DIY Seder Decoration: An At-Home Artist Workshop for Passover

Pesach 2020 will be challenging on account of the restrictions in place around social gathering due to the coronavirus outbreak. For the first time, many of us will not share the Seder with a large gathering of close family and friends. Favorite dishes may be harder to come by, familiar tunes may have less harmony, and extended family traditions may have to be improvised or reimagined.

To add a fresh touch of color to the holiday, Yeshiva University Museum invited artist Deborah Ugoretz to design a simple craft activity that could be done at home by the whole family and with only the most basic of materials. Deborah’s DIY craft activity will not only add a splash of color to your table, it will also allow us all to share a traditional Jewish symbol in a creative way. All you need: 8 1/2 by 11 sheets of paper, scissors, glue, adhesive tape, and any coloring medium of your choice - crayons, markers, or even pastel chalk.

Deborah was inspired by 20th-century artist Arthur Szyk (pronounced "shiek"), whose illustrated Haggadah was originally published in England in 1940, as the country was under attack by the Germans. His detailed illustrations allude to parallels between the oppression at the hand of the Egyptians and of the Nazis – as can be seen in his imaginative version of the Seder plate.

Szyk uses the Magen David star shape as the framework for his design. If you look closely, you can see that the two triangles that form the star are woven together, with an under-and-over appearance. Using the attached template, provided by Deborah Ugoretz, you can create a Magen David shape that is woven the same way. Color in the triangles before cutting them out, or afterward, taking your time to add as many details as you like within the outlines of the triangle. Another option is to apply color to the entire page, before cutting out the shapes, creating random color patterns when you cut them out. You can use the second template page to add motifs for the three essential elements of the Seder: Pesach, Matzah, and Maror. Attach the Magen David and your choice of Seder motifs to a colored backing of your choice. You can make several versions and use them to decorate your entire Seder table.

Please email pictures of your creations to ibenson@yum.cjh.org, so that we can share them!

May we all have a meaningful Passover this year, and be privileged to celebrate next year with all our loved ones.

L’Shana Haba’a B’Yerushalayim Habenuya
Create a Star of David (Magen David)

- Color this page any way you like. Don't worry about staying in the lines. You can be as precise or spontaneous as you prefer.
  
  Use the Szyk Haggadah image as a guide or create your own design.
- Fold the paper in half along the center line. Line up the bottom edge as carefully as you can.
- Following the outer line of the triangle, cut out the outside of the triangle.
- Cut through the slit in the triangle (indicated in a dotted line) and cut out the inside of the triangle.
  
  You will have 2 separate triangles.
- Weave the 2 triangles together (over and under) to form a Star of David!
- Glue the two triangles together by placing a little glue on the overlapping places, and a piece of adhesive tape to seal the open cut in each triangle.