

**Elyssa Wortzman**

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For my upcoming solo exhibition at the Koslowe Judaica Gallery in Westchester, NY, *Sanctity Through Sacrifice*, I delve into the ritual of sacrifice - from its religious undertones to its more contemporary, self-referential realities. Human beings have been making sacrifices for thousands of years. The sacrifice of living beings (animal, Isaac) became both an opportunity for trust and a practice of prayer. My interest lies in how we have transformed the traditional idea of animal or human sacrifice through psychology, mysticism and contemporary culture and what meaning the concept of sacrifice has today. Are the sacrifices we make today forms of personal prayer? What offerings do we give? To others? To ourselves? To the Creative Force of the Universe? How can offering something (ego, time, hopes) become the opening to receive more (children, love, insight, wisdom) or a narrowing for receiving less (eating disorders, isolation, depression, purposefulness)? Do we need to have a regular practice of "sacrifice" to keep our channel of connection (to others, the Divine) clear to receive? Is art sacred? Is the process of making art, making holy? In this exhibition, I begin with the root meaning of the word "sacrifice" - to make holy - playing with the relationship between human creation, here in the form of art, and Divine creation. I look at three areas of sacrifice in daily life: connectivity, to each other and to the Creative Force; self, in terms of our bodies, emotions and psyche; and dreams, both personal and collective. In the end, the exhibition challenges us to consider our notion of sacredness and sacrifice so that our personal sacrifices become pathways to greater internal and external awareness, or in Hebrew, *korbanot*, usually translated as sacrifice but literally meaning "coming closer".

For more information about this exhibition, contact Amy Levine-Kennedy, Curator, [amyruth67@aol.com](mailto:amyruth67@aol.com)

Gallery Reception \* Tuesday, September 11, 2012 \* 7:45 p.m. The exhibition will run from September 11 to mid-November.

To arrange a program our tour for your group, contact Elyssa Wortzman, at [mail@elyssawortzman.com](mailto:mail@elyssawortzman.com)

Working with Jewish themes and rituals, Wortzman tries to deepen our relationship to traditional texts or prayers through an emotional and spiritual response. She produces Jewish art prints, Torah mantles, bimah covers and other ritual/sacred objects.