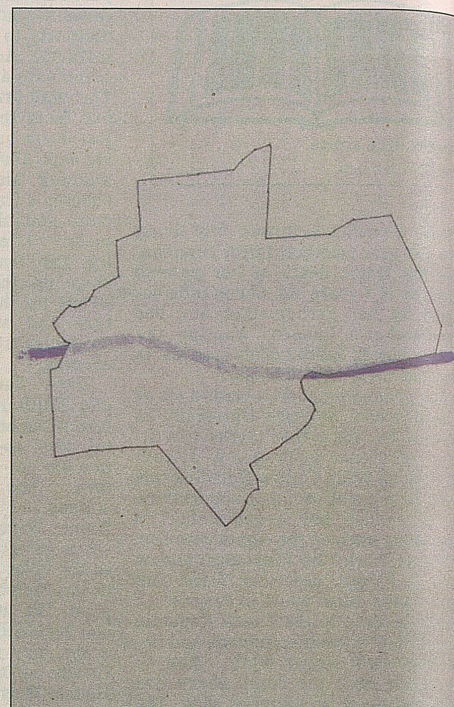
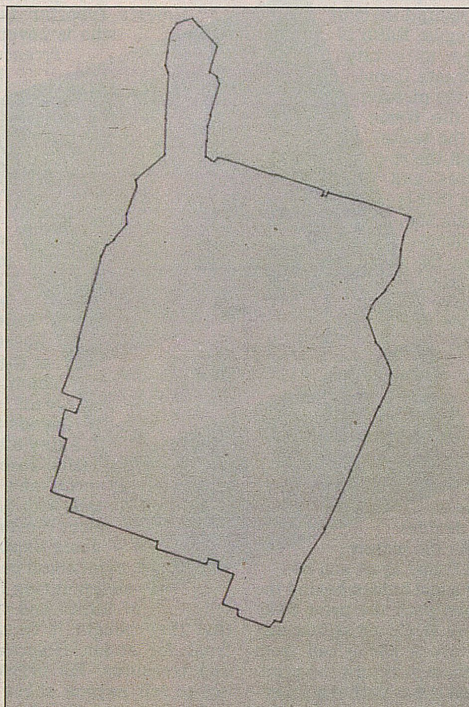
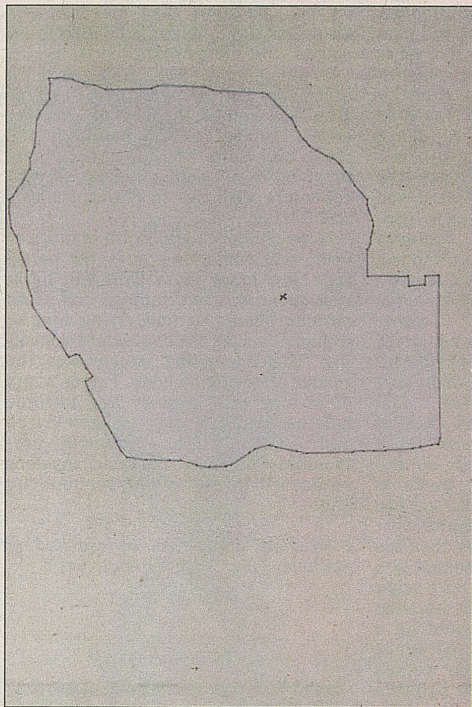


# The borders of art and religion



Schachter has done paintings of eruvim around the world. In 2007 he did Los Angeles (left), Manhattan (center) and Squirrel Hill (right). His new exhibit at the Squirrel Hill JCC will take a closer look at the Squirrel Hill eruv.

## New JCC art exhibit explores Squirrel Hill's eruv

BY MIKE ZOLLER  
Associate Editor

They are hardly noticeable, practically invisible, but for Orthodox Jews on Shabbat they are a way to allow Jews to carry items on the Sabbath, which is normally considered work.

Eruvim are everywhere in the world there is a large Orthodox population. From Squirrel Hill to Manhattan to Venice, they help shape and define a Jewish community.

Now, as part of the American Jewish

Museum's Love|Fences|Nests series at the Jewish Community Center, artist-in-residence Ben Schachter will be examining the eruv that encompasses Squirrel Hill, as well as looking at communities in general.

"The work is based on the eruv that is part of Squirrel Hill," he said. "I'll be making an eruv in the gallery space. There will be a map on the wall that they (visitors) can draw on. They can mark where they have walked in the eruv. I'll transcribe it to a tape drawing on the floor."

The map will be on display in the gallery and the public is invited to mark down exactly where they walk within the eruv. Schachter will then show with tape where people walk within the community.

"The map on the floor will give everyone a sense of where a larger

amount of activity took place," he said.

Schachter has been exploring eruvim for a couple of years now. He has done artwork of other eruvim in cities like Manhattan and Los Angeles.

"I've been applying Jewish laws to art making," he said. "Another body of work was a series of kosher paintings. This is surrounding itself around the eruv idea; the eruv as a drawing in space."

He first got interested in the idea of eruvim when he learned about all the work that went into building them.

"The investigating and learning how you build an eruv; I was interested in the rules and ways of solving problems in getting the eruv to work," he said.

During his three-month residency at the museum, Schachter will also work with teens and other children's groups to explore the idea of community and

what makes up a community.

The public will also be invited to share their definitions of terms that revolve around community.

"There will be a ballot box where people can submit their own definitions of home, community and neighborhood," he said. "Those will turn into a boundary within the gallery space. The whole museum once you enter it will be a whole other defined area."

"I was honored to be asked to participate (in the series) and look forward to working with the community," he continued.

(Mike Zoller can be reached at [mikez@thejewishchronicle.net](mailto:mikez@thejewishchronicle.net).)

### Want to go?

The eruv exhibit of the Love|Fences|Nests series at the American Jewish Museum runs from Jan. 2 through March 24. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

**FOR RENT**  
**OFFICE SPACE**  
2176 sq. ft.

**Prime East End Location**  
with easy access to  
Squirrel Hill, Oakland and Shadyside  
**Off Street Parking**

Call Barbara 412-687-1000

**SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS**

Tell them you saw their ad in

**THE JEWISH CHRONICLE**