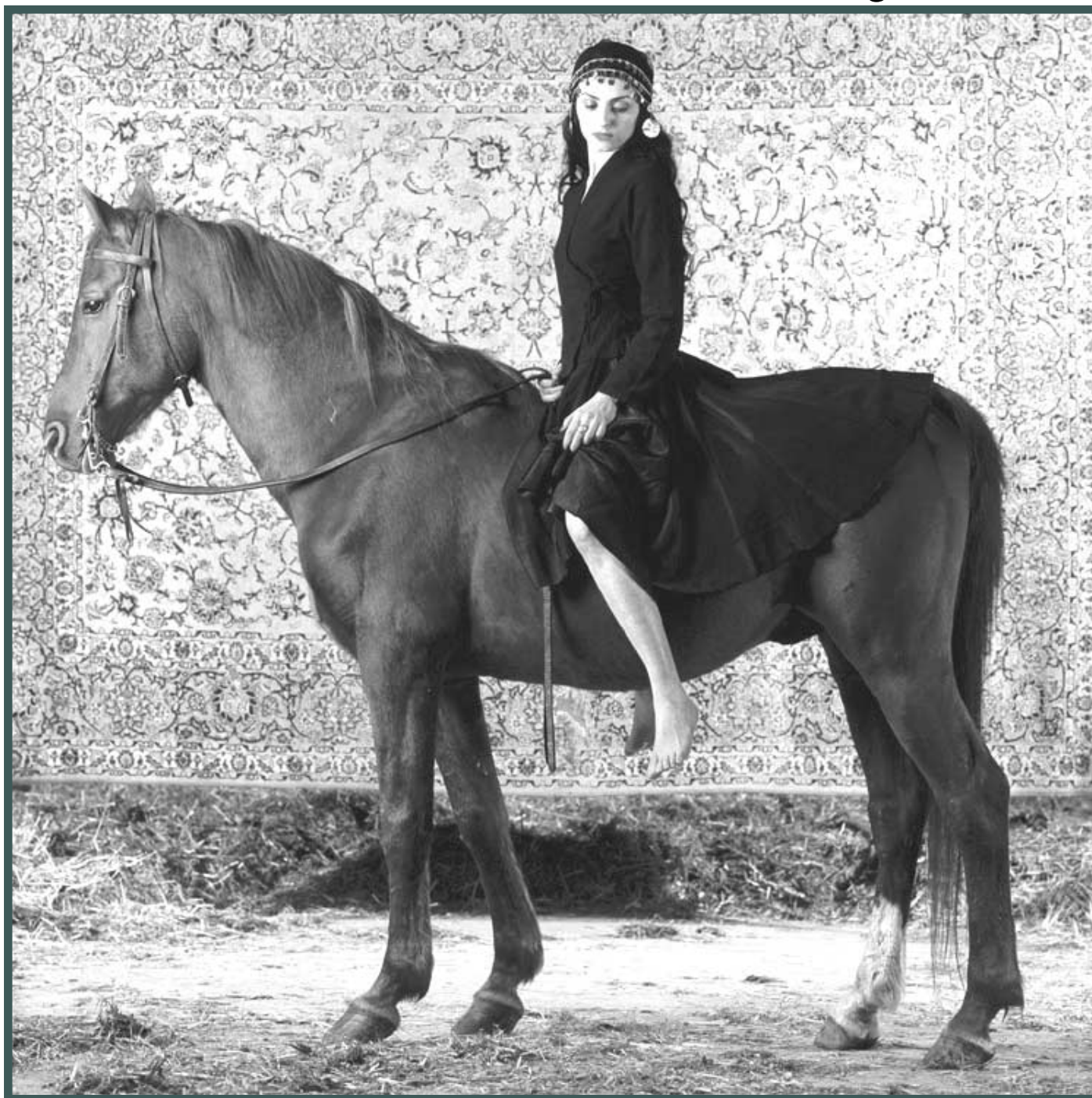


# Jewish Culture News

THE PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF JEWISH CULTURE NEWS IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF THE JEREMIAH KAPLAN FAMILY FOUNDATION.

## ARTISTS FRAMED!

*Too Jewish or Not Jewish Enough?* page 3



### Inside

Going public with Israeli art – where to see it, where to buy it.  
Documentaries explore identity in Former Soviet Union, the Bronx Coops, Israel and Brazil.  
Cruising through the Sephardic past in the Caribbean.

# Looking Forward: Visual Musings



**Richard Siegel**  
Executive Director

**It can be argued that much of what is considered contemporary modern art has been invented, in large part, by Jews in order to posit a new beginning to art history.**

Since the cover story of this issue deals with visual arts, I thought I'd add a comment or two inspired by my recent trip to Italy. Italy *is* visual arts: architecture, painting, sculpture, walls, ceilings and floors, inside and outside. And most of it, or so it seems, is Christian art, not that there's anything wrong with that. Being there, however, one understands in a visceral way what it means as a Jew to say that the history of Western art begins with Christian art. It means that we are written out – and have written ourselves out – of the history of Western visual art, quite unlike our position in the history of Western literature or of Western philosophy. This makes it hard for us to find a place for Jewish art now.

It can be argued that much of what is considered contemporary modern art has been invented, in large part, by Jews in order to posit a new beginning to art history. A beginning, not based on Christian ideas about the Supreme Being, but based on the universal character of the human being – mortal, fallible, capable of loving, capable sometimes of thinking, capable of the most hideous crimes imaginable, capable of the most beautiful sounds imaginable. It is not entirely coincidental that some of the major shapers of American modern art were Jewish, whether artists like Rothko, Nevelson and Newman or critics like Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg. They were all breaking away from hundreds of years of Christian art on the one side and

Jewish prohibitions against making the visual real on the other. They were iconoclasts, pushing both traditions to their natural conclusions. Interestingly, they managed to both break the bonds of Christian art and create the basis for Jewish art at the same time.

In pre-modern times, however, you have to admit that the Jews were very marginal players in the world of visual arts. And I wonder, what have we lost in severing this limb? I know all the arguments for and against the Second Commandment; I know all the convenient rationales saying that since we were a literate people, we didn't need visuals. As if there was only one way to learn through the eyes, and that was through words and not images. The reality, as we now know, is that we have multiple intelligences, that we learn in many different ways, books being just one of them. What have we not learned because we didn't fully develop our visual language?

It is hard to walk into some of those churches and not be totally knocked out. Saturated in colors. Enveloped by visual symbols. Surrounded by vaulted ceilings and carved columns. The grandeur. The passion. The beauty. I don't think I could daven there, but I could definitely meditate. And at the same time, it was too much: too much stimulation, too many focal points, too many messages, too many stories, too many styles. So are we lucky that we avoided the excesses? Or are we diminished because we never experienced the sublime expressions, rare but nonetheless sublime?

