

UNDER  ONE ROOF
SUKKAH ART EXHIBIT

Chai



SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 5, 2026



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of Cincinnati

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The Mayerson JCC welcomes the community to celebrate the Jewish festival of Sukkot* with the Under One Roof Sukkah Art Exhibit. The exhibit invites community into a shared sukkah* beautified with works of art created by organizations, agencies, community groups, and individuals from across the city. Thousands of people visit the sukkah exhibit, and all are engaged and inspired. This year, participants used their artwork to explore the theme, *Chai*.

The artworks in the 2026 Under One Roof exhibit explore the values and intricacies that make life special. We have arrived at this theme from diverse points of inspiration:

It is important to take time to recognize what brings meaning to our lives.

Each year, the Under One Roof Sukkah Art Exhibit explores a new theme, creating thought-provoking conversations through compelling artwork from across the community.

When we look inside ourselves and bring those thoughts and feelings outward, that contemplation coming together from different perspectives creates an interlacing of ideas, thoughts, and truths for us as individuals and as a community. The artworks in the 2026 Under One Roof exhibit explore the meaning of *chai*, or life, and the numerology behind the Hebrew word: 18.

This theme was inspired by 2026 being our JCC's 18th building anniversary. The JCC is a place that values growth (*tzmichah*), belonging (*shayahut*), and hospitality (*hachnasat orchim*).

Chai is the Hebrew word for life. The two letters that make up the word, *chet* and *yud*, add up to the number 18. Because of this, the number 18 holds great significance in Jewish tradition. As we celebrate this milestone, we contemplate how this building, and the people within it, have transformed and flourished.

What brings the JCC to life after 18 years in this building? Our answer – **the community that calls this place home.**

We toast ***l'chaim*** to everyone who has shaped our JCC space in the past 18 years and beyond – ***to life!***

As we take in the radiance of the stars in the night sky above our sukkah, the artworks in the 2026 Under One Roof exhibit will explore what *chai* (life) means to them.

What does *chai* mean to you? What brings meaning to your life? As we discover meaning on our journey, we treasure the little moments of *chai* around us, wherever we may find them.

** Sukkot (often translated as the "Festival of Booths" or "Tabernacles") is a major weeklong Jewish holiday. It serves a dual purpose: celebrating the fall harvest and commemorating the temporary shelters the Israelites lived in during their 40-year journey through the Sinai desert.*



Adrienne Varady

The inspiration for my painting comes from Isaiah 4:5-6.

Then the Lord will create over all Mount Zion and over those who assemble there, a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over all the glory will be a canopy.

It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.

I have been a member of the Jewish Community Center since 1974 when it was located in Roselawn. When this new Center opened, I was excited that they had created a room specifically for the making of art. I continue to be a member to meet friends, for the community spirit, and for the art group that continues to meet.



Alberta Schneider

"Life is Good at the J"

Sukkot commemorates the temporary dwellings the Israelites lived in during their 40 years in the desert and celebrates the agricultural gathering of autumn. It is a festival of joy. The J, a permanent facility, provides joy to its members through participation in activities and programs including Childcare, Fitness, Wellness, Senior Center, Camp, J Cafe, Cultural Events, Holidays, Sports, Indoor Games, Day Trips, Discussion Groups, Lunch Group Meet Ups, Spa and Volunteer Opportunities.

In creating this poster, I thought of the activities I experience joy at the J. Art classes symbolized by flowers and music programs symbolized by "Fiddlers on the Roof" playing and singing "L'chaim - To Life."

We need to be grateful for the 18 years the J has helped provide a good life to its members. May it continue to do so.



Amberley Village Human Rights Commission

The non-partisan Human Rights Commission was established by Amberley Village in 2018 to encourage and endeavor to bring about mutual understanding and respect among all persons. The Commission also works to safeguard the right and opportunity of all persons to be free from all forms of discrimination.

The Commission is honored to participate in the Under One Roof event with our Sukkah panel: Tree of World Languages/One Humanity/Many Cultures.

Language is a fundamental element of human communication, culture, and life. Our worldly Tree of Life, with 18 branches, features "life" leaves in 18 languages.

How many languages do you know? Take the time to learn to say "life" in a language new to you. By doing so, you help strengthen and broaden ties to people in our community and the world.



Amy Mueller

Inspired by the philosophies of Viktor Frankl and his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, this painting reflects the idea that meaning is something we create each day. As Frankl wrote, "Rather than asking what the meaning of life is, we are the ones being questioned by life daily, and we answer it through our responsibilities, actions, and attitude."

This sunrise serves as a reminder not to wait for "someday" to find our purpose. Life is lived one day at a time. Each dawn is an invitation to begin anew—a chance to choose gratitude, embrace responsibility, and live with intention. A meaningful life is not found at the end of the path, but in the faithful living of it, one day at a time.

May this painting encourage you to celebrate the gift of each new day with gratitude and to recognize that every sunrise offers another opportunity to live a life of purpose.



