



HEBREW  
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C A L E N D A R

# recent acquisitions

## Hanukkah Menorah by Otto Natzler

The shape and decoration of a Hanukkah lamp often reflects the architectural style of the time and place in which it was made.

Working in the idiom of 20th century design, Otto Natzler has created this bold, minimalist, slab-constructed menorah, its strong horizontal mass recalling the simple geometric forms of contemporary buildings. In the manner of the Post-Modern architect, Natzler quotes from the classical vocabulary, decorating the menorah with a simple spiral motif reminiscent of an Ionic column capital.

The traditional use of architectural elements in Hanukkah lamps can be seen as a reference to the Temple in Jerusalem. In this view the lamp itself, as well as the act of lighting it, becomes a powerful visual metaphor for the historical meaning of Hanukkah as the celebration of the Temple's rededication.

Natzler, who was born and trained in Vienna, settled in Southern California in 1938. He and his wife, Gertrude (d. 1971), were among the most experimental of modern ceramicists. While Gertrude specialized in shaping thin-shelled pots, Otto concentrated on their glazing and firing, inventing new firing techniques and over 2000 glazes.

Since 1973, Otto Natzler has been making his own ceramic statement, constructing hand-built containers of various geometric forms. This menorah grows from this new direction in Natzler's *oeuvre*.

The purchase of the menorah was made possible by the Audrey and Arthur Greenberg Acquisitions Fund. The Greenbergs and the menorah are pictured above with ceramicist Natzler and Museum director Nancy Berman.



*Hanukkah menorah by Otto Natzler*

## 'Dual System' by Kosso Eloul

*Dual System*, the gift of Museum Associates Stanley and Elise Grinstein, is the work of Kosso Eloul, a sculptor who has gained an international reputation for smooth-surfaced, monolithic pieces which seem to defy the laws of stability.

The piece consists of two large blocks of painted stainless steel (total height 10')

*Dual System by Kosso Eloul*

which are split and angled against one another, creating a tension that makes the work seem about to fall, or pull, apart. Like Eloul's other work, *Dual System* mirrors the forces in life which create opposition and resolution.

A Canadian citizen since 1964, the 56-year-old Eloul was born in the Soviet Union, and educated in Israel and the United States. His work is part of collections around the world, including those of Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Brandeis University in Boston and Shell Oil Canadian Division in Calgary. Eloul has received numerous government commissions in Canada and Israel.

The Grinsteins announced their gift last August while hosting fellow Associates for a tour of their extraordinary collection of contemporary art. *Dual System* is now installed on the Hebrew Union College campus and later will be part of a sculpture garden planned for the Hebrew Union College Cultural Center for American Jewish Life.

