

Rainer Waldman Adkins

Artist Bio

Raised in Seattle, I hold a BFA (Cleveland Institute of Art) and MFA (University of Washington). My art has always been oriented towards finding wonder, solidarity and symbiosis in each culture and experience.

I have roots in the Central District: much of my youth happened there, with beloved elders deeply involved in activism going back to the 1940s. My first community-based murals were painted with youth at Powell Barnett Park, TT Minor School and at 23rd and Union. I am very familiar with the Central District's history - honoring the diversity of its historical communities is important for current empowerment and justice.

I have maintained a studio art practice, doing personal work and art installations in the general and Jewish communities, while working as a youth teacher, advocate and program manager. I am well-known as an artist, educator and organizer in the Seattle Jewish community, including for my hand-lettered and illustrated *ketubot* (Jewish marriage contracts), and am a Heritage Arts Mentor Artist in Jewish Calligraphy with Humanity Washington's Center for Washington Cultural Traditions.

My workshops on visual arts storytelling, folk and wisdom traditions bring an artistic and Jewish lens to identity, gender, deep ecology and social repair in multi-cultural environments.

As I have striven to always learn and listen with care, my arts activism and collaborations have raised the voices of marginalized youth and communities; my *ketubot* respond to a full spectrum of gender and sexual identities; I've been an activist for racial justice, co-organizing 13 weeks of action for Black & Brown Lives Matter in SE Seattle; done peace and justice solidarity work in Israel and Palestine via the Center for Jewish Non-Violence; been on an immersive and transformative freedom struggle pilgrimage in the U.S. South; and as co-president of a progressive synagogue, strive for maximum inclusivity.

RAINER ADKINS



Rainer Waldman Adkins, Details, Seven Days of Creation Mural, Congregation Beth Shalom, Acrylic on Panel



Rainer Waldman Adkins
Details
Congregation Beth Shalom Sanctuary Mural Installation
Acrylic on Panels

בצאת ישראל ממצרים בית יעקב מעם לעז היתה יהודה לקדשו ישראל ממשלוחו הים רמה זינס הידרן יסב לאחור הידים דקדו כאילים