I think historically, we were diminished. In the present, however, we are lucky because we now have artists who are bringing the pictorial "back" into Jewish art. There is definitely a

place for symbolic art, because it is through the symbols that wisdom gets passed along, and the more symbol sets one has, the richer one's life is. So for individuals, so for peoples.

As a concluding note, I am delighted that the National Foundation for Jewish Culture received a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to produce a series of public programs over the course of the year in communities across the country in honor of the 350th Anniversary of Jewish Life in America. [See story page 15.] The programs will explore the theme of American Jewish icons or "key texts," many of which are visual. We expect that this will be an opportunity to further grapple with some of these questions, as the Jewish cultural experience in America embraces the wide range from abstract expressionism to social realism.

## Jewish Culture News

IS PUBLISHED BY THE  
**National Foundation for  
Jewish Culture**

330 SEVENTH AVENUE, 21ST FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10001  
TELEPHONE: (212) 629-0500  
FAX: (212) 629-0508  
EMAIL: NFJC@jewishculture.org  
www.jewishculture.org

### President

CHARLOTTE NEWBERGER

### Chairman of the Board

JAMES AUGUST

### Executive Director

RICHARD A. SIEGEL

### Editor

AMY STONE

### Art Director

BARBARA TAFF

JCN IS FUNDED IN PART  
BY A GRANT FROM  
THE JEREMIAH KAPLAN FOUNDATION

## Contents

**3** Cover story: Too Jewish or Not Jewish Enough?

**4** Israeli Artists / U.S. Collectors

**5** Q & A with Ronnie Heyman Prize Winner Hanan Harchol

**6** Film Fund Recipients

**7** Jewish Image Awards

Jewish Film Festival Conference

**8** Jewish Cultural Achievement Awards in the Arts

**10** Jewish Cultural Achievement Awards in Scholarship

**12** Celebrating 350 Years of Jewish Life in America

**14** Patrons Circle Events / New Board Members

**16** Looking Back

Cover: photograph by Israeli artist Tal Shochat from "Queen of the Night" series. Courtesy of Andrea Meislin Gallery, New York City.



# Visual Arts



Shoshana Dentz's "Identity Unknown"

## Artists Framed! 'Too Jewish' or 'Not Jewish Enough'

By Amy Stone

**W**hen a curator of The Jewish Museum in New York feels uncomfortable exhibiting a major body of work because it's "too Jewish," you know he's hit psychic pay dirt. That was back in 1989. The work was Archie Rand's series of 54 paintings inspired by the yearly cycle of Torah readings, and the curator was Norman Kleeblatt.

Kleeblatt had the courage and integrity to dig into his discomfort and create the 1996 show "Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities." In Kleeblatt's words, it was an exhibition about marginalization and the paradoxes of identity for Jewish artists. In

Moses respectfully done on vellum overlays; and the unrepentant consumerism of Cary Leibowitz and Rhonda Lieberman's "Chanel Hanukkah," with the requisite number of lipsticks mounted on a faux Chanel quilted gold handbag.

It's been eight years since "Too Jewish?" and the art world has moved on. Rand, 54, undeterred by what he considers the stigma of identification as a Jewish artist, has tackled the 613 mitzvot. In fact, he's at work on a total of 700 canvases. He says he'll need an airplane hangar to exhibit them all.

Aylon, 73, continues her God wrestling. In March, her interactive "Digital Liberation of G-d" was

installed at San Francisco's new JCC. Exhibit visitors can search for specific texts at a nearby computer station and leave comments that go into a database. A traveling exhibit is set for San Diego.

Lieberman, at 40something, continues cheerfully demolishing the wall between Pop culture and high art. She's currently involved in what she describes as *tikkun olam*, repairing the world with "Cats-in-Residence." The inter-species hangout for people and stray cats is planned for 2005 at New York's non-profit White Box gallery.

But even with the hecksher of The Jewish Museum's "Too Jewish?" show, Jewish collectors still shy away from Jewish art. Rand has a theory about

### Younger artists seem less concerned that creating 'Jewish art' will brand them for life.

the multi-cultural surge of the 1980s, artists identified as African-American, Hispanic-American, feminist, gay, lesbian had already explored these issues. Jewish artists, especially the successful, assimilated males in the art establishment, were not part of this identity search, unless they were expressing their marginalization as something other than Jewish.

The watershed Jewish Museum exhibit showed 18 artists' works, including Rand's "The Chapter Paintings," where he combined the elegant Minimalism of Barnett Newman with Surrealism, Pop and Hebrew sources; Helène Aylon's "The Liberation of G-d," with pink highlighting of sexist, misogynist and cruel phrases in the Five Books of



Cary Leibowitz and Rhonda Lieberman's "Chanel Hanukkah"

# Visual Arts



Left: Archie Rand's "Samson, Judges 16:28" from "The 19 Diaspora Paintings"  
Above: Samuel Erenberg's "Passover (Four Questions)"



this: "People are terrified of identifying to themselves as Jews, not just to the outside world. Paintings auto-graph your architecture with belief."

But Rand's work is being shown – and bought. The Hebrew University College-Jewish Institute of Religion Museum in New York is showing Rand's "The 19 Diaspora Paintings" from Oct. 14 through Jan. 5. The series combines action-packed 1950s-

style comics with scriptural fragments.

Younger artists seem less concerned than Rand that creating "Jewish art" will brand them for life. In "118-60 Metropolitan Avenue," Joan Linder, 33, the Ronnie Heyman Prize winner in 2002, paints the world of her grandparents without sentimentality. As ArtNews Executive Editor Robin Cembalest puts it, she's "affectionate, yet clear-eyed" toward her Judaism.

Artist and filmmaker Shari Rothfarb, 36, embraces and critiques female Jewish ritual with her installation and video "Water Rites." Citing Aylon as an inspiration, Rothfarb built a tiled mikvah pool and projected her video onto the water. The video weaves together evocative images of the female body and ancient mikvah sites with the written and spoken words of Jewish women describing their relationship to the mikvah ritual. The mikvah pool has been shown in galleries in New York, Santa Fe, Austria, Germany and Italy, and is in the permanent collection of the Jewish Museum in New York.

Using paint and the familiar pattern of the keffiyah, Shoshana Dentz, 36, grapples with the political meaning of the fabric and her position as a Jewish artist working with such a loaded symbol. Dentz feels entitled to the subject matter as an American Jew. How would she feel about Palestinian artists painting yarmulkes or the Holocaust? "I would love it. I would think there's a mingling of really complex issues. ... I'm trying to pull people into the not-obvious, the scary, the messy stuff." The art world has been receptive. Dentz has had two solo shows this year, at the Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery in New York and Angles Gallery in Santa Monica.