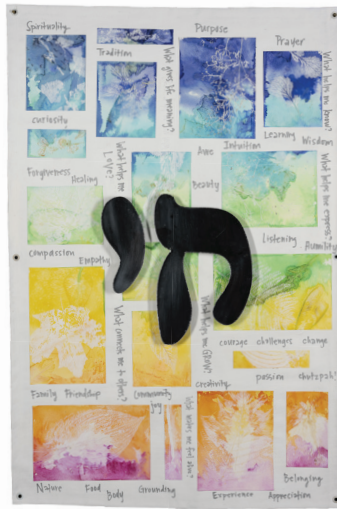
Anjella Martini

Art is a reflection of life and, therefore, endlessly variable. Nature, love, truth, and humanity are depicted in my work to represent different aspects of life as I see them. I used watercolor, acrylic paint, oil pastels, and charcoal. I wanted to create a tattered look with bright splashes of color that would stand in opposition to the black lines which symbolize life's challenges and finite boundaries. I hope you can connect with some aspects of your own life when looking at my work.



Betty Dannenberg

Chai is joy – in nature, colors, and flowers.



Birds of a Feather

The Tree of Life: What Gives Us Life

Together, the women of Birds of a Feather began with a simple question: **What gives our lives meaning?** Our answers were as varied as we are, yet one thread appeared repeatedly: **nature**. We chose to weave nature throughout the piece, incorporating leaves into 18 individual cards, a reference to *chai*, the Hebrew word for life, and a celebration of the Mayerson JCC's 18th year in its current building.

The values we discovered together became our own contemporary interpretation of the **Tree of Life**, inspired by the Jewish mystical tradition of the *Sephirot*. Each quality represents a way we experience, nurture, and bring meaning to our lives: through love and compassion, connection and belonging, courage and growth, wisdom and intuition, gratitude, spirituality, creativity, and joy. The arrangement also offers a gentle nod to the body's chakra system, connecting these qualities to both body and spirit.

At the center are the Hebrew letters *n* and *i*, spelling *chai*, rendered in mirrored acrylic. In their reflection, the viewer becomes part of the work, reminding us that **we ourselves are part of what gives life meaning**.

The space between the panels reflects the Kabbalistic concept of *Tzimtzum*, the Divine contraction that created space for the world, for free will, and for creation to unfold. Within that space, the Tree takes form, reminding us that meaning is not simply given to us; we participate in creating it.

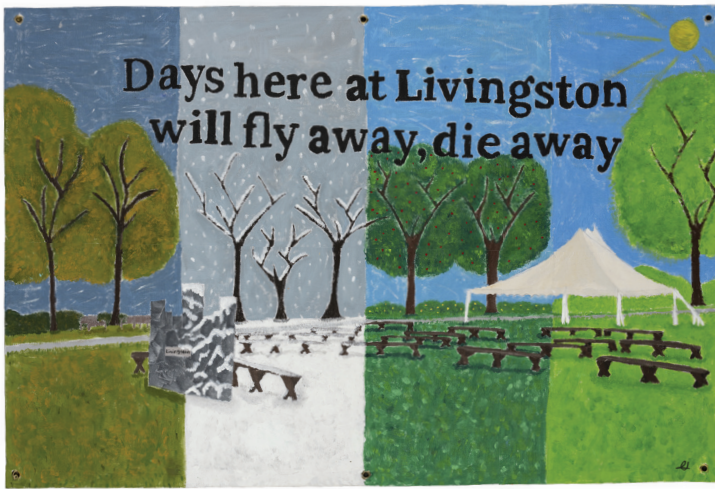
This piece reflects both the **individual and the collective**: many voices, many values, and many ways of experiencing life, coming together to create one living Tree.



Camp at the J

Camp at the J offers a fun, active, and safe summertime experience that provides opportunities for children and young adults in the Jewish and broader communities to build friendships, learn valuable skills, and enhance their self-esteem. Our welcoming and inclusive environment values the dignity and worth of each individual. We work to foster positive relationships and build greater understanding among campers of every background, culture, religion, gender identity, race, and ability.

This summer we tasked our oldest campers with the responsibility of designing our panel. We had brainstorming sessions and finally decided to incorporate water. As our campers put it, "All life comes from water." The campers then worked to decide how we would incorporate water. They had ideas for the ocean, rain, and even the pool before landing on a koi pond. Our campers researched that koi fish can represent friendship and thought that it would be perfect for our camp community. We then got to work, asking different bunks to paint different colors on fabric. Using stencils, they cut out each of the plants and parts of the koi. Lastly, they glued each piece into place. We are so proud of how hard our campers worked on this panel.



Camp Livingston

Camp Livingston, a Jewish residential youth camp, enriches the lives of its campers and staff by providing a fun, unique, community experience, while encouraging the development of Jewish identity within a safe and inclusive environment. Camp Livingston enables the formation of lifelong friendships and provides the opportunity to participate in exciting recreational and creative programming.

We started talking about what “life” means to us as an organization. We discussed what this means from a wider perspective and a history of over 100 years and from the campers and staff involved at Camp in the present day. The conversation kept circling back to one idea: Camp doesn’t end when summer does; it stays with us all year (and well beyond).