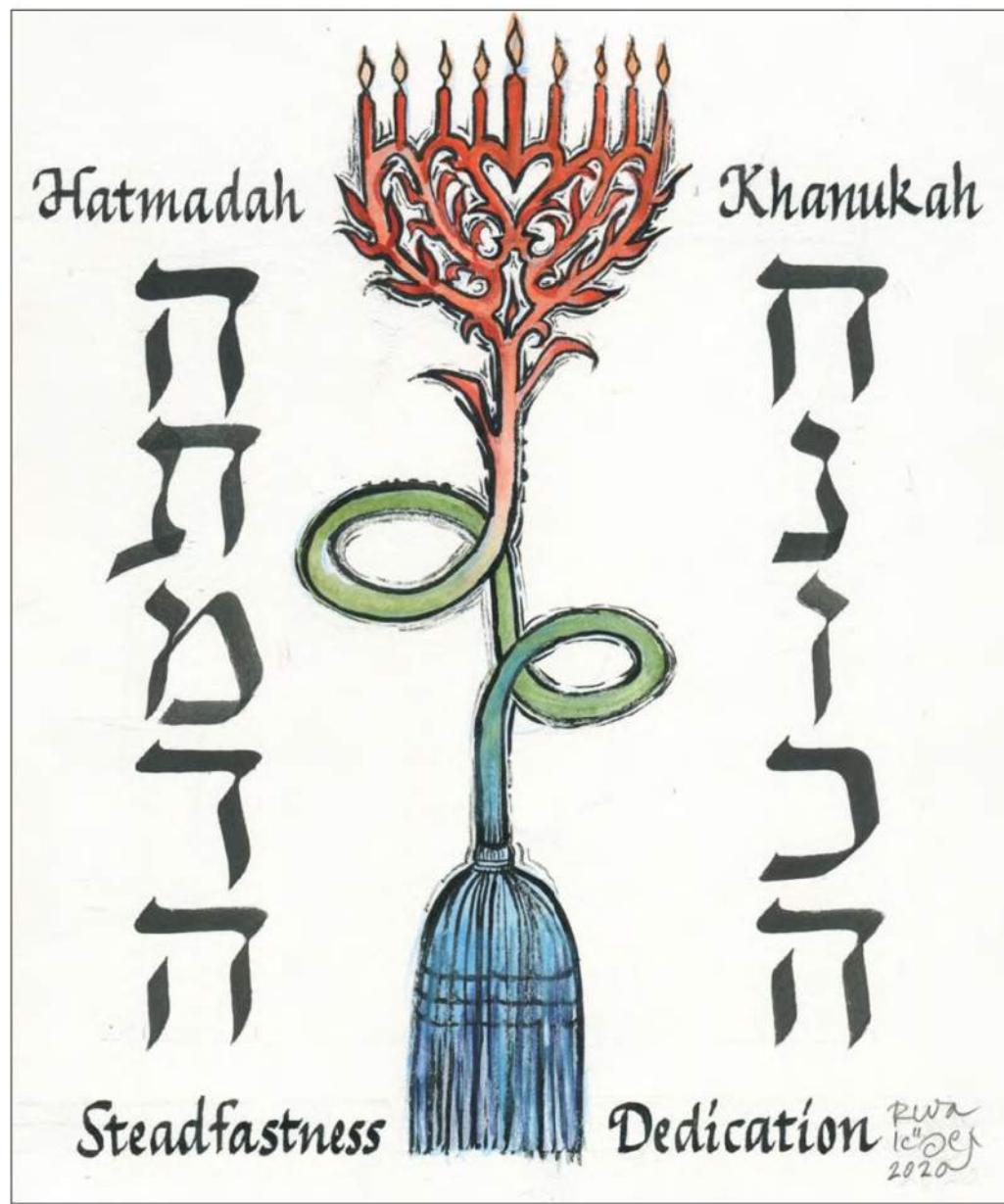
ההפלי הצוד אגם מים הלמיש למעיע מים



ההרים מרקדו כאילים גבוהות כנני צאן מלפני ארון דודי ארץ מלפני אלה יתקרב

לשמה שמה ורבים סוצים מים אף עטא ומת זלזלשזים

Rainer Waldman Adkins
Betzeit Yisrael / the Hills Danced
Watercolor, Ink on Paper



Rainer Waldman Adkins
Chanukah Card Design
Ink and Watercolor on Paper



RWA 1/04

Esther TON



Rainer Waldman Adkins
Muslim Esther, Ink and Acrylic on Paper



אוריאל • URIEL

Illuminator



מיכאל • MIKHAEL

Messenger



רפאל • RAFAEL

Healer



גבריאל • GAVRIEL

Hero

Midrash tells us that four angels assisted Esther:

They helped her rise up; they made her radiant in the moment she needed to face the king;
they opened the king's eyes; and they pushed his scepter forward to allow Esther to speak.

**MAY THE ANGEL MICHAEL BE AT MY RIGHT, AND THE ANGEL GABRIEL BE AT MY LEFT;
AND IN FRONT OF ME THE ANGEL URIEL; AND BEHIND ME THE ANGEL RAPHAEL;
AND ABOVE MY HEAD THE SHEHKINAH.**



Rainer Waldman Adkins
Selected 'Hand Art' Images for
Fremont Public Association Calendar
Scratchboard



Rainer Waldman Adkins
Sasson Musical Group Album Cover
Watercolor on Paper

CONCEPT PROPOSAL

Representing Jewish Community in the Central District:

I am a Jewish artist, making this proposal to reflect the experience of Ashkenazi Jews (Yiddish-speaking, from Eastern Europe) and Sephardi Jews (Ladino-speaking, from Greece and Turkey), as immigrants seeking safety and opportunity instead of oppression, poverty and political upheaval, creating vibrant community in Seattle's Central District (the CD).

There are several possibilities for content that intrigue me. These can include:

- Folkloric expressions of protective forces, such as guardian angels, which offered affirmation and resilience in both difficult and hopeful times.
- Hebrew lettering, with both sacred, ritual application, statement of values, and everyday use in Ladino and Yiddish, the vernacular languages of most early Jewish immigrants to Seattle. Hebrew calligraphic techniques and traditions are an important 'fugitive' portable heritage with rich associations and storytelling.
- Related to this, the rich and often wry and humorous heritage of Ladino and Yiddish proverbs and sayings.
- The literal structures for vibrant community that Jews built in the CD that many years later still have important uses.
- The pillar can be crowned by a Jewish symbol such a pomegranate form, the Cohanim blessing hands, etc.

Possible Design Aspects:

I envision levels to the pillar art, with a base and a form that spirals upward. These components are of course open to editing and/or modification.

- The base would honor several specific values that enabled community and mutual aid, such as *Tzedakah*, the charitable sharing of resources for a more just community. These 'value words' would be portrayed with Hebrew and English lettering, floating in a swirl of flying Hebrew characters and subtle color.
- Traditions of guardian angels have represented the hopes of people in often difficult situations. Inspiration can come from the wonderfully stylized abstract forms found on magical amulets that came with both Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jewish immigrants. There is a plea still used: "On my right is Michael, on my left is Gabriel, in front of me is Uriel, behind me Raphael, and all above, surrounding me, the Holy presence." Each angel has a specific quality, i.e. healing, heroism...
- The final level would be the rest of the pillar, with forms resting on an upwards spiral, holding two elements:
 - Images of the structures built by the Jewish community, in their original forms derived from historical images. Depending on materials, these can be in simple form or with greater detail.
 - They can provide a backdrop for representation of embellished Yiddish and Ladino proverbs/sayings, in formal or informal Hebrew script, transliteration and translation, that represent values and experience integral to the CD's historic Jewish community..
- The pillar can be crowned by a Jewish symbol.

Possible Materials and Media:

Materials and media must take into account durability, protection from human interaction, and ease of repair. I expect that best material/technique practices need to be confirmed in consultation with design/installation stakeholders and designated fabricator[s]. Possible materials may include:

- ceramic tile with digital image transfer, kiln-fired, on cement substrate, or digital image transfer on cut steel, if needed for durability
- multi-hued ceramic and found object mosaic, on cement substrate
- enamel paint on laser-cut steel
- digital image transfer on cut steel
- Steel slat structural support



*Shlof gikher, men darf di kishn -
Sleep faster, we need the pillows!
Albotar cazal, albotar mazal -
A change of scene, a change of fortune.*

Images on are not meant to show actual final forms. All material in this proposal is subject to change as the design process evolves.