

## **Praise for *Embroidery and Sacred Text*:**

"Rachel Braun's sabbatical project yields a treasury of embroidery, combining the precision of a mathematical mind with the spiritual depth of a true artist. Her embroideries commemorate life cycle events such as bar mitzvahs and births, but also comment on Torah texts and the experience of the Israelites in the wilderness. Rachel's embroideries walk us deeper into the texts, and her brilliant commentaries open up the "blackwork" that underlies her creative vision. Along the way she invents five new Hebrew fonts, designs five new English alphabets, and reproduces the templates for her designs. For anyone curious about how art, mathematics, and Judaics can be gloriously woven together, this book is a delight."

-Rabbi Gilah Langner, Washington, DC

"Rachel Braun's embroidery design fuses intellect and spirituality with the visual beauty and sensual pleasure of the fiber arts. As one who has worked for many years to develop a Jewish iconographic vocabulary in the manuscript arts, I particularly appreciate her remarkable use of mathematics in blackwork embroidery patterns to embody and express profound Jewish thought. What a pleasure to sink the hands and eyes into this elegant work!"

-Debra Band, artist and author, *Kabbalat Shabbat: the Grand Unification*

"Acknowledging repetition as insistence, Rachel Braun stitches her interpretations of sacred texts. With exquisite craft as a statistician, needleworker, and text interpreter, she insists on each stitch--its mathematically calculated placement, its sources of inspiration, its relation to the power of the whole piece--as she insists on each line of text, including its multiple meanings, sounds, and implications for our own relation to the Whole. Rachel is sophisticated and masterful while simultaneously straightforward and generous. She readily shares her knowledge and insights, providing accessible explanations while also conveying the joy of designing and drashing in thread."

-Amy Smith, handweaver, Blue Feet Studio, Arrowsic, Maine

## **About Rachel's programs:**

"Artist and mathematician Rachel Braun's creativity and depth of knowledge led to a lively conversation about her art and the long tradition of interpreting Jewish text into new forms. The event attracted a large audience of men and women ranging from older scholars and community members to college students, all of whom were captivated by Braun's explanations of the hidden patterns in her art and the surprising reasons for her holding a Guinness World Record for her collection of graph paper. Braun's art is graceful and complex, and she speaks with both real passion and an infectious sense of humor. She is truly one of a kind."

-Lisa Fishbayn Joffe, Director, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University