That led us to our camp song, “Days Here at Livingston,” and the specific lyrics, “days here at Livingston fly away, die away.” Instead of reading that as something sad or finite, we saw it as the opposite: a reminder that even as one summer season ends, Camp lives on in us for life. From the lessons learned to skills developed and friendships made, who we become at Camp and how we feel while we are there never leaves us. So, we built the panel around images of all four seasons, each carrying a little piece of Camp with it.

This summer, our art staff and select campers worked on the panel over a few weeks of the summer, sketching ideas and then splitting up the seasons so everyone could paint a part of it.

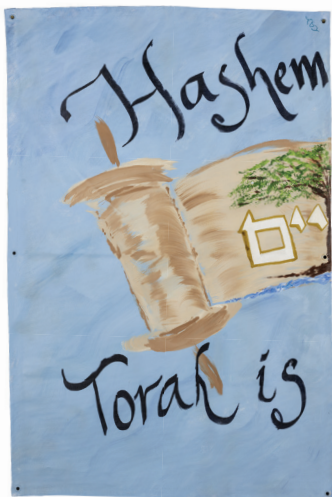
If we had to sum up the panel in a few words: Camp lives in every season of life. What we’d most want people to take away is that Camp isn’t just a place we go to. It is something we carry with us through life.



Chaverot M'Israel

Art by: Hadar & Shira

This sukkah panel represents a powerful story of hope, joy, and the rebuilding of the Jewish people inspired by Ofra Haza's famous 1983 Eurovision song *Chai* (meaning "Alive!"), which won second place in the contest. We have always loved Ofra Haza, whose music was a cherished part of our own childhood and a timeless soundtrack to growing up in Israel. In the center stands a lead singer in a glowing white dress, shining like a bright light to show that hope is always alive. Surrounding her are dancers in bright, sunshiny yellow outfits, reclaiming a color once tied to the Holocaust's yellow star and transforming it into a badge of happiness, warmth, and strength on the very land where Jews were murdered 40 years prior. With their hands reaching high into the sky toward a peace dove, everyone dances together in pure celebration, shouting to the world that the Jewish people are strong, happy, and standing tall: "*Chai, Chai, Chai, Am Yisrael Chai.*"



Congregation Zichron Eliezer (Left)

There's an idea from the Netziv, a 17th-century Rabbi, that sometimes the word **ח** in Torah means "alive," as opposed to dead, but often, it means "alive! Not depressed." Not just alive, but living! Not just surviving but taking great pleasure in being alive.

The most complete way that we feel alive, like we are squeezing every bit of living out of life, is when we are connected to Hashem. Perhaps this is what we mean when we say **לחיים**, to living, not just to being alive.

The Navi, Yirmiyahu, describes Hashem as **מִיַּח מִמַּד רִקְמָה**, the source of life-giving waters. He is not merely the One who gives us life, but the source from which true **מִיַּח** flows.

As we celebrate 18 years, let us celebrate not just being alive, but being connected to the source of life and living deeply Jewish lives.

לחיים

Cincinnati Community Mikveh (Right)

And how do we live those lives? Shlomo Hamelech, King Solomon, gives us the answer:

הַתּוֹרָה עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא - the Torah is a Tree of Life.

Torah is not simply a set of rules for how to survive. It is a way of living – a way of connecting to Hashem, of finding meaning and purpose, and experiencing the fullness of life.

The Tree of Life at the center of our scroll reminds us that when we root our lives in Torah, we are nourished by the source of life itself.

After 18 years, we celebrate **מִיַּח** that comes from living a life rooted in Torah.

לחיים!



Cincinnati Federation of Colored Women's Club

Art by: Arayah Henry

Our mission is to empower women of color, uplift families, and promote racial harmony through dedicated service, education, and scholarship assistance. We strive to protect the rights of women and youth, improve the quality of life in homes and communities, and advocate for civil and political rights for all citizens. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that African American women can excel in every field and foster interracial understanding for a more just and harmonious society.

I began brainstorming ideas throughout my head of what I wanted to create to start the original sketch. The sketch was clear but towards the end I added some elements because I wanted it to be more meaningful. I started painting and the creation of my panel took about a week. It also took a certain amount of time for different portions to dry because of the paint I was using. My panel shows how people touch the earth with their kindness and sense with community which is what the vines around the many arms on the picture to show that we all come together to make the world a better place. The white flowers on said vines show growth.



Cincy Kadima

Art by: Eric George Tauber

Etz Chaïm Hee

"Wisdom is a Tree of Life to those who embrace her." (Proverbs 3:18) Wisdom is not innate, but learned. She is sought after and nurtured. Grant us all the wisdom to understand that we share this world with many others. Give us the strength to protect what is endangered and the wisdom to preserve what is precious so that we and our descendants may live long, healthy, and fruitful lives. Amen.



