

## By the Grace of God

**The July tornado** that touched down on the campus of the Hebrew Home at Riverdale, uprooted trees, broke windows, and destroyed outdoor furniture, doing \$1 million in damage. But spared by the freak twister—only the second ever recorded in the Bronx, New York—was the Jacob Reingold Pavilion. Named for the institution's late vice chairman, who believed that art enriches the lives and improves the health of the elderly, the building now houses the Derfner Judaica Museum, a showplace for the collection that Reingold began amassing in the 1960's.

Louise Braverman Architect's 5,000-square-foot museum interior celebrates culture and religion while capitalizing on the Hudson River view. Display cabinets often run perpendicular to the floor-to-ceiling windows, facilitating a simultaneous appreciation of art objects and natural landscape. Where literal indoor-outdoor interplay isn't possible, translucent channel glass forms sun-drenched exhibition zones—for example, the main gallery's C-shape partition, which encircles a selection of Torahs.

Given the Hebrew Home's constituency, the Americans With Disabilities Act took on extra significance. Braverman says she was charged with making the space "ADA-more-than-compliant," a challenge that actually sparked imagination. Consider the gently sloping ramp. It's lined by cases containing Bauhaus-era plates and candlesticks, engaging the visitor regardless of age or ability.



**Clockwise from top:** At Louise Braverman Architect's Derfner Judaica Museum in the Bronx, New York, a cabinet holds a torched Torah that survived Nazi Germany's Kristallnacht in 1938. Silver plates and candlesticks showcased at wheelchair height. Quarter-sawn Douglas fir display cases. Channel glass encircling Torahs. ➤

