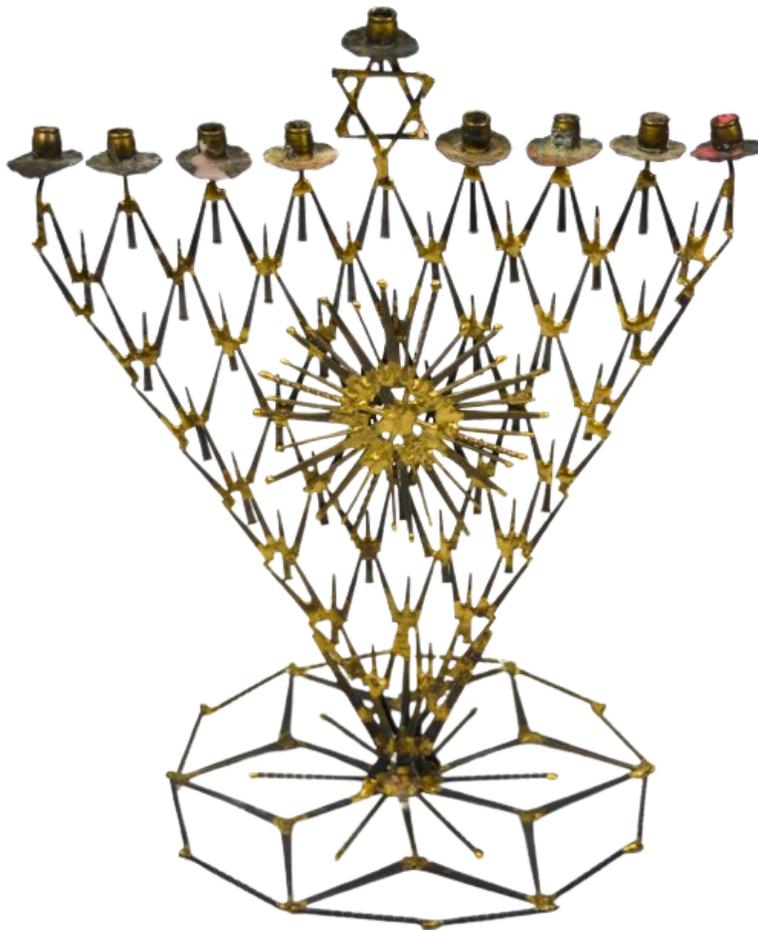


# Thieberger Menorah (ca. 1970s)

## About

This menorah was created out of flattened nails and scrap metal by Erwin Thieberger. Originally from a metal working family in Silesia, Poland, Erwin was a trained metal worker and coppersmith. During the Holocaust, Thieberger was imprisoned in fourteen different concentration camps. In these camps, his skills were considered valuable and he was forced to labor. While in Auschwitz, he began collecting whatever scrap materials he could find in order to craft menorahs and other Judaica. In 1949, Erwin Thieberger, his wife Hilda, and their young daughter Renee left a Displaced Persons camp in Germany and emigrated to the United States. There, they rebuilt their life. Erwin worked as a roofer and later opened an art metal shop in Kensington, MD where he created many more scrap metal menorahs, such as this one, recalling what he had made in the camps. Thieberger's pieces were on display at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall in 1970, 1972, and 1981. In 2023, this Thieberger menorah was lit in the office of Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, husband of Vice President Kamala Harris.

## Item





*Douglas Emhoff*

## Questions

1. What do you think this art piece symbolizes?
2. Consider the story of Hannukah. Why do you think the artist might have chosen to craft a menorah specifically?
3. What is the significance of a menorah like this being displayed in the Second Gentleman's office?

## Learn More

- Capital Jewish Museum Announces the Loan of a Hanukkah Lamp to the White House Office of the Second Gentleman. December 10, 2023. [Link to article here.](#)

## Item Descriptions

- Menorah made by Erwin Thieberger, ca. 1970s. Gift of Tzvi and Esther Porath, Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Object ID: 2003.15.3.
- Photograph of the Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris, and Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff, lighting a menorah from the collection of the Capital Jewish Museum for Hanukkah 2023. The photograph includes the Second Gentleman's autograph. Object ID: 2020.32.20.

Education programs at the Museum are made possible, in part, by Sue Ducat in memory of Stanley Cohen, z"l, The Alper Education Fund, The Bresler Family Education Fund, The Michael Goldstein Education Fund, The Doris & Robert I. Silverman Endowment, and The Morse-Loeb Fund.