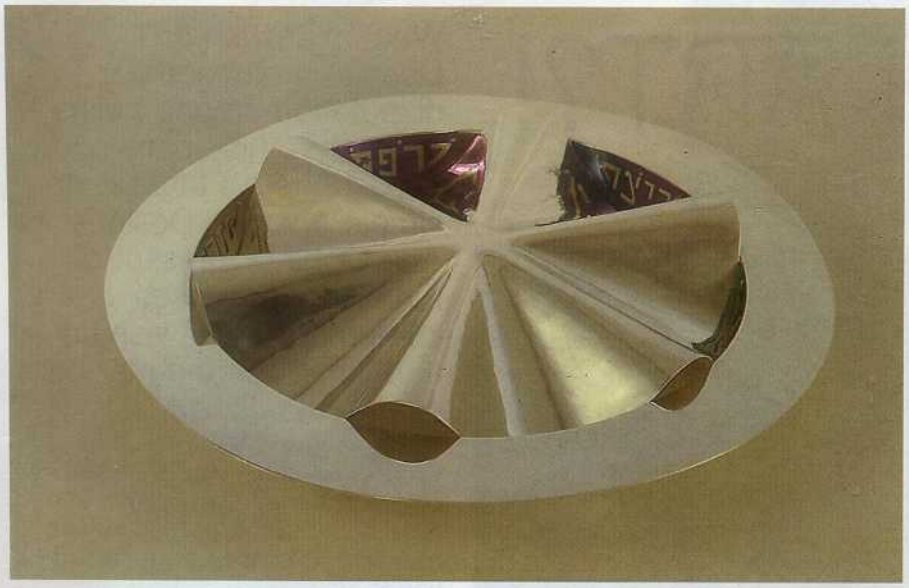

Above: Seder Plate, Sterling silver & titanium. Arie Ophir
Below: Zedaka Box, Sterling silver and enamel. Arie Ophir
למעלה: צלחת פסח, כסף וטיטניום. אריה אופיר
למטה: קופסת צדקה, כסף ואמייל. אריה אופיר

that he advocates a break from the past, or a rejection of influences which are not Israeli or Jewish. But, developing a local culture is of vital importance. "It just doesn't make sense for Jews not to create a culture of their own, when after such a long exile, we are finally living in a country that is our very own again".

To Ophir, Jewish ceremonial art is the most effective medium for spreading a facet of culture in Israel. Every home, whether religiously observant or secular, has Sabbath candlesticks or a Chanukah lamp. Few of the owners of such items are art collectors or artists, yet most of them are keen on their beauty. It is the designer's role to introduce them to new attitudes regarding form, proportion, harmony and textures.

The Chanukah lamp, becomes therefore, more than a device to commemorate a miracle. It serves as an object of aesthetic value, an element of the national culture. Unlike pure art, it has a functional aspect - it must be designed to enable the user to light the candles in a prescribed manner. Yet, there is more to it - it needs *hiddur* (adornment or glorification), which becomes a spiritual need. Thus the *mitzvah*, incorporating aesthetic design, becomes an art form belonging to a culture.

The artist, involved In the process of design, is influenced by various elements - his own background, nature, tradition, other artists' work etc. If the style of Jewish ceremonial art remains unchanged, it is

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— שם יש את הקשר הישיר עם הקבר
ברמה הגבוהה ביותר, בנוסף למפגש הבלתי אמצעי עם המעצבים. זהו מפגש פורה לכל הכיוונים.
בשנת 1972 החל אריה לנהל את