Continuing where The Jewish Museum's 1996 show left off, 23 Southern California Jewish artists will be exhibiting their work in "Too Jewish and Not Jewish Enough." Samuel Erenberg's painting "Passover (Four Questions)" neatly straddles the show's title. The elegantly Minimalist work is made from bitters, matzo, spices, acrylic and oil on linen mounted on wood panels.

All the artists belong to the Jewish Artists Initiative. The group was organized by Ruth Weisberg, dean of the USC School of Fine Arts. She felt the need to take action after the NFJC "Visions of Jewish Meaning" retreat three years ago.

The show, opening Sept. 28 at the Jewish Federation of Greater Los

## Israeli Artists / U.S. Collectors

**W**hen Reuven Rubin's dreamy 1920s landscapes of pre-State Israel come up for sale, the works go for \$200,000 to \$300,000. But when it comes to contemporary Israeli artists, religion and politics can slow down collectors. A breakthrough occurred this past November when four friends and serious collectors – Andy (Andrea) and Charles Bronfman and Dale and Doug Anderson – brought the work of 10 Israeli artists to Chicago's renowned SOFA, the International Expositions of Sculpture Objects and Functional Art. They also brought many of the artists, as Doug Anderson says, "Because we wanted Americans to look at Israelis as artists, not as warriors."

They named their venture AIDA, Association of Israel's Decorative Arts (<http://www.aidaarts.org>). Their SOFA Special Exhibit of ceramics, porcelain, fiber collage and jewelry sold, and nine of the 10 artists were signed up by major American galleries. Anita Wornick, an NFJC board member and AIDA supporter, says the Bronfman-Anderson do-it-yourself effort has been "supported nationally by people who want to see Israeli artists shown in the U.S." In fact, AIDA will be back in Chicago this November, with AIDA selecting artists living and working in Israel with assistance from professionals at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Racine Art Museum, Sotheby's Israel, and the Eretz Israel Museum in Tel Aviv. In January, an AIDA spin-off will be in London at COLLECT 2005, The International Art Fair for Contemporary Objects.

When it comes to paintings, curators and gallery owners may shy away from Israeli artists although they are part of the global art world. The way artist, writer and curator Cheryl Kaplan sees it, "The more aggressively the art world is exposed to Israeli art, the less Israeli art will be marginalized. A focused plan should include an international dialogue and debate between Israeli artists, curators and dealers and their counterparts in Europe, the States and the rest of the world."

This past spring, Sotheby's increased visibility with Israeli Art Week in New York. Along with special events, a number of New York galleries showed Israeli artists at the same time as Sotheby's annual auction of Israeli art. The showcasing was similar to Sotheby's enterprise 20 years ago to build the market for Latin American artists.

One of the unexpected results of Israeli Art Week was the opening of the only New York gallery concentrating on contemporary Israeli photographers. In fact, the Andrea Meislin Gallery in trendy Chelsea may prove that photography is the Israeli art form that's not "too Jewish" for collectors to live with. (See cover.) The way Meislin puts it, "Photography is a cooler contemporary art form. It's in a different realm from a Chagall-like oil painting of a wedding scene. It's a contemporary hip picture that happens to be about Israel."



# Hanan Harchol

## Wins 2004 Ronnie Heyman Prize for Emerging Jewish Visual Artist

Angeles Bell Family Gallery, grew out of eight months of discussion by the Jewish Artists Initiative. Participants range in age from early twenties to late 70s and represent a diversity of cultures, including Iraq, Israel and Southern California. The show runs through December and can be viewed online at the website of the Los Angeles Jewish Federation ([www.jewishla.org/html/bellfamilygallery.htm](http://www.jewishla.org/html/bellfamilygallery.htm)).

One of the show's organizers, Victor Raphael, descended from Ladino-speaking Sephardic grandparents, says, "The fact that you identify yourself as a Jew and as a creative artist has many dimensions and complexities. We've all been told at one time or another that our work is 'too Jewish' or 'not Jewish enough.'"

Far removed from the Jewish questions imposed by artists on themselves and by the viewing public come the devil-may-care approaches of the new traveling exhibit "100 Artists See God." First exhibited by San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum, the Independent Curators International show of works by artists of all faiths and no faith approaches God with irony and humor – God seen in a dishwasher, God in a well-stocked medicine cabinet.

Nancy Schwartzman, associate program director for visual arts at the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, suggests, "The struggle to 'see God' is a Jewish struggle because of our laws forbidding the figure in art and our comfort intellectually with discussing and grappling with the divine."

As Jewish artists appear to feel increasingly comfortable embracing ambivalence when it comes to "too Jewish" or "not Jewish enough," Dean Weisberg throws out a challenge to Jewish curators of mainstream museum and gallery shows: "If the work is Jewish, they think it should be in Jewish museums. They would not say to an African-American artist that their work should be in African-American museums. There's discomfort among mainstream Jewish curators and they need to get over it."

Picture the artist as a hyper energetic 34-year-old kibbutz born, New Jersey bred Israeli American. Both his parents – now divorced – were born on kibbutzim, children of Eastern European parents. Their son the artist draws them, animates them, and recreates their nagging, bragging voices. Not part of his oeuvre is his sister the computer science professor.

Harchol's third floor walk-up in the Chelsea section of Manhattan is production headquarters. He animates his pen and ink drawings using Adobe Aftereffects and Photoshop. The autobiographical animations have appeared in eight recent Jewish and non-Jewish film festivals. The dark side of the funny, poignant autobiographical animation is Harchol's ink drawings of dog-headed humans.

The Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion Museum in New York recently exhibited Harchol's giant installation "Witnessing the Sacrifice." The ten-by-eight-foot multimedia installation stars his mother with a video screen in her womb showing Harchol's father-son animation "The Haircut." The work is bordered with biblical quotes from "The Binding of Isaac" and Samson and Delilah.

This past June, Harchol was awarded the Ronnie Heyman Prize for an Emerging Jewish Visual Artist. The award to an artist creating a body of work that reflects the Jewish experience is now in its second year and carries a prize of \$2,500. This year's panel consisted of Robin Cembalest, executive editor of ArtNews; Michael Danoff, curator of the Neuberger, Berman Gallery; Tobi Kahn, visual artist; Norman Kleeblatt, curator of The Jewish Museum in New York; and Archie Rand, painter, Presidential Professor of Art, Brooklyn College, City University of New York, and former chair of Columbia University's Visual Arts Division.