Congregation Etz Chaim

"Passionate and participatory, our supportive Jewish community engages each individual in a life-long Jewish journey. We embrace diverse experiences that span both traditional and contemporary ideas while learning and pursuing spiritual growth."

Our sukkah panel celebrates the beauty of our CEC community as a diverse, vibrant Jewish family—many different people, stories, backgrounds, and perspectives, all growing together under one roof.

The colorful flowers represent our community in full bloom. Each flower is unique, yet together they create something far more beautiful than anyone could create alone.

Rising above the flowers is the image of a DNA double helix. DNA is the blueprint woven into every one of us, and the helix becomes a powerful symbol for Judaism as something woven into our own identity. Our Jewishness is not simply something we practice—it is something that connects us, shapes us, and has been carried through generations. Like the strands of DNA, our ancient traditions and our modern Jewish lives intertwine, creating a living inheritance that continues to evolve and grow.

Together, the flowers and the DNA helix tell the story of Jewish identity rooted in connection. We are individuals, but we are also part of something larger. We carry the past within us while creating the future together. *Am Yisrael Chai.*



Daya Horton

My name is Daya Horton. I am 14 years old and entering 9th grade. My vision of the panel represents the circle of life. The circle is created with 18 categories, which represent the Hebrew numerology of chai, meaning symbol of life, good luck, and blessings. Each category celebrates what all humans have in common in life. The mirrors remind us how we should reflect on our lives and how each moment plays a role in the circle of life. Wishing you good luck and many blessings!



Elizabeth Chudnovsky

Elizabeth Chudnovsky created this beautiful panel to share and educate about the beautiful holiday of Sukkot.

Growing up in the FSU, she never even saw a sukkah. She experienced much tragedy, surviving near starvation during World War II, and having close relatives murdered at Babi Yar.

Yet Elizabeth expressed her pride and joy in being Jewish and carefully researched and expressed the images and meaning of the holiday.

This artwork is dedicated to Sukkot — a celebration of life, gratitude, joy, and togetherness. The traditional symbols of the holiday remind us of the simple yet meaningful things in life: home, family, memories, and the ability to appreciate every moment.

For Elizabeth, the theme “Life” has a very personal meaning. She has been participating in this competition for many years, continuing to create and share her art with the community.

Next year, Elizabeth will celebrate her 100th birthday. Her participation in this competition is therefore more than an artistic tradition — it is a celebration of life itself. Her creativity, energy, and love of art are a beautiful reminder that inspiration and the joy of creating have no age.

This artwork carries a simple message: life is a gift, and as long as we can create, appreciate beauty, and share it with others, every moment is worth celebrating.



Etana Garfinkle

Etana is an artist and musician currently living in the Cincinnati area. They specialize in fiber arts, particularly embroidery. This work is a take on the Tree of Life, utilizing ribbon, paint, felt, and permanent markers to create texture and movement.

Etana enjoys repurposing fabrics, creating touchable art, and watching Star Trek.

You can find their work and online shop on Instagram, @SerenityString.



Floreta Zacharia

I am an amateur painter. I see life as flowers. They know how to bring happiness and know what they need to live.

We all need to express our needs as flowers do.

I see life as flowers. They tell you about life communicating better than humans. I need sun, I need water, I do not like how you put me in the shadow. I am suffocating with too much vegetation around me. I need vitamins. No need for a psychiatrist!!!!

Painting done in couple of days. I am an amateur since 1969. My real life is concert pianist.

Sincerely

Floreta Zacharia



Halom House

Several residents of Halom House worked together on this project. We discussed the idea of L'Chaim, and celebrating things in life that make us happy. We worked to color some of the letters of L'Chaim and To Life with dot and regular markers, and also to decorate the canvas with joyful stickers.

Since 1985, Halom House has been a cornerstone of the Greater Cincinnati community, providing housing and support for adults with disabilities. Halom House champions the independence and fulfillment of these adults, and works around the clock to offer the highest level of individualized care to its clients.



Hillel at Miami University

Hillel at Miami University, the center of Jewish life on campus, seeks to engage, connect, and empower students to explore their Jewish identity, creating a vibrant Jewish community and inspiring the next generation of Jewish leaders.

The theme of Under One Roof is “*Chai*,” meaning “to life,” and our panel represents the life and love that Hillel at Miami brings to our students. At its heart, the central idea is bringing life, love, and community to campus.

For the creative process, we knew we wanted to involve a student who could bring both artistic talent and a personal connection to Hillel. We worked with a student who is studying education with a focus on the arts and hopes to become an art teacher, making her a perfect fit to take the lead on designing the panel. She created several different designs, which gave us the opportunity to talk through her ideas, provide feedback, and work together to shape the final piece.

The final artwork was truly a group effort, but it also gave the student an opportunity to grow as both a student leader and an artist. We loved being able to give her the space to take ownership of the creative process while collaborating with staff to create something that represents what Hillel means to our students.

Ultimately, this panel is about *chai*, celebrating life, love, connection, and the community we create together at Hillel at Miami University.

