

# Wax Off

*by* Daniel Passamaneck

For a week I've put it off  
but now no more. The time has come  
to scrape the wax from my menorah.  
Layers of color perhaps might remind me  
of something uplifting -  
Instead it's just wax,  
inconveniently dribbled.  
The job goes slowly. Patience ebbs,  
harvesting more aggravation  
every time I wield my skewer.  
This whole thing is too much trouble  
for a job I'll soon undo  
with messy drips of new-bought candles  
bringing back the bygone nights,  
menorah glinting, crowned with flame,  
light eclipsing wax-scrape rage  
I won't recall this tiresome chore  
when festive candles blaze again  
But I don't care, it's irksome now,  
digging dross from candlesockets  
dredging clean the magen david  
thirty-six angles of painstaking detail  
it's delicate work but it has its own rhythm  
I do not realize at first  
that I've stopped feeling quite so nettled  
clearing out the long-cold wax  
gold, red, blue, a blended violet  
big chunks snapping cleanly off  
I find the work has calmed me down  
scrapings pile up to show me  
all the progress I have made,  
and flames that burned with joy last year

return to me their bright potential.  
Dunk it now in steaming water -  
tiny specks of parrafin  
float upwards to the placid surface;  
down below, the naked metal  
gleams in readiness again  
as if ablaze within the bucket.  
I am ready now as well:  
Bring on the latkes, dreydels, gelt -  
let's light candles.  
Flame is clean.