### Is there a common theme to your animation, drawing, painting and installations?

What I'm interested in is the psychology of relationships. What better source than the family. Jewish culture is tremendously rich in analyzing relationships. It's some of the most poignant, universal humor.

### What are you currently working on?

A 22-minute pilot for an animated series for TV. It's about an Israeli-American family where the parents are

divorced. The mother is looking for a man. The father is on JDate. All the action is seen through the eyes of their son the strolling guitarist. In fact that's how I support my work as an artist. I perform 20 hours a week as a guitarist at the Rainbow Room, Tavern on the Green, and Bice Ristorante.

Once the pilot is done, I intend to show it anywhere that will have it. I want to continue to bridge the gap between high and low art.

### Are your animations totally personal?

Everything is based on actual experiences or conversations. It's just my luck that I have a father who's not only Eastern European – nothing is ever good enough, the shame, the guilt – but he's also Israeli – with the bluntness or what he calls "not being phony." On top of that, my father is a nuclear physicist. He is trained to understand the universe. When you get all of that in one character, it's

bound to be hysterical. Or for a young boy, frightening and overwhelming. I have found that the darker aspects of my narratives become more accessible when I approach them through humor. Another important layer in my work is that I get to actually "be" my parents, by drawing them and impersonating their voices.

### What about the black droppings in your drawings?

I shy away from explaining the "meaning" of my drawings because it tends to limit the possibility for personal interpretations. I will say that I intend their content to be connected to shame. I see shame as a prevalent theme in the Jewish experience. Shame is also a key ingredient in Jewish humor – making fun of feelings of shame. For a long time I was trying to make artwork about fear. But it's too difficult to express. But shame can very effectively be expressed, and it's inextricably linked to fear. Humor that's based on shame is, in my opinion, the closest an artist can get to actually addressing fear.

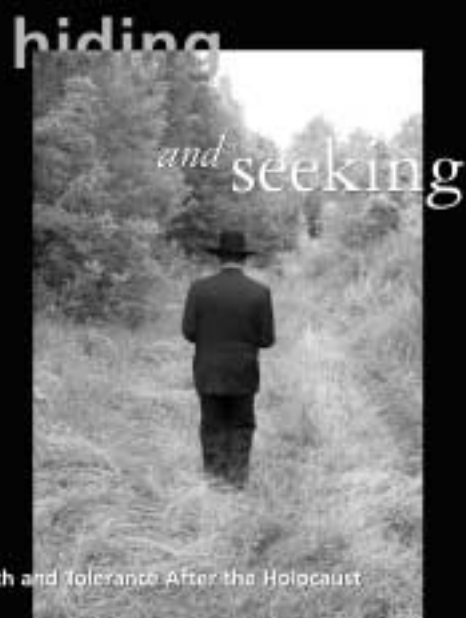
### And the Ronnie Heyman Prize?

Ultimately, the whole existence of the Ronnie Heyman Prize is a statement that it's OK to make Jewish artwork. It's a tremendous honor to receive the prize and I treat it as a responsibility that reaffirms my commitment to making meaningful work that addresses the Jewish experience as an important part of the universal social fabric.



"The Haircut"

# 2004 Grant Recipients for Jewish Documentary Filmmaking



**T**he Fund for Jewish Documentary Filmmaking, established in 1996 with a lead grant from Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation, supports the creation of documentary films and videos promoting thoughtful consideration of Jewish history, culture, identity and contemporary issues for diverse public audiences. This year's panel consisted of Patricia Erens, professor of film studies at Northwestern University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Jay Rosenblatt, film fund awardee for *King of the Jews*; Justine Shapiro, film fund awardee for *Promises*; Janet Sternburg, filmmaker, visual artist and scholar; Peter L. Stein, executive director of the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; Kenneth Turan, film critic for the Los Angeles Times; Margot Winchester, film producer and partner in Philanthro Films; and Michael Renov, professor of critical studies at USC School of Cinema-Television.

***Keep Not Silent, Ilil Alexander***

Three Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox women, all lesbians, fight for self-fulfillment and acceptance within the confines of their homes and their Jerusalem communities. Not a cry against society but a search for love in a traditional society, the film is reminiscent of *Trembling Before G-d* from a female perspective.

***Let My People Go, Laura Bialis***

The first retrospective film to chronicle the movement to free Soviet Jewry, *Let My People Go* documents the stories of activists in the United States and within the Soviet Union. These are passionate people dedicated to changing the policies of a super power.

***At Home in Utopia, Michal Goldman***

The United Workers Cooperative Colony – the “Coops” – was a radical utopian community growing out of the ideals of secular Jewish immigrants in the 1920s. *At Home in Utopia* documents how a powerful way of Jewish life was shaped and reshaped over three decades.

***Neturei Karta: Guardians of the City, Susan Rivo***

The video documents an Ultra-Orthodox Jewish movement, its religiously based opposition to the State of Israel, and surprising political alliance with Palestinians and their supporters. The documentary delves into the complex history of the creation of the State of Israel and into questions central to Jewish belief and identity.

***Stalin and the Jews, Alan Rosenthal***

The one-hour film for television examines Stalin's attack on Soviet Jewry and Jewish culture following World War II. The initially supportive relationship ended with the murder of 25 Yiddish writers and intellectuals, rumors of plans to send hundreds of thousands of Jews to Siberia, and the arrests and executions following the infamous Doctors' Plot.

***Hiding and Seeking, Menachem Daum and Oren Rudavsky***

After challenging his observant Jewish sons living in Jerusalem to be more tolerant, Menachem Daum seeks to educate them on a trip to his own father and father-in-law's hometowns in Poland. An unexpected encounter overturns assumptions.

***Kiddush With Cachaça: Jewish Roots and Revival in the Brazilian Backlands, Jeremy Siefer***

The documentary explores the controversial emergence in Northeastern Brazil of self-professed Marranos, descendants of Sephardic Jews forcibly converted to Christianity during the Inquisition. Siefer investigates the improvised nature of religious identity of seekers and preachers, including a fledgling Marrano-Jewish congregation.

***Gett: Sentenced to Marriage, Anat Zuria***

From the director of the award-winning and controversial documentary *Tebora (Purity)* comes this provocative documentary of three Orthodox women fighting an uphill battle in Israel's rabbinic courts to divorce their husbands and gain their freedom.



*At Home in Utopia*

## Vote for the Top 10 Great Jewish Films

In celebration of 350 years of Jewish life in America and in conjunction with the fourth annual Jewish Image Awards in Film and Television, the NFJC is sponsoring a web based contest to determine the “Top 10 Great Jewish Films.” Votes can be cast at the NFJC Website ([www.jewishculture.org](http://www.jewishculture.org)) through Oct. 5. Winners will be announced at the Oct. 11 Jewish Image Awards ceremony in Beverly Hills and posted on the NFJC website .

