

What is a Menorah (Chanuliya)?

Framing this unit

A chanukiya is a menorah used for Chanukah. Artists and craftspeople from all over the world and from different times in history have created chanukiyot. What makes a chanukiya a chanukiya? What rules must they follow? How creative can they be? In this activity the students will examine sources about the design of chanukiyot and see how these guidelines are reflected in the chanukiyot depicted in NLI resources. Then they will design their own chanukiya.

This lesson plan can be used as an integrated activity for both Judaic Studies and Art with teachers from both departments working together in planning and executing the two session lesson.

Group Activity

Look at chanukiyot on the NLI website (view online or print out and distribute). Analyze the chanukiyot using the [NLI General Analysis Worksheet](#). What do the chanukiyot have in common? The groups present the chanukiyot they analyzed and share their answers.

Discussion

- What are the similarities or differences between the different chanukiyot?
- Looking at the different materials used, as well as the symbols that are incorporated in the design, what were the artists' sources of inspiration?
- Based on these chanukiyot, what rules do you think there might be for making a chanukiya and where is there room for creativity?
- Learn the guidelines for making a chanukiya with [this source sheet](#).

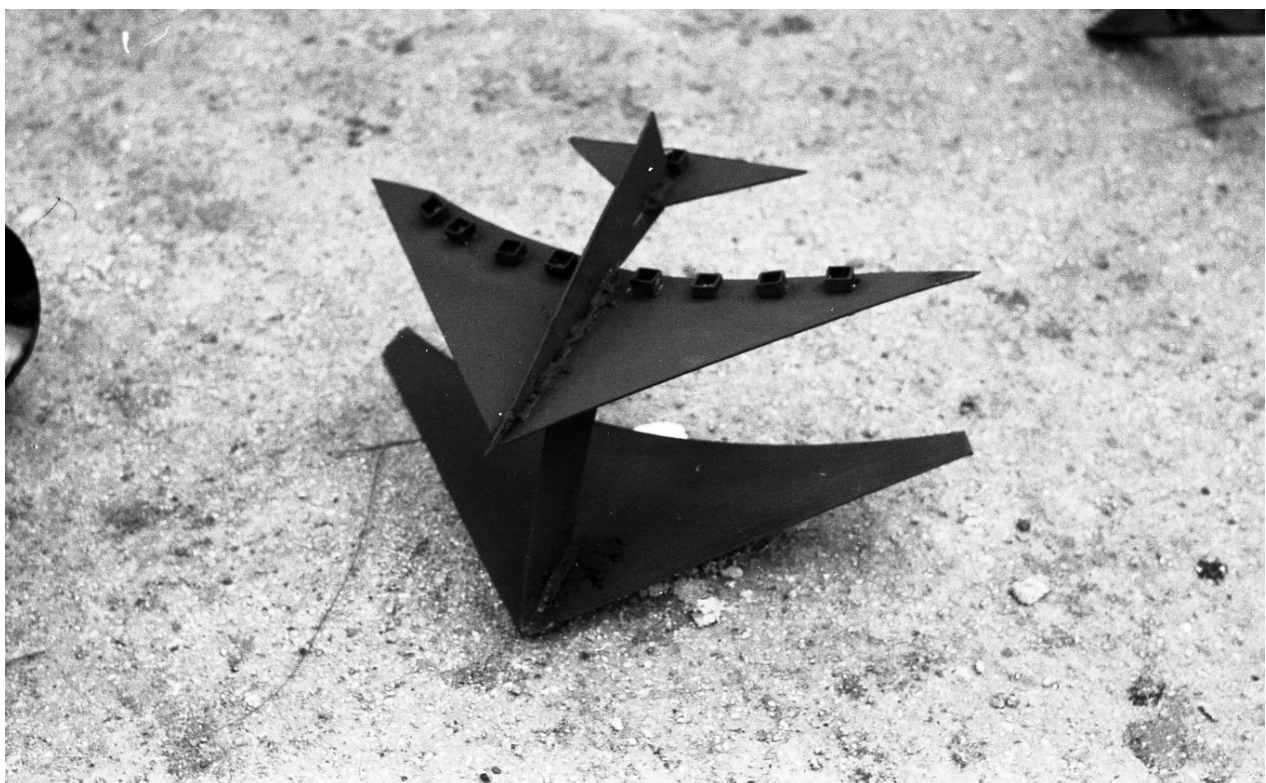
Creative Activity

- Create your own chanukiya. Decide on a motif and follow the basic guidelines of what makes a chanukiya a chanukiya. Be creative!
- Present your chanukiya to the group or have a display. Explain how you incorporated the guidelines into your design and share the inspiration for your creativity.