The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) is a division of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), and was established in 1947 by renowned historian, Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, in order to collect, preserve, and make available for research, materials on the history of Jews and Jewish communities in the Western Hemisphere (primarily focusing on North America) including data of a political, economic, social, cultural, and religious nature.

Three primary goals of the AJA Mission:

To collect a variety of source material including documents, photographs, and media, that are reflective of all aspects of American life and culture. The AJA seeks to obtain records of congregations and Jewish organizations, genealogical materials, the papers of rabbis and key figures in American Jewish history, and personal histories that relate to the masses.

To produce publications relating to the American Jewish experience including the American Jewish Archives Journal which features articles on relevant themes in American history.

To promote the study of American Jewish history within the context of the broader American community by sponsoring symposia and conferences; producing a variety of educational tools and resources; and developing exhibits both physical and online.

The AJA exists to preserve the continuity of Jewish life and learning for future generations and aspires to serve scholars, educators, students, and researchers of all backgrounds and beliefs.

This year's theme, Chai (n), offered us an opportunity to reflect on the life of our institution and all that comes with approaching 80 years of existence. It prompted questions about identity, purpose, memory, preservation, and heritage.

As an archive, these are concepts deeply familiar to us and intrinsic to the work we do. Yet this theme, and the broader reflection on life it inspired, encouraged us to engage with them through a different, more philosophical lens.

We began to consider how profoundly a person's life is shaped by where they are born, where they grow up, and, just as importantly, the era in which they come of age. These reflections on space, place, and time ultimately led us to a larger question: what does it mean when so much of one's identity is rooted in a physical and geographical space?

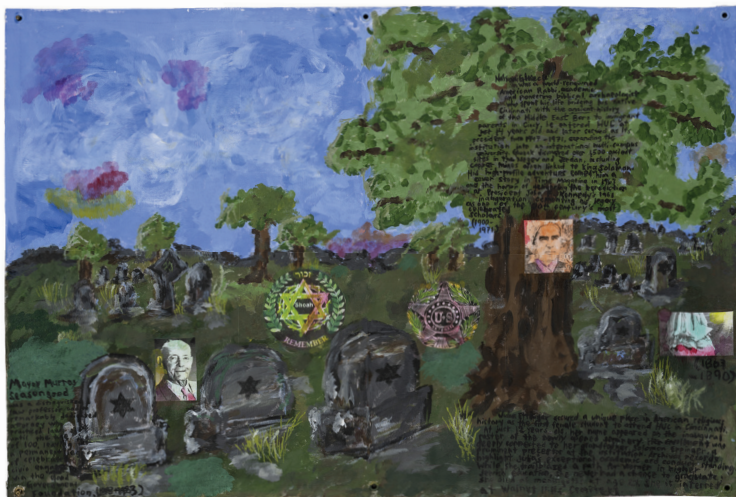
The AJA was originally located in a downstairs office of HUC's Bernheim Library building on the Cincinnati campus. As the decades passed, and the archive's collections grew, so too did the need for space. Following a major expansion and renovation that took place in the early 2000s, the AJA reopened in the spring of 2004. At the heart of the renovation was the preservation of the historic library reading room and the facade of the original library building. Today, the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives remains rooted in this space and place, where history, memory, and identity continue to meet.





Jessica Max

Using color and pattern to create a collage with hand-painted canvas, this piece celebrates 18 wonderful years of the Mayerson JCC in its current location. This building and everything it provides means so many different things to all of us, but ultimately, it is a place for community and joy. Hopefully this piece brings that joy to the forefront.



Jewish Cemeteries of Greater Cincinnati

Art by: Jacie Edelstein

JCGC serves the burial needs of the Greater Cincinnati Jewish community with care and dignity and honors the resting places of our people.

“Dying is an integral part of life, as natural and predictable as being born.”

– Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

This panel serves to provide a reminder of the relationship between life and death. We honor the memory of three remarkable members of the Cincinnati Jewish community: Mayor Murray Seasongood (1878–1983), Archeologist and Rabbi Nelson Glueck (1900–1971), and Julia Ettlinger (1863–1890) the first female student to attend Hebrew Union College. Each of these people has a life story that reflects the history of our city and our people. Also featured on the panel are the images of special markers for the burial sites of Holocaust survivors and United States military veterans.

The Jewish Cemeteries of Greater Cincinnati (JCGC) is pleased to provide access to 35,000 burial records through the genealogy section of our website. Almost all of our records include a photo of the memorial. In addition to preserving history, JCGC provides community programming and tours, as well as a range of products and services.

Jacie Edelstein is an RN, certified in school nursing, nurse management, and facilitating end-of-life discussions. In addition to being a board member of the JCGC, she is a volunteer for the Jewish Fertility Foundation. She has worked for Rockwern Academy since 2019. She and her husband, David, live in Milford with their daughter Ada.



JFS Adult Day

Our conversation about Chaim is inclusive of all dimensions of existence—body, soul, and time. From there, we centered on the interconnectedness of all people, symbolized by a tree. All participants in our program had a part in adding to work. It is symbolic of our small group and we are each a part of the whole.