Jewish Image Awards Selections Committee Co-Chair David Tausik said, “While it's hard to find consensus on what defines a film as great and even harder to find consensus on what might define a film as Jewish, these cinematic landmarks embody the values, culture and experience of American Jews. We hope the list will throw a spotlight on important films which have enjoyed little recent exposure, whether due to the passage of time or the challenging nature of their subject matter.”



## Fourth Annual Jewish Image Awards

Special honorees along with winners in eight categories will be honored at the Fourth Annual Jewish Image Awards in Film and Television on Oct. 11 at The Beverly Hilton Hotel. The awards recognize industry professionals and film and television productions which portray the depth and complexity of the Jewish experience.

### Award Recipients

**Narrative Film** – *Angels in America* (HBO)

**Documentary Film** – *Hiding and Seeking* (ITVS/ First Run Features)

**Television Episode** – *The Simpsons*, “Today I Am a Clown” (20th Century Fox Television)

**Female Character in Film** – **Eva Amurri** as Cassandra in *Saved!* (MGM/United Artists)

**Female Character in TV** – **Kristin Davis** as Charlotte York in *Sex and the City* (HBO/TBS)

**Male Character in Film** – **Ben Shenkman** as Louis Ironson in *Angels in America* (HBO)

**Male Character in TV** – **Jeffrey Tambor** as George Bluth Sr. in *Arrested Development* (20th Century Fox Television/Imagine TV)

**Cross-Cultural Production** – *Paper Clips* (Miramax)

### Special Awards

**Tisch Industry Leadership Award** – **Mark Gordon** has produced over 45 motion pictures and television programs in the last 25 years. Among his credits are *The Day After Tomorrow*, *Speed* and *Saving Private Ryan*, for which he received an Academy Award nomination. He also produced the Emmy award winning *The War Between The Classes* and *Nothing But Sun*, the critically acclaimed Holocaust documentary that he directed. Mr. Gordon's current productions include *Casanova* for Disney, the HBO film *Warm Springs*, *Prime* for Universal and the television dramas *Lax* for NBC and *Grey's Anatomy* for ABC. He serves on the boards of the Producers Guild of America, Teach for America and the Virginia Film Festival.

**Creative Spirit Award** – **Josh Schwartz**, creator and executive producer of “The O.C.”

**The MorningStar Commission Marlene Adler Marks Woman of Inspiration Award** **Caryn Mandabach**, executive producer of *The Cosby Show*, *Roseanne*, *3rd Rock From the Sun*, *That '70s Show* and *Grounded for Life*.

# splash!



From left: Steven Weber, Josh Schwartz, Ricki Lake and Howard Bragman

On June 21, the NFJC's Los Angeles Entertainment Industry Council made a splash as it kicked off the 2004 Jewish Image Awards in Film and Television. The poolside event was hosted by Josh Schwartz, creator and executive producer of the new Fox hit “The O.C.” and this year's Creative Spirit Award recipient, along with talk show queen Ricki Lake. The

event was at the home of NFJC board member and Jewish Image Awards Co-Chair Howard Bragman. Awards Selection Committee member Andrea King gave the crowd coming attractions for the Oct. 11 awards presentations and Steven Weber retold the touching story of his Jewish Image Award statue proudly placed in his home, which he endearingly refers to as his “Jimmy” Award.

## Fourth Conference of Jewish Film Festivals

Five leaders of major North American Jewish film festivals will be sharing their expertise at the NFJC's Fourth Conference of Jewish Film Festivals Nov. 4-7 in Brookline, Mass. The conference will be followed by the Boston Jewish Film Festival, an opportunity for conference participants to screen films for their own festivals.

Conference sessions include “The Right Mix: Curating a Film Festival,” chaired by Aviva Weintraub, director of the New York Jewish Film Festival; “Jewish Film Festivals: Just a ‘Gateway’ to Affiliation?” chaired by Peter Stein, executive director of the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; “X, Y & Z – Outreach to the New Generations,” chaired by Joshua Ford, director of the

Washington Jewish Film Festival; and “Deconstructing Controversy,” chaired by Kaj Wilson, artistic director of the Boston Jewish Film Festival.

Morey Altman, director of the Vancouver Jewish Film Festival, will conduct a workshop for larger festivals. Stefanie Shulman, director of cultural arts at the Sid Jacobson JCC on Long Island, will lead a workshop on “Small Budgets, Big Challenges: Festival Planning and Marketing Techniques for Small Festivals.”

The conference will be held at Temple Ohabei Shalom. Conference cost is \$150. Registration closes Oct. 4. For information, contact Dana Schneider at the NFJC, 212-629-0500 ext. 212 or at [dschneider@jewishculture.org](mailto:dschneider@jewishculture.org).

# 2004

# Jewish Cultural Ac

## From Tony Kushner's introduction to Daryl Roth

I've always been mystified by any love for the theater, my own or anyone else's, because I deeply believe in the essential love people have for truth, and the theater seems so often to me to have nothing to do with the truth. And truth be told, even when theater is great and strikes truth like a bell, it's still truth ringing in a theater. And without falsehood, theater couldn't exist any more than books could exist without paper or oil paintings exist without linseed oil. Truth traffics in lies in the theater. That's what makes the theater matter and also what makes it always a little less than healthy. I really believe this. I don't think it's healthy, but what redeems it, what redeems theater's essential and unavoidable insalubrity is love, real love, real deep love, not fake, narcissistic oh-aren't-I-fabulous-loving-you-the-way-I-do love, but love that costs and love that hurts and love that ravages us and ages us and drives us closer to our own mortality and to unbearable beauty.

The theater is only redeemed when it's loved like that – and that's how Daryl Roth loves the theater. And so we who have been the beneficiaries of her deep and ardent love of this preposterous and morally questionable and insalubrious and utterly essential enterprise thank her from the bottom of our hearts, not just for making our work possible but through transforming imagination, taste, energy and money into passion and, finally, into something much more meaningful, more *menschlakh*, more holy than beauty, into redemption.

## The National Foundation for Jewish Culture's June 7 in New York City at the

### Patron of the Arts Daryl Roth



Daryl Roth and Tony Kushner

I believe that theater is essential. It is food and water. We cannot survive without it. Theater is revelation. It is illumination. It is healing. Theater offers us a home to examine our fears and our joys. It offers us a sanctuary in which to confront our selves and our world. I feel my role as a producer is to support, protect and champion the creator's work. Nothing can move us, challenge us or enlighten us quite like an experience in the theater. I have tried to use the theater to explore issues of my own personal Jewish identity and community.