Primary sources in this lesson



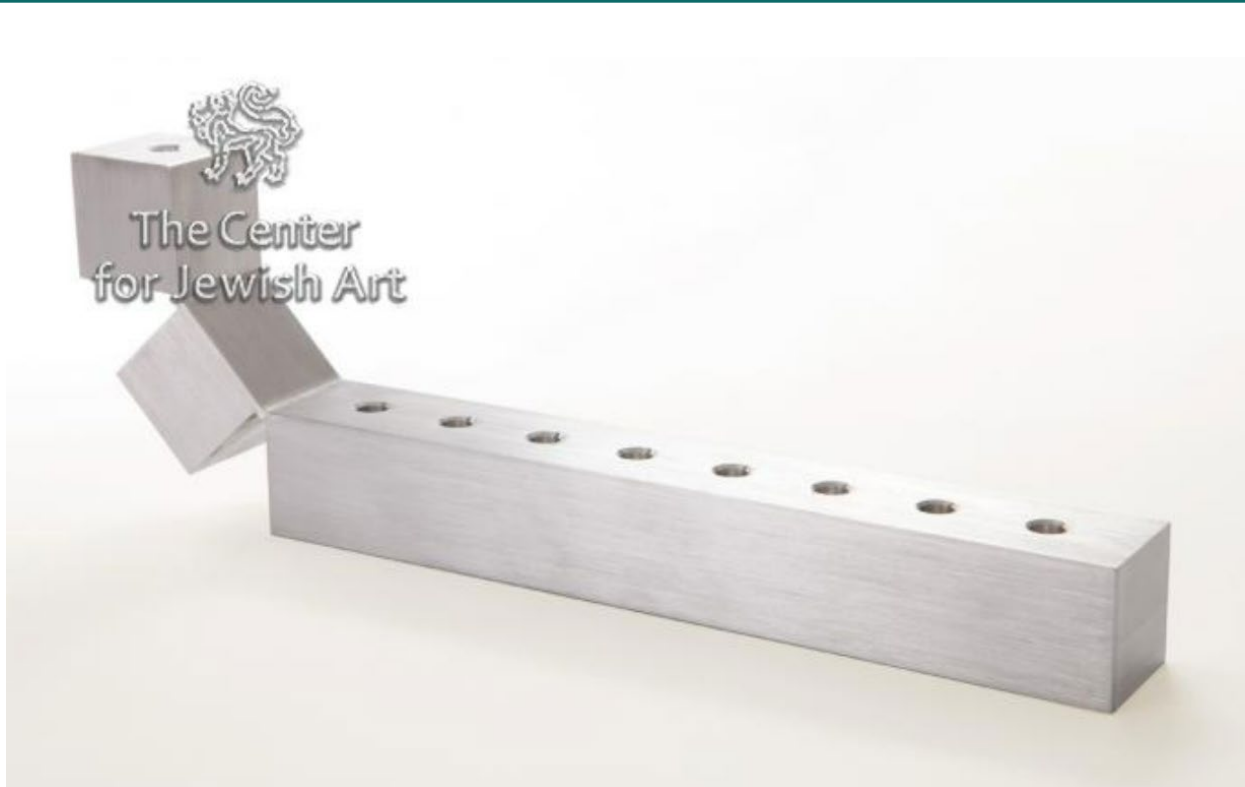
Menorah, Italy
The Center for Jewish Art



Fighter plane Menorah
The Pritzker Family National Photography Collection



World War I Menorah
The Pritzker Family National Photography Collection



Bezalel Menorah
The Center for Jewish Art



Menorah, India
The Center for Jewish Art