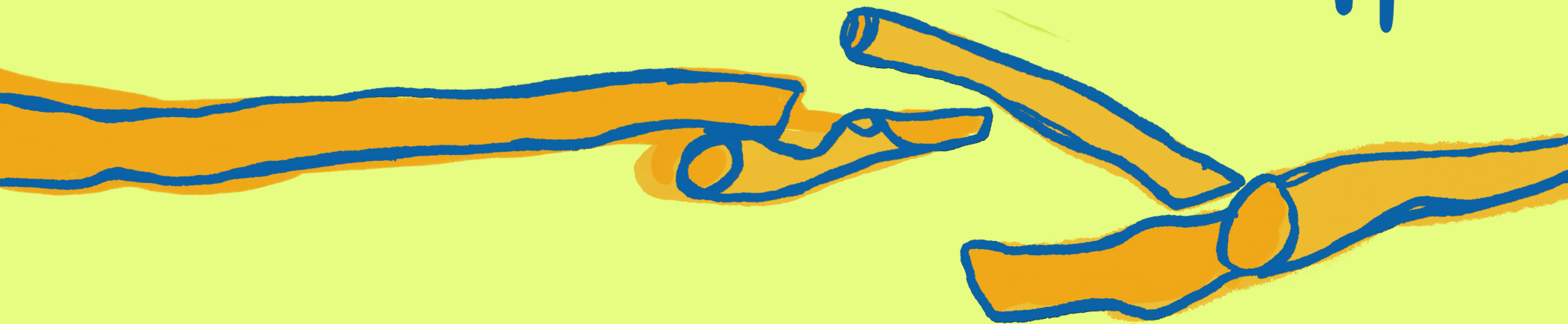




Herbert Bearman Campus
Jewish Museum
of Maryland
An agency of The Associated

NISAN



NISAN

April 9 - May 8, 2024

This is the ninth edition of a monthly zine by the Jewish Museum of Maryland. In each issue, we share content about the holidays, rituals, and ideas related to the current month in the Jewish calendar.

This month's zine focuses on the Hebrew month of Nisan.

You can pick up physical copies of the zine in the Lombard and Lloyd Library. Lombard and Lloyd Library is located on the grassy corner of the JMM campus at the intersection of Lombard and Lloyd Streets.

We hope to provide space for people at the JMM and beyond to share their thoughts and creations as they relate to where we are in the Hebrew calendar.



[jewishmuseummd](#)



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This month's zine focuses on the month of Nisan. The month of Nisan is associated with the Hebrew word nitzan, which means "bud." This is appropriately named, as Nisan signals the arrival of spring in the Northern Hemisphere.

During this vibrant season, nature awakens from its winter slumber, bursting forth with new life and fresh beginnings.

Nisan carries a sense of renewal and hope as it ushers in a period of growth and rejuvenation. Just as buds on trees begin to unfurl, Nisan invites us to embrace the opportunity for personal growth and transformation. It serves as a reminder that even after the coldest of winters, the warmth of spring and the promise of blooming possibilities are never far away.

Let us welcome Nisan with open hearts and minds, ready to bloom and flourish just like the buds its name calls to mind.

A REFLECTION ON SNOWDROPS

By Naomi Rose Weintraub,
JMM Communications & Public Art Coordinator

Each month when I sit down to create cover art for the monthly JMM zine, I refer back to my weekly walks in Stony Run Trail in the Baltimore neighborhood of Remington.

On each of my walks I notice something new or transforming along my familiar path.

This year, I knew spring was arriving when hundreds of snowdrops began to peak out of the cold ground. Snowdrops are a small white flowering plants that appear in late winter and early spring. They grow in clusters, and have blossom heads which bend and flop over.

The blooming of the snowdrops reminds me that there is so much beauty that lies in the simple and fleeting moments of nature's cyclical dance.

- *What are some signs in your life that indicate the arrival of spring?*
- *What do you hope to take with you from winter and bring into spring? What are you letting go?*

Check out these Passover related objects from our collection!

First is a photograph featuring Rose Cohen, Fannie Katz, and Marlene (Katz) Sollod salting fish for Passover in the Pimlico neighborhood of Baltimore circa 1948-50.



JMM 1992.095.001



JMM 1989.220.001

Next is this gorgeous handmade matzah cover from the turn of the 20th century. It was made by Bessie Levitt Jacobs, the donor's beloved aunt, likely when Bessie was a young teenager in Europe. The Levitt family came to Baltimore from Lithuania in 1906. Not much is known about Bessie's life at this point, but happily we have this piece, carefully preserved by the family, to remember her by.



JMM 2021.012.001

We have another gorgeous handmade matzah cover in our collection. This matzah cover is made in a "crazy quilt" style and was made by Henrietta Heiman Jacobi in the 1880s. She likely made this lace-edged matzah cover using scraps from her father's tailoring business in Philadelphia.

This matzah cover was handed down through five generations of mothers and daughters to use for Passover seders.

COUNTING THE OMER

The Omer refers to the 49-day period between the second night of Passover and the holiday of Shavuot.

In biblical times, this period marked the span of time between the barley and wheat harvest when ancient Israelites brought grain offerings to the Temple. These grains were counted by the omer, a unit of measurement. Omer also translates to sheaf, which is the English word for a bundle of grain stalks bound together.

Kabbalists later interpreted the ancient counting ritual as an opportunity for mystical exploration of the sefirot. The sefirot are emanations, or aspects of the Divine, that are traditionally seen mapped onto the Tree of Life.

Each week and day between Passover and Shavuot is dedicated to one of the lower seven sefirot, creating 49 daily combinations to reflect on.

There are many ways to interpret each of the sephirot, check out these interpretations below:

Chesed: Kindness ~ Opening ~ Loving Kindness

Gevurah: Strength ~ Boundary ~ Judgement

Tiferet: Beauty ~ Harmony ~ Balance

Netzach: Endurance ~ Preseverance

Hod: Splendor ~ Humility

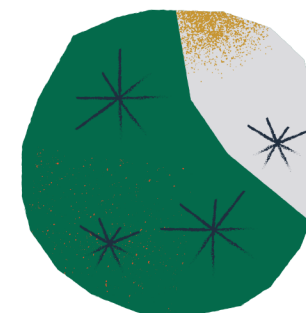
Yesod: Foundations ~ Roots ~ Generativity

Malchut: Kingship ~ Shekhinah ~ Divine feminine

Counting the omer can be a practice in mindfulness and reflection. We created an omer counter that you can hang up in your house to help guide your daily counting.

Each day you count, you can color in the associated circle, and reflect on the two coordinating sefirot.

HAPPY COUNTING!



* 5784 OMER COUNTER *

CHESED	GEVURAH	TIFERET	NETZACH	HOD	YESOD	MALCHUT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22

CHESED
GEVURAH
TIFERET

23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43
44	45	46	47	48	49	SHAMUOT

NETZACH
HOD
YESOD
MALCHUT