outside that there are Jews in this building? We can use the “thumbs up” for a congregation that feels comfortable advertising that there is a Jewish community here and “thumbs down” for a congregation that does not feel safe advertising to the outside population that they are there. I see we voted for a community that is not so comfortable. There are no signs on the outside of this building that show that it is tied to the Jewish people. There is no Hebrew, stars or menorahs or any other signs.  The Touro Synagogue was built from 1759 to 1763 under the leadership of Cantor Isaac Touro. The cornerstone was laid by Aaron Lopez, a Newport-based philanthropist for Jewish causes who primarily made his fortune through the trading of candles and slaves. The synagogue was formally dedicated on the 2nd of December 1763.  The Touro Synagogue was designed by Peter Harrison, a noted British architect and Rhode Island resident. It is considered his most notable work. The interior is flanked by a series of twelve Ionic columns supporting balconies, which signify the twelve tribes of ancient Israel, and each column is carved from a single tree. The building is oriented to face east toward Jerusalem, which means it does not sit straight with the street, which was a point of contention with the city fathers when it was built. Above the ark on the east wall is a mural representing the Ten Commandments in Hebrew, which was painted by Newport artist Benjamin Howland.  Judah Touro, the son of Isaac Touro and his wife Reyna, made a fortune as a merchant in New Orleans and he left $10,000, which is about $300,000 in current dollar terms, in his will for the upkeep of the Jewish cemetery and synagogue in Newport.  This synagogue is very important in the history of the formation of the United States of America. The Royal Charter of 1663 granted by King Charles II of England to Rhode Island formalized the rights of the colonists in Rhode Island to pray freely. Rhode Island was the first of the 13 colonies to have these freedoms. On August 17, 1790, President George Washington visited Newport, Rhode Island and the synagogue's warden, Moses Seixas, wrote a letter to Washington, expressing the support of the Congregation for Washington's administration and good wishes for him. In response to this letter Washington sent a letter on August 21, which read in part:  ... the Government of the United States ... gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance. ... May the children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants  This statement of religious freedom being an inherent natural right will become part of the Constitution of the United States as the two fundamental tenets of American democracy: the separation of church and state and the right of individuals to practice or not practice their religion freely. To commemorate this amazing letter and visit, the synagogue has a portrait of George Washington inside the synagogue that we can see here.  Let’s look at another object from the Anu Museum collection that was designed by Emmett Leder, an American Jew from V ermont whose grandparents came from the Shtetl in Eastern Europe. His grandfather, Rabbi Yitzchak Leder, was born in Slonim Krynina. Emmet Leder initiated a project called The Revival of Slonim, which connects the Ukrainian shtetl culture with the communities in New England where the Jews who emigrated to America had to reinvent themselves. This item is one of the works of this project.  We see here a box for an etrog, which is a citrus fruit, one of the four species on the holiday of Sukkot. The box is used to protect and display the etrog. This box that was created by Emmet Leder draws inspiration from many sources, from tombstones in the shtetl cemetery, a 14th-century Passover Haggadah and biblical texts in order to shape family history in an accessible visual language and combine nostalgia for forgotten traditions with the preservation of old values. The design is influenced by the illustrations of bird heads in the medieval Haggadah, which circumvented the biblical prohibition on images and figures. The dove often appears and serves as a metaphor for the divine and the human spirit that aspires to spirituality.  Since we are talking about sukkot, let me show you another piece of art used for the holiday. The holiday of Sukkot, the Festival of the Tabernacles, celebrates the collection of produce and has two distinct mitzvot: the building of the sukkah and the four species, also known as the lulav, which is a bundle of three spices, the palm fronds, the myrtle, and the willow branches, and the etrog. The source of these four spices is from Varikray, "On the first day you shall take the fruit of a citrus tree, palm branches, boughs of thick trees and brook willows, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." We already saw the beautiful house for the etrog, this woven wrapper houses the additional 3 spices and joins them into what we call the luav.  I’d like to share a beautiful video with you that shows various synagogues on another holiday, Yom Kippur, the day of atonement. Enjoy!  I hope you have all enjoyed seeing just a few of the amazing models that we have in our Hallelujah gallery. I can’t wait for you to come to our museum so that you can read all 21 of our amazing models!  Are there any questions? |  |
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