

New Holocaust Memorial at Meijer Gardens, Generously Given by The Pestka Family

The Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids received a generous gift from the Pestka Family in memory of their father, Henry, and the millions of Jews who perished in the Holocaust, for Grand Rapids' first Holocaust Memorial, located at the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park.

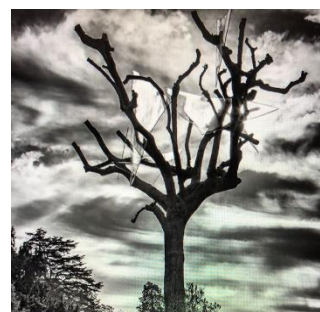
The selected sculpture is titled *Ways to Say Goodbye*, by the Israeli artist Ariel Schlesinger (1980-). Schlesinger is an accomplished sculptor, who in 2020 was commissioned to create a sculpture by the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt and the City of Frankfurt. *Ways to Say Goodbye* is an exceptional work of contemporary sculpture dealing with the themes of profound loss and grief and will beautifully serve as a memorial to Holocaust victims here in Western Michigan. *Ways to Say Goodbye* is a 20 foot tall cast aluminum tree that has sheets of glass between its branches. The cast is taken from a fig tree in Italy that the artist selected. In Jewish culture, the fruit tree is venerated as a source of life and new beginnings.

Meijer Gardens provides a safe and prominent space for the sculpture. Over 700,000 people visit the sculpture garden each year. The Federation, in conjunction with Meijer Gardens, plans to develop educational programs about the Holocaust in order to prevent future tragedies.

We thank the Pestka Family for their generosity and commitment to our Jewish community. On behalf of the Federation, we are grateful and inspired by this gift.



Linda, Steve, Alicia & Nathan Pestka



Ways to Say Goodbye, by Ariel Schlesinger