

## N.C. Museum of Art Hanukkah Lamp Selected for Annual White House Hanukkah Ceremony

**Raleigh, N.C.**—A Hanukkah lamp in the collection of the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) was selected for the candle-lighting ceremony at the annual White House celebration of Hanukkah. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama will host the reception, which will also be attended by Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, in the East Room of the White House this afternoon.



This is the first year the White House accepted recommendations from the public for the menorah to be used in the ceremony. NCMA Deputy Director for Art John Coffey submitted the Museum's lamp for consideration, and the lamp was selected in early December.

"It is an extraordinary honor for this masterpiece from our Judaic art collection to receive this recognition, and to play a part in such a beautiful ceremony," said Coffey, who will also attend the reception.

The NCMA lamp was designed and made in Jerusalem in the 1920s. It takes its form and style from the menorah, the seven-branched lamp of the ancient Jewish Temple. (An additional branch was added to accommodate the eight candles of the Hanukkah festival, plus a ninth "servant light.")

The NCMA is one of only a handful of art museums in the country with a permanent gallery dedicated to Jewish ceremonial art. The Judaic Art Gallery opened in 1983 under the guidance of Dr. Abram Kanof (1903–99), physician, medical professor, and scholar of Jewish art and symbolism. The NCMA's Judaic art collection spans three centuries and four continents, embracing a wide variety of forms and artistic styles. It features objects associated with most aspects of Jewish ceremonial life: synagogue worship, observance of the Sabbath and other holidays and festivals, rituals marking the life cycle, and the sanctifying of the Jewish home. The collection continues to grow with the support of the Museum's statewide Friends of the Judaic Art Gallery.

In previous years the White House has lit a menorah from a synagogue damaged during Hurricane Sandy, a menorah from the Jewish Museum in Prague that had been rescued from a synagogue destroyed during the Holocaust, and menorahs specially created for the occasion.

### Image caption:

Ze'ev Raban, Bezalel Workshop, *Standing Hanukkah Lamp*, designed circa 1926, probably fabricated late 1920s, silver: repoussé and etched, filigree, inset with colored glass; wood base, H. 35 ½ in., North Carolina Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the North Carolina State Art Society (Robert F. Phifer Bequest), the Friends of the Judaic Art Gallery, and Joann Pizer-Fox and Stanley H. Fox in honor of their children

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### About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art's permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years, from ancient Egypt to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The Museum's collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing national touring exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts.

The Museum opened West Building, home to the permanent collection, in 2010. The North Carolina Museum of Art, Lawrence J. Wheeler, director, is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Pat McCrory, governor, and an agency of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Susan Kluttz, secretary.