JFS Group at Majestic Care of Cedar Village



Jewish Family Service of Cincinnati Barbash Family Vital Support Center Activities Program

Jewish Family Service strengthens lives and enhances our diverse community by providing exceptional and transformational human services.

As you look at the painting, imagine yourself standing in the sukkah, feet firmly planted on the ground, looking up at the night sky, contemplating all of the wonders life has to offer, feeling thankful for the year, the bountiful harvest, and the people that make a difference in your life.

There are 18 stars painted by our clients at the Barbash Family Vital Support Center. They were given a variety of materials to create the stars, and each one reflects the personality and unique point of view and creativity of the artist.



JFS Russian Jewish Cultural Center

**Art by: Galina Bampi, Liza Gutkin, Galina Shur,
Luba Golobochansky, Bella Chertkov, Inna Kruglov,
Sveta Savchenko, Diana Fenichel, Henry Fenichel,
Lola Smolyansky, Inna Pyatigorsky, Natalia Zelkind,
Eduard Zelkind**

We greatly enjoyed creating these works together. Through this artwork, we express our connection to the life, traditions, and celebrations of the Jewish people.

This artwork brings together traditional symbols of Sukkot—the lulav, etrog, and other elements of the holiday—as a celebration of life and togetherness.

Sukkot reminds us to appreciate the simple things that give life meaning nature, family, tradition, gratitude, and the joy of being together. The fragile sukkah represents the temporary and fragile nature of life, while the beauty and abundance of the holiday remind us to cherish each moment.

Through these familiar symbols, our artwork reflects the idea that life is both fragile and beautiful. Its greatest richness comes from connection, gratitude, tradition, and hope.



Lauri Ann Aultman

To Life/*L'Chaim* is a dream I've had for many years: to participate in Under One Roof. Sukkot is not part of my family's traditions, but I admire the way this exhibit brings art and community together in nature and in faith.

When I saw that the theme for this year was *Chai*, I was thrilled. We grew up dancing around our house singing "To Life/*L'Chaim*" from *Fiddler on the Roof*. The way this art came together blessed me, so I hope that it blesses others.

I value my friends of many different cultures and learn so much from diverse perspectives, so I took a Palestinian embroidery (Tatreez) class and used the "Tree of Life" design from the Tirazain.com website. It took me days to embroider the piece. Then I realized it was small and might not do well in the outside elements, so I photographed, enlarged, and laminated it. During this process I also attended a class where they offered us a pile of albums to use. Imagine my joy when I found the "Fiddler" vinyl! Also, we lost an artist friend tragically and in her estate sale, I found the "To Life" words which had been part of a lifeboat sign. I loved the way all these bits and pieces came together.

I do not understand the complexities of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, but I have friends from all sides, and I pray for peace and love for everyone. I know it seems simplistic, but I believe that our thoughts and prayers do make a difference, especially when they are combined with kind actions and activist art.

Please join me in praying for peace and love for all people as we toast "*L'Chaim*" this fall. Thank you!



Lizzie Kibler Wallace

"The Cats of Life"

Throughout my 32 years of life, I have been fortunate and blessed to meet a vibrant tapestry of incredible people. Each cat represents someone that I call a friend. What is especially fantastic is that every single one of my friends has a passion that brings our relationships to life. My friends play *Dungeons and Dragons*, cosplay, knit scarves, write, make art and music, get really into Fandoms, save others, succeed in defeating difficult video game levels, and so much more. Everyone brings something to the table in our group.

You might be asking, "Why cats?" Simple. I cannot draw people. But that's not important. What I want people to take away from this piece is to think about everyone who has touched your life and given you meaning, the ones you call when you get that promotion at work, the ones you visit when they're feeling overwhelmed, the ones who watch your cats while you're on vacation, the ones who trust you to babysit their kids because you've brought meaning to their lives. Love each other and there will be joy.



Lola Smolyansky

This colorful work celebrates the enduring spirit of Israel and the continuity of life across generations. The vibrant colors and joyful objects associated with Sukkot express energy, hope, gratitude, and the richness of life.

At the heart of the work is a simple yet powerful message: Israel lived, Israel lives today, and Israel will continue to live in the future. Past, present, and future are connected, reminding us that life and hope endure even through difficult times. The colors symbolize strength, resilience, joy, and optimism.

For Lola, Sukkot is a celebration of life, gratitude, and continuity. Through this artwork, she expresses her belief in the enduring spirit of Israel and in a future filled with life, color, and hope. For Lola, Sukkot is a celebration of life, gratitude, and continuity. Through this artwork, she expresses her belief in the enduring spirit of Israel and in a future filled with life, color, and hope.



Majestic Care of Cedar Village

Residents of Cedar Village enjoyed brainstorming around this year's theme. Ideas of living in the moment, faith, identity, and celebrating the big and small things emerged through many conversations. The group opted for an abstract, yet simple design focused on colors of nature. Soon the image took shape like the spinning of a kaleidoscope. An 18-inch *chai* was then added using small, mirrored pieces in a mosaic to reflect the collective of people that we interact with in our lives.



