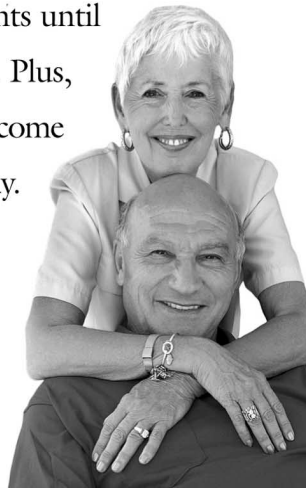




Your house isn't just a roof over your head, it's money in your pocket.

M&T's Reverse Mortgage.

With M&T's Reverse Mortgage, you can use the equity in your home to supplement your income - for anything you want. Best of all, there are no payments until your home is sold or your estate is settled. Plus, money from M&T's Reverse Mortgage is income tax free.\* Qualifying is easy, so call us today. (716) 848-7600 or 1-800-724-7575



\*Consult your tax advisor.



© 2002 M&T Mortgage Corporation

Ben Shahn & the Secrets of the Temple

By Robert Hirsch

Many people are aware of Temple Beth Zion at 805 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo, but few know its origins or about its hidden trove of historic and contemporary artistic works.

Buffalo's first synagogue was founded as an orthodox congregation in 1850. Temple Beth Zion, Buffalo's first Reform Jewish congregation was officially dedicated in 1865 on Niagara Street. In 1890 an exotic Byzantine style building with a cooper-covered, half-sphere dome was opened on the present Delaware Avenue site. This building was destroyed by fire in 1961. A new facility, designed by architect Max Abramovitz, was rebuilt in 1966. It features ten scalloped outside walls, symbolizing the Ten Commandments, which flare 15 degrees outward towards the sky. Artist Ben Shahn (1898 - 1969) was

commissioned to create two stained glass windows, an interior sculptural rendition of the Ten Commandment tablets, and a menorah.

Shahn's artistic reputation was set in 1932 with The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti series of paintings. Both the content and style of the work proclaimed his commitment to social realism and an agenda of political reform. Shahn was also involved with photography and many of his works were based on photographs. In the early 1930s Shahn's friend, photographer Walker Evans, taught him the basics of photography. Shahn's eye for social justice led him to become a photographer from 1935 through 1938 for the Farm Security Administration, whose mission was to inform the country about the plight of the rural poor during the Great Depression. As a Jewish artist living in New York City he was engaged in struggle for social change, but he never idealized or sentimentalized his subjects. He said it was



CENTER FOR ORTHOPEDICS

SPORTS MEDICINE • JOINT RECONSTRUCTION • ARTHROSCOPY

FRANK P. ALTIERI, M.D.
JAMES M. WOPPERER, M.D.
STEVEN P. BRADLEY, RPA

NON-SURGICAL & SURGICAL MANAGEMENT OF JOINT PAIN & ARTHRITIS

Board Certified in Orthopedic Surgery
Most Major Insurance Accepted

5320 Military Rd, Suite 107
Lewiston, NY 14092
716-297-1701

415 Tremont St.
N. Tonawanda, NY 14120
716-690-2355



AMERICAN MASONRY & CHIMNEY

ALL MASONRY WORK

BUILT, REPAIRED, RELINED, CLEANED, RESTORED

RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL

BRICK, BLOCK, STONE, STUCCO, MARBLE, CONCRETE,

24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE

FREE ESTIMATES AND INSPECTIONS

OVER 50 YEARS EXPERIENCE

LICENSED & INSURED

854-0590







Opposite: Temple windows

Left: Detail of Torah mantle

photos: Robert Hirsch

organ. Tinted glass windows in the ceiling further accent the play of light in the sanctuary, making it a major architectural theme. The open and soaring interior space reinforces this motif by encouraging people to visually follow the bush-hammered walls, which give the concrete surface an antique mottled effect, skyward.

Visitors may think that they have seen it all, but additional surprises wait. Beth Zion's caretaker, David Maldonado, can show you the Temple's Cofeld Judaic Museum whose purpose is to document, celebrate, explain, and interpret

"alright to have a soft heart, so long as your have a hard eye." Shahn sought a public art and painted several public murals that were done to serve social causes and move people to action. He combined art and document to fabricate work that could be seen and understood by people without any special training. His commitment to a moral life and public art made him a model artist to communicate the ideals of the Temple.

As one enters from the east, there is a foreshadowing of the Beth Zion's artistic contents. In the north corner there is a menorah on a pedestal, a candelabrum with six branches and a central socket, designed by Salvador Dali. Inside the sanctuary ones' eye is immediately drawn to Shahn's two stained glass windows, reaching a height of forty feet, which frame the front (west) and back (east) of the temple. The congregation faces the east wall window, which is behind the altar that is framed on both sides by the mosaic lettering of Shahn's tablets. This provides the setting for the Holy Ark where the sacred scrolls, Torahs, and the Five Books of Moses that reveal the law of God are housed. Above the Holy Ark hangs the Ner Tamid (eternal light), a symbol of the nearness of God and reverence for Torah. The Torah is read from a lectern in front of the ark that is shaped like an open book in honor of the Jewish commitment to study.

On the north side is Shahn's giant menorah, The Shabbat Candlebra, a seven-branched Menorah that represents the menorah in Solomon's Temple. The sanctuary seats 1,000 people and its balcony holds a 4,000-pipe



Continued on page 16

**STUDIO ARENA THEATRE**

*The*  
**MOUSE TRAP**

WRITTEN BY  
**AGATHA CHRISTIE**

DIRECTED BY  
**GEOFFREY SHERMAN**

This much fun should be criminal.

**DECEMBER 1-28**

**CALL NOW (716) 856-5650**  
or **1(800) 77STAGE**  
Visit us online: [www.studioarena.org](http://www.studioarena.org)

Production Sponsor: **M&T Bank**

**A law firm that stands out...**

*Suburban location, extended hours and personal service.*

*We practice law for your peace of mind.*

Estate Planning • Corporate • Real Estate • Elder Law • Personal Injury  
Criminal Law • Family Law • Taxation and Financial Planning

**HOGAN & WILLIG, PLLC**  
Attorneys at Law

One John James Audubon Parkway • Amherst, New York 14228 • 716/636-7600 • [hoganandwillig.com](http://hoganandwillig.com)

**ALTIMA**

**SHIFT\_prestige**

Best Selection • Lowest Price • Exemplary Service  
**3676 Sheridan at Millersport • 833-9888**

**MIKE BARNEY NISSAN** [www.mikebarneynissan.com](http://www.mikebarneynissan.com)

**PREMIER HEAT COMPANY**

FREE ESTIMATES  
**837-5400**

**SENIORS SAVE 10%**  
On Any Service Or Installation

**24 HOUR HEATING SERVICE**

"Your Full Service Heating & Cooling Contractor"

<b>FULL FURNACE TUNE-UP</b> \$35 <sup>00</sup>	<b>Aprilaire HUMIDIFIER INSTALLED</b> \$325 <sup>00</sup>	<b>SAVE \$350<sup>00</sup> FURNACE REPLACEMENT</b>
---	--	--