### Performing Arts Wendy Wasserstein



Wendy Wasserstein and Edward Albee

I made my stage debut in the second grade at the Yeshiva of Flatbush as Queen Esther. My parents took me to plays. We saw everything. I think the first play I saw was *My Fair Lady*. I remember seeing *No Time for Sergeants* and thinking, "Where are the girls?" I remember seeing musicals and thinking, "I really like the best friend who can't get a man and who is funny." I found the ingénue sort of boring. My imagination ran to the theater because my parents, on a Saturday, would say, "Let's take in a show."

Six or seven years ago, I went to Congress to lobby for funding for the arts. Basically, they said, "We love the arts but government shouldn't fund it and, anyway, don't you think health and education are more important?" To me, very much, the arts are health and education.





# Achievement Awards in the Arts

15th Annual Jewish Cultural Achievement Awards in the Arts took place at the Plaza Hotel. Below are excerpts from the event speeches.

## Visual Arts Tobi Kahn



Carol Brennglass Spinner and Tobi Kahn

At the age of six, I knew I wanted to be a painter. I do believe that art comes, hopefully, from a very pure place. I knew when I became an artist I wanted art to be transformative. If one day you have a child who decides he or she wants to be an artist, embrace them. Tell them how wonderful they are ... how lucky they are.

## Literary Arts Anne Roiphe



Anne and Dr. Herman Roiphe

How are we going to survive with that great hate in the world mounting against us? As long as we keep turning out books, poems, plays and criticism and thinking, and as long as we keep turning out art ... we will be protected from the outside. Because we will keep on going ... we will keep on giving to the world what it is we give best.

## Cultural Leadership Richard Siegel



John Ruskay and Richard Siegel

My role at the NFJC has been as CCO: Chief Catalytic Officer. If I have been able to enable any of the remarkable creativity which we see from our artists and scholars and cultural institutions to emerge faster, more robustly, more thoughtfully, more visibly than would have been the case otherwise, then I am extremely grateful. ... The painters, writers, playwrights, producers, scholars, filmmakers, sculptors, composers, performers, poets, dreamers, priests and prophets ... are the active ingredients in cultural creativity ... the ones who are creating the synthesis of American and Jewish culture in front of our eyes ... the ones without whom the catalytic agent would simply be inert.



From left: Lynn Korda Kroll, Swoosie Kurtz, Judith Light, Daryl Roth and Michelle Lee

Photos by Dave Alloca, Starpix, LTD.

# SCHOLARSHIP

## Doctoral Dissertation Grant Recipients

Since 1961, the Fund for Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships in Jewish Studies has awarded over \$2.6 million to more than 500 doctoral candidates and scholars in Jewish Studies.

**T**his year, the National Foundation for Jewish Culture awarded fellowships to 10 students. Funding was made possible by a combination of grants from the Dorot and the Lucius N. Littauer Foundations, the Jewish Endowment for Arts and Humanities, and the Marilyn and Maurice Cohen Fund for Doctoral Dissertations in Jewish Studies.

This year's review panel, drawn from the NFJC's Academic Advisory Committee, was co-chaired by Dr. David Berger of Brooklyn College and Dr. Alan Mintz of the Jewish Theological Seminary and the City University of New York Graduate Center.

The panel included Dr. Judith Hauptman of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Dr. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett of New York University, Dr. Sid Z. Leiman of Brooklyn College, Dr. Pamela Nadell of American University, Dr. Ray Scheindlin of JTS, Dr. David Sperling of the Hebrew Union College, Dr. Michael Stanislawski of Columbia University, and Dr. Michael Wyschogrod of Baruch College, City University of New York

### **Marcy Brink-Danan**

*Mother Tongue: Turkish-Jewish Ideologies of Language and Kinship*  
Stanford University Department of Anthropology  
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver Memorial Fellowship Fund

### **Mia Sara Bruch**

*The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man: American Jews and American Religious Pluralism, 1941-1960*  
Stanford University Department of History  
Lucius N. Littauer Foundation Fellowship Fund

### **Jordan Finkin**

*"Jewish Discourse" and the Development of Yiddish*  
University of California - Berkeley Department of Near Eastern Studies  
Kogan Foundation Fellowship Fund

### **Rachel Greenblatt**

*A Community's Memory: Jewish Views of Past and Present in Early Modern Prague*  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem Department of Jewish History  
Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Fellowship

### **Benjamin Jacobs**

*The (Trans)Formation of the American Jews: Jewish Social Studies in Progressive American Jewish Schools, 1910-1940*  
Columbia University Program in Social Studies  
Joan and Richard Scheuer Fellowship Fund

### **Maud Kozodoy**

*Profiat Duran: A Jewish Thinker of Late 14th Century Catalonia*  
Jewish Theological Seminary Medieval Jewish Studies  
Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Fellowship

### **Henry Millstein**

*Embodying Empire: Rabbinic and Early Christian Representations of Roman Power*  
University of California - Berkeley Joint Doctoral Program in Jewish Studies  
Joy Ungerleider-Mayerson - Dorot Foundation Fellowship Fund

### **Natalie Oeltjen**

*The Conversos of Majorca, 1391-1435*  
University of Toronto Centre for Medieval Studies  
Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Fellowship

### **Jess Olson**

*From Freethinker to Believer: Religion, Politics and Peoplehood in the Thought of Nathan Birnbaum*  
Stanford University Department of History/Jewish Studies Program  
Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Fellowship

### **Daniel Schwartz**

*Reclaiming Spinoza: The Heretic From Amsterdam in Modern Jewish Culture, 1832-1918*  
Columbia University Department of History  
Beverly and Arnold C. Greenberg Fellowship Fund



2004



# Jewish Cultural Achievement Awards in Scholarship

The National Foundation for Jewish Culture's 11th Annual Jewish Cultural Achievement Awards in Scholarship were held June 6 at the Center for Jewish History in New York City. Below are excerpts from the event speeches.

## Textual Studies

### Frank Moore Cross

If I mistake not, my primary contribution will not be in the books and papers I have written but in the training of students in the fields of Jewish and West Semitic paleography and epigraphy, new methods of textual criticism stemming from insights provided by the Dead Sea Scrolls, and in the history of Israelite religion and Jewish apocalypticism.

Future study [of the Dead Sea Scrolls] will continue to refine our knowledge of the history of the texts of the Hebrew and Greek Bibles. ... For Jewish history, manuscripts from the caves of the Dead Sea will provide new insights requiring new historical syntheses. ... The scrolls stem from the crucial and fascinating era when Rabbinic Judaism was emerging from a time of warring religious parties and traditions, and when Christianity grew out of the apocalyptic wing of Judaism. Perhaps most revolutionary will be the light shed on Jewish apocalypticism.