Mayerson JCC 60 & Better Center

Art by: Melissa Shrimplin

I created a panel with 18 balloons to celebrate the 18-year anniversary of the Mayerson JCC. Each balloon is painted in a custom JCC blue color representing the diversity of our members and programs offered at the JCC 60 & Better Center.

Members of the Mayerson JCC 60 & Better Center can pursue their creativity, enjoy a game of bridge or mahj, or hear lectures from special guests. Gather in community at the J or join us to explore parts of Cincinnati on one of our popular day trips.

Mayerson JCC Blue Jays

Art by: Mike Creemer

This is my 25th year serving the JCC as Director of Sports and Recreation. And as such, I'm extremely proud of our beloved JCC Blue Jays Sports Teams. By my rough estimation, we have had over 2,000 Blue Jays players, both girls and boys, compete in soccer, basketball, and baseball during my tenure with the JCC. Needless to say, JCC Blue Jays Sports is a huge part of my life!

But JCC Blue Jays Sports reaches more broadly than me and the players. We have had so many great coaches in this time as well, with many of the coaches being involved for several years! From this, I can only conclude that JCC Blue Jays Sports is a big part of their lives as well.

Now I want to call out our parents who carpool to and from practices and games (with some games being very far away). I want to call out parents who attend the games, and sometimes multiple games in a day! And oftentimes (most times), they bring the players' siblings to cheer on our Blue Jays. I know the JCC Blue Jays are a big part of their lives as well!

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that our Blue Jays Basketball Teams are the only Jewish teams (besides Rockwern) in the Greater Cincinnati Area and that our Blue Jays Baseball Teams are the ONLY Jewish teams in the Greater Cincinnati Area. This is an important part of our story and responsibility.

It took me a while to get the vision of what I wanted to design. I've submitted pieces for Under One Roof for many years and almost missed the deadline. But it finally came to me...the player is a character I developed years ago named Kid Blue Jay. Kid Blue Jay is in his baseball uniform, standing on the grass. He's holding "Chai" in one hand and "Life" in the other. He's surrounded by a baseball, his bat and glove, a soccer ball, and a basketball. For him, it's not the sports that are most important...it's being a JCC Blue Jay that's most important!





Mayerson JCC Early Childhood School

This collaborative multimedia collage celebrates *chai*—life, vitality, and the sacred potential to grow. Created by the students and teachers of the JCC Early Childhood School, the tree represents our community: rooted in Jewish values and traditions, while continually growing, reaching, and branching outward and upward.

Each classroom created its own leaf, using unique materials, colors, textures, and techniques to express its classrooms' DNA. Through painting, collage, layering, and tactile exploration, every class contributed something distinctly its own. Together, these individual leaves become a vibrant canopy—different in character yet connected as one.

Like the children who created it, this Tree of Life is rooted, growing, and full of energy.



Mikey Frank

My canvas is an homage to many of the women in my family.

My “life” is influenced by these women z”l. They are represented by the raindrops. A personal emblem symbolizes a precious memory contained in each drop.

These women tended their garden. They did the work, every day, every week, every year, to cultivate the next generations of women.

I am honored to be among their blooms, which I hope will become a nourishing drop for my own family and my community.



Most OutGROWing, LLC

Art by: Adoria L. Maxberry

Chai! What is life?! Well it's both beautiful and messy. Life is like a field of colorful flowers for artist Adoria L. Maxberry.

Growing fast but also with a delicate balance of uncertainty, caution and an excitement for the unknown just like in life the artist allowed the piece to evolve. Starting with splotches of colors placed randomly and allowing the art to dictate what the subject should be, a garden emerged. Perfect, not close, but beautiful nonetheless.

May we all remember to take time to find beauty in the mess, take risks, rest and reflect, while blossoming unapologetically. Let's inspire, create and grow together in this world!

Most OutGROWing LLC. "An Art Movement," is an organization focused on helping people grow beyond their potential and develop their purpose through the arts. One who is "Most OutGROWing" shatters perceptions, inspires and cultivates life through passion, energy, encouragement, growth and healing while walking with purpose. Simply stated "one who exceeds expectations." It's the superlative we can all have. We can all grow beyond expectations and our goal is to help inspire you to create and grow through art.

Most OutGROWing (MOG) offers creative consulting, retail, education and events for people of all ages and skill levels. We have two studio locations, one in the Kennedy Heights Arts Center Annex and our Northside location in the WordPlay Cincy building. Come create with us!



PJ Library of Cincinnati

PJ Library thrives on powerful stories — from the vibrant Jewish narratives we share in beautiful children’s books, to those of the incredible community who bring PJ Library to life. And at its heart, PJ Library’s goal is to inspire families to continue the Jewish story, embracing and imparting the joy of Jewish life to the next generation.

Our 2026 Under One Roof project explores *Chai*— life — through the eyes of Jewish children in Cincinnati. At the center of our canvas is an open book, representing the books PJ Library sends to children around the world to help them discover and connect with Jewish life.

