



**RABBI LINDA MOTZKIN'S "SACRED SCRAPS" COMES TO
SPRING STREET GALLERY JUNE 8-AUGUST 8
Saratoga Rabbi Follows a Unique and Unusual Artistic Path**

Saratoga Springs, NY -- Rabbi Linda Motzkin has been a presence in Saratoga Springs' rich cultural community for decades, both as co-rabbi of Temple Sinai and also as Jewish Chaplain at Skidmore College. But behind her public role as a rabbi, Motzkin has been on a private artistic journey that will be exhibited for the first time on Sunday, June 8, 3pm-5pm, at her show "Sacred Scraps: The Work of Rabbi Linda Motzkin," at Spring Street Gallery in Saratoga Springs, NY. The works will be on display until August 8.

Motzkin was ordained a rabbi in 1986, and came to Saratoga Springs that summer with her husband and co-rabbi Jonathan Rubenstein. Since her youth she had dabbled in various art forms, including the study of Hebrew calligraphy as a college student under master calligrapher David Moss. But it wasn't until 2003 that she began studying with Rabbi Dr Eric Ray to become a *soferet* (a Hebrew scribe who writes Torah scrolls and other sacred documents), a profession traditionally restricted to men. She is one of a handful of women worldwide who have mastered this craft, and the only *soferet* in the world who makes her own parchment, which she prepares using deerskins donated by local Adirondack hunters. "I never dreamed I'd get involved in scraping and fleshing animal hides," Motzkin recalled, "but at the time I began, it was the only possible way for me, as a female scribe, to obtain kosher parchment."

When Motzkin began making parchment for the Torah scroll that she is currently writing, she discovered that not every deerskin can produce suitable parchment, due to inherent flaws in the skin as well as damage that occurs during processing. "Even though I couldn't use them as Torah panels, I still thought these flawed pieces had their own sacred dimension," Motzkin said. So she decided to highlight their imperfections and transform them into a different sort of sacred art, weaving fragments of Hebrew texts and other design elements around the holes and tears in the skins. Some of her pieces are small, and some over five feet in length, sometimes resembling Swiss cheese, with their organic intricacies.

The process of creating these pieces reflects the mystical belief that holiness lies embedded within all matter, waiting to be recognized, uplifted and transformed. Motzkin's artistic journey is an inspiration to those of every background, sacred and secular, who seek to find beauty and meaning in the midst of the flaws and imperfections of life.

Baked goods for the Opening Reception of "Sacred Scraps: Works by Rabbi Linda Motzkin" on Sunday, June 8, 3-5pm, will be provided by Temple Sinai's Slice of Heaven Breads, a project of Motzkin's husband, Rabbi Jonathan Rubenstein.

There will also be two workshops presented at Spring Street Gallery as part of the "Sacred Scraps: Works by Rabbi Linda Motzkin" exhibit. The first is a Writing Workshop with poet Marilyn McCabe on Sunday, June 15 from 1-5pm, co-presented by the Adirondack Center for Writing, which will use Motzkin's work as the inspiration for reflection and personal expression. The second is a Parchment Making Workshop with Rabbi Linda Motzkin on Sunday, June 22, from 10am-noon, where Motzkin will demonstrate her preparation of deerskin hides. Workshops are \$5.

SACRED SCRAPS

Works by Rabbi Linda Motzkin



Opening Reception
Sunday, June 8
3-5 PM

Spring Street Gallery
110 Spring Street
Saratoga Springs, NY
12866

Shiviti: Healing Psalms
Ink on handmade deerskin parchment; 59" x 29"
Photo by Michael Fenton

Baked goods for the opening reception will be provided by Temple Sinai's Slice of Heaven Breads

EXHIBIT OPEN THROUGH AUGUST 8, 2014

- **Writing Workshop with Marilyn McCabe** using the works as the inspiration for reflection and personal expression. Co-presented by the Adirondack Center for Writing.
Sunday, June 15, 1:00 PM – 5:00 pm, \$5
- **Parchment Making Workshop with Rabbi Linda Motzkin**
Sunday, June 22, 10:00 AM – NOON, \$5



Spring Street Gallery
110 Spring Street, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
www.springstreetgallery.org
Open Weekdays 10AM-4PM and by appointment

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