Deborah Dash Moore presenting award to Paula Hyman



Frank Moore Cross, Ray Scheindlin and Paula Hyman

## Social, Cultural and Literary Studies

### Ray Scheindlin

The unifying impulse in my career is delight in working with languages – in my case, Hebrew, Arabic and English – across cultural boundaries. I have tried to understand the ways in which Arabic literary traditions interpenetrated Hebrew literary production in the period that we Westerners call the Middle Ages through the close study of Hebrew texts. I have also tried to turn Hebrew poems into English – not, I hope, merely into English language but into English poems. ...

This confessional poetry is a precious treasure, because it makes the poets' voices audible to any of us who want to hear. ... My impulse to translate springs naturally from loving to work with words in any language. I think of translating as being like kneading dough, getting



Alan Mintz, Academic Advisory Board Co-Chair, NFJC

between my fingers all those words and phrases, allusions to the Bible, and Arabic locutions disguised as Hebrew, and mixing them up with English words and verse forms – poking and pushing and squeezing and shaping until my fingers are sticky with the mass and a hybrid poem emerges that is a translation. ... I do not profess to be a poet ... but I do think that the translation of a poem has to ... reproduce not just the words but the effect the poet was aiming to achieve. It is the poet's voice we want the reader to hear, not our own.

## Historical Studies

### Paula Hyman

After becoming a feminist, it became obvious to me that women, whatever their social class, belonged to the non-elite, and were perhaps the most neglected of that large group. ... As I studied Jewish women, I was persuaded that the inclusion of gender differentials in the investigation of such major processes of modern Jewish history

as acculturation, social activism, identity formation, and the nature of community had the potential to transform the way we considered the trajectories of the past. Gender-sensitive scholarship has provided new questions for classical Jewish texts

and has challenged our focus on texts as the way to understand Judaism by exposing the lived Judaism of ordinary women and men. ... The inclusion of women in Jewish history has also enabled historians to draw on the considerable body of theory on power relations and identity that gender studies has generated.

I am pleased to have participated in the establishment of a dynamic new subfield that has stimulated the formulation of a series of new questions about the past as well as new research to begin to answer those questions.

# Celebrating 350 Years of Jewish Life in America



In May of this year, 43 passengers sailed from Curaçao, off the northern coast of Venezuela, to Charleston, S.C., on the “Life, Liberty and Legacy” voyage. The 350th anniversary Jewish heritage cruise was sponsored by NEJC in cooperation with Celebrate 350: Jewish Life in America 1654-2004. Traveling with Theo Bikel and historians Aviva Ben Ur, Eli Evans, Wim Klooster and Ori Soltes, the group spent 12 days retracing the journey

**The descendents of survivors of the Inquisition, who somehow made their way to these islands, paved the way for those of us who now live in America.**

that brought Jews to America. In a real sense, the legacy cruise was a metaphor for our communal struggle to escape persecution and achieve our dreams. It is also a tribute to the United States, a nation that granted Jews – and not only Jews – religious freedom and equal opportunity. Bringing the

350th journey home, the following are excerpts from Pamela Ross’s report to her synagogue, Temple Beth Ahm in Springfield, N.J., and Co-Chair Renee Stanley’s report to the NEJC Board.

**Pamela Ross:**

The legacy cruise began in the Dutch colony of Curaçao. There we visited Mikve Israel, the first and earliest synagogue in the Americas, and the oldest in continuous operation.

The floor of Mikve Israel is sand. According to some traditions, the sand represents the wandering of the Jews in the desert or perhaps reflects the symbolic hope that Jews will one day be as plentiful as grains of sand. I believe that there is a deeper meaning – actually two deeper reasons which go back to the terrible nightmares of forced conversions and living as a Jew in secret.

In Spain, after forced conversions, many Jews would go to their basements to worship in secret and in silence. Sand was brought in to deaden the sound of footsteps as well as the sound of prayer. This, too, was a tradition the Jews carried to the Caribbean. Also, sand was helpful in

covering an escape tunnel. As many of you are aware, Sephardic synagogues often have trap doors. While the mind tells them they are secure, in their hearts is deeply ingrained a memory and a fear.

There is in these places an Absence of Presence and Presence of Absence. Although diminishing in size, St. Thomas and Curaçao still have active Jewish congregations. The vibrant, wealthy communities that were havens for Jews for centuries will quietly ebb away. With no outside enemies, these communities of Sephardic Jews are dying from disinterest. The Caribbean is like some of the stars in the heavens – in retrograde like the tides only to have places in the history books. The buildings will be kept for their historical relevance but the sound of prayers, the voice of the community (aging now) will fall to a whisper like the sands on the floor blown by the winds of change. This time it will collapse from within, as Jews in Curaçao and St. Thomas never had enemies from without. It makes one wonder what there will be to look at when we are 600 years in the Americas.



Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese Jews were among the first settlers of St. Eustatius. Many of the Jewish settlers came in 1655, and physical evidence of their inhabitation can still be found in the foundations of buildings peeking through the sands of its beaches. In the 17th century, Jewish glassmakers in Amsterdam were producing a particular kind of blue beads, most valuable for trading abroad. It is said that they are still to be found on the beaches here.

Other Jews soon followed the first settlers. They became ship owners, planters of sugar cane, and producers of rum and molasses. They arrived from Recife in Brazil, Suriname, Barbados, Holland and France. Jewish immigration to St. Eustatius burgeoned from 1757 to 1813. During that time the Dutch government, to bolster its holdings abroad, issued grants in Dutch guilders to Portuguese Sephardim to leave Amsterdam for Dutch colonies. Most grant recipients went to the Caribbean, and many ended up in St. Eustatius. They came

with commercial expertise and worldwide contacts, and they made "Statia" into the Western world's emporium. For trade or social purposes, Jews could deal in a range of European languages, but among themselves the Sephardim spoke Ladino, the admixture of old Castilian and Hebrew.

It was the Jews of St. Eustatius who were the privateers and buccaneers of the region. At the happy urging of the Dutch, they reveled in picking off the Spanish and Portuguese treasure ships. Among the most famous was Jean Lafitte – pirate and Jew.

It was the Jewish merchants and seamen of St. Eustatius who supplied the American Revolution with armaments. They ran the guns in under the English navy, carrying the muskets and cannon balls to General Washington. Jewish ships and Jewish know-how got these supplies in.

The island earned a unique place in the annals of American history. The first shots in recognition of the newly sovereign United States were

fired in a congratulatory exchange between the island's Fort Orange and the American brigantine Andrea Doria. The Andrea Doria had been dispatched by Washington on Oct. 23, 1776, on a diplomatic mission (at least partially) to deliver a copy of the Declaration of Independence to the governor of St. Eustatius.

In its responding salute, the small voice of St. Eustatius was the first to officially greet one of the major events of the century – the entry the society of our own United States of America.

#### Renee Stanley:

Of all the islands, our visit to St. Eustatius and its people made the greatest impression on me. St. Eustatius – or Statia as the locals call it – is part of the Netherlands Antilles, not far from Nevis where a large Jewish community existed in the 17th and 18th centuries. The island contains the remains of a Jewish cemetery and a synagogue that is being restored



Historian Eli Evans with actor Theo Bikel

through the joint efforts of the Statia Historical Society and a Jewish businessman who holds both Dutch and Israeli citizenship.

Guided by members of the historical society, we visited the cemetery and studied the few, scarred, often indecipherable graves that remain.

It struck me that these were the descendents of survivors of the Inquisition, who had somehow made their way to these islands in order to seek refuge and to be able to reclaim their Jewish identity. In a real sense, they paved the way for those of us who now live in America.

## 350th Anniversary Happenings

#### Paul Taylor Dance Company Commission

Paul Taylor is choreographing *Klezmerbluegrass*, a new work for his company in tribute to the American Jewish experience. The piece, commissioned by NFJC, will debut in Glen Ellyn, Ill., in October. It is expected to be seen throughout the U.S. as part of the dance company's national tour in celebration of its own 50th anniversary. In a letter to NFJC, Taylor wrote, "The Jewish experience in America reflects the best values and traditions of our country."

*Klezmerbluegrass* was developed by David Eden with support from George and Pearl Zeltzer and the Pearl Zeltzer Fund for Jewish Choreography. Special thanks to Leon Wieseltier for his creative input and consultation on music.

*Klezmerbluegrass* was co-commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C., with support from the Howard and Geraldine Polinger Family Foundation; Fleet Boston Celebrity Series, Boston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Play-

house Square Center with support from the Roe Green Foundation, Cleveland; Dance Celebration, Philadelphia; San Francisco Performances; University of Washington UW Series at Meany Hall, Seattle; and UA Presents, Tucson, with support from Tucson Patrons of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

#### Plays of Jewish Interest:

##### An Updated Catalog

The NFJC will publish a revised and expanded edition of its widely used catalog *Plays of Jewish Interest*. Originally published in 1982 with more than 600 entries, the catalog includes synopses, casting requirements, production histories and script sources. The new edition, edited by Ellen Schiff and Michael Posnick, will be an on-line searchable database. While the update will continue the focus on North America, NFJC is partnering with the Global Jewish Theater Initiative, which is creating a companion

catalog of European and Israeli plays of Jewish interest.

Funded by gifts from the Karma Foundation and Joan and Robert Arnow.

#### Play List and Calendar

The NFJC is promoting a national calendar of productions at regional theaters around the country that address the American Jewish experience or include American Jewish subject matter. The calendar of productions is available on the NFJC and the Celebrate 350 websites, and include Alfred Uhry's *Driving Miss Daisy* performed by the A.D. Players in Houston, Clifford Odets' *Awake and Sing* at the International City Theatre in Long Beach, Calif., and *The Book of Wonders*, an original play being developed by A Traveling Jewish Theatre in San Francisco as part of its program connecting the stories of American Jewish women in the past, present and future. The NFJC

web site also lists suggested plays to celebrate the 350th anniversary of Jewish life in America.

For the play list, calendar, and list of suggested plays, click on:

<http://jewishculture.org/programs/350/>.

#### Passover Radio Project

A team of award-winning radio producers and creative advisors is working with NFJC staff on a one-hour special for broadcast during Passover 2005. A Passover seder will be the setting for the story of Jewish life in America. Guests at the imagined seder will focus on freedom, exile, and America as the "promised land." The program will combine memories, stories, music and ritual, along with excerpts from pre-recorded seders and readings from a variety of American haggadahs.

Funded by gifts from Joan and Robert Arnow, Stanley Chais, and the Charles H. Revson Foundation.

More for the 350th  
on page 15

# Patrons Circle

## San Francisco Panel on *Jew As Artist/Artist As Jew*

**N**FJC will present a public panel on “The Jew As Artist/The Artist As Jew II,” at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art on Sept. 27 at 8 p.m.

The event will follow NFJC’s annual San Francisco Patrons Circle Dinner at Hawthorne Lane restaurant.

The panel will be moderated by Michael Roth, president of the California College of the Arts. Panelists include photographer Larry Sultan, whose work was recently seen at SFMOMA; monologist Josh Kornbluth, currently on national tour with his show *Love & Taxes*; and Heidi Zuckerman Jacobson, curator of the Phyllis Wattis MATRIX Gallery at the UC Berkeley Art Museum.

For information, e-mail [nfjcla@jewishculture.org](mailto:nfjcla@jewishculture.org) or call 213-387-0990

## Coast-to-Coast Patrons Events

**P**atrons in Chicago, San Francisco, Washington and Houston enjoyed a wide range of salons and private tours. In June, Tobi Kahn, recipient of the 2004 Jewish Cultural Achievement Award in visual arts, spoke to Chicago Patrons about Jewish ritual art and about his new book, *Objects of the Spirit: Ritual and the Art of Tobi Kahn*. In July, Elizabeth Kahn and Charlotte Newberger hosted a Chicago literary evening with Larry Tye, noted journalist and author. He spoke about the black and Jewish diasporas in America and around the world.

Earlier this year, San Francisco Patrons had a private tour of the exhibit “Isaac Babel, A Writer’s Life (1894-1940)” followed by a discussion with Steven J. Zipperstein, Koshland Professor of Jewish Culture and History and co-director of the Taube Center for Jewish Studies at Stanford University. The event took place at Stanford’s Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

From the viewpoint of “A Jewish Eye Looks at the MFA,” Tom Freudenheim conducted a private tour of Houston’s Museum of Fine Arts for the Houston Patrons Circle this past winter. During Freudenheim’s 40-year career in the museum world, he was curator of The Jewish Museum in New York, assistant secretary for museums at the Smithsonian Institution, and director of the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Worcester Art Museum and the Berlin Jewish Museum.



Writer Larry Tye in Chicago

# New Board Members

## George Blumenthal – *New York City*

Since 1967, George Blumenthal has held a membership on the New York Stock Exchange and is Chairman and CEO of Madison Medical Data Systems. He is on the boards of the American Jewish Historical Society, the Center for Jewish History and the Jewish Television Network.

## Stanley Chais – *