At PJ Library events over the summer, children reflected on what makes their own lives meaningful by answering kid-friendly questions like: What brings you joy? Who and what do you love? What makes you feel connected to your family and community? What Jewish traditions are special to you? Their answers came to life through colorful drawings, each showing a piece of what *chai* means to them.

Together, their illustrations fill the book on our canvas, showing that a meaningful life is made up of the people we love, the traditions we share, the things that bring us joy, and the community where we belong. Through the eyes of our children, *chai* is not just life — it is the people, traditions, experiences, and moments that make our lives special.

Rockdale Temple

As we celebrate this theme of Chai, we reflect on what it means for a community to be truly alive. At Rockdale, community is created not by one person or one experience, but by the many people, traditions, relationships, and moments that bring us together.

Our Kehal Kodesh Religious School learners were asked to reflect on the question: What brings our community to life? Our young people expressed their interpretations not only in recognizable symbols of Jewish life, but also by sharing a favorite tradition, a person, a memory, a value, a friendship, or simply something that brings joy.

These individual pieces come together to form a tree, a familiar symbol of life, growth, connection, and continuity. Its branches remind us that while each of us brings something unique to our community, we are all connected. Our community is made vibrant and strong through the many people who learn, celebrate, pray, create, and grow together.

May this tree remind us to celebrate the many things that bring us to life and to recognize that each of us has a role in bringing life, joy, and connection to our sacred community. *L'chaim!*

Vision Statement

A vibrant, inclusive, innovative congregation creating connections to Judaism and each other.

Mission Statement

Our Reform Jewish community celebrates lifelong learning, strives to repair the world, and creates meaningful worship and transformative Jewish experiences.





Scott Jankowski

This painting shows a woman in a field of *calanilyot*, Israel's red poppies, as a symbol of enduring life.

The *calanilyot* represent renewal and resilience. In this piece, they are active and full of movement, creating a sense of life that extends across the canvas. This work focuses on life as something ongoing and in motion. The flowers and the landscape reflect energy, growth, and continuity.

My process is layered and physical. I use acrylic and house paint, applying wide brushstrokes and precise detail to build texture and movement. The shifting colors and softened edges create a sense of movement and energy within the painting.

This painting is both a personal meditation and hopeful offering, a reminder that even in uncertain times, something soft and radiant can still bloom.



Stacie Hecht

Stacie is the mom of two boys and heads the research team at a local chemical company. She's made jewelry for 17 years and recently started a small business, Stacierabbit Jewelry Designs.

This submission is a beaded pomegranate mosaic, which symbolizes fertility. This is my interpretation of *chai*, or life. This artwork symbolizes my 5-year fertility journey to bring the life of my youngest son into this world.



Susan Klug Kahan

Chai means life. All living things contain water. There is a cycle to water as there is to life. Water rises as mist and fog to condense into clouds and returns to the ocean (and land) as rain. I chose to represent “life” by portraying this continuous cycle. I centered this cycle around a green sprig, so that life could center around hope, the hope that is ever present no matter what part of the cycle of life one is in...the hope of new growth, new beginnings, new possibilities.

I am an independent artist. I have enjoyed creating artwork for Under One Roof many times since it was opened up to individual artists. I show much of my recent work at susanklugkahan.com.



The Smyth Family

A new baby entering the world. Deep friendships. Mountains of books. A crackling campfire. These are the things that come to mind for our family when we think of Life. The celebrations and the things that bring us joy. It was a joy to work on this art project together, all of us brainstorming and painting together as a family! Of course, to really enjoy the good things, we must also find ways to accept the hard things along the way. The loss of a loved one. The death of a dream. Heart-wrenching sorrow. Salty tears on your cheek. It is the painful things that open our hearts wide enough to appreciate the good that much more. It is all a part of embracing Life to the fullest. Joy AND Sorrow. Tears AND Laughter. L'chaim!

This was very fun! Thank you for the opportunity to share and collaborate as a family together to share our ideas of what brings us life!



Zoya Zelkind

This piece explores “*Chai*” through the female experience: the body as earth, the earth as life, and both as vessels for memory of the past and hope for the future. Women carry, create, and pass forward history, ritual, culture... life.

The female body is the landscape for life, a place of creation, nurturing in nature, where stories are held, and meaning is made. The earth is bountiful and holy, we owe everything to her.

Across the hills, women dance with timbrels to the setting sun, evoking Miriam and the women who initiated, sustained and celebrated the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. Eighteen red poppies bloom across the earth, evoking Israel and the Jewish people’s beautiful strength, resilience, remembrance, and the consistent persistence of life.

Chai is the life we inherit, the life we create, and the life we carry forward.

We say, “never forget.” Women remember—in body, mind, and spirit. We hold the past, present, and future. We create. We nurture. We host. We teach. We share. We love. We are *chai*.

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The mission of the Under One Roof Sukkah Art Exhibit is to create community, connection, and conversation. The artworks and statements created and submitted are those of the participants; they do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Mayerson JCC, staff, board, sponsors, or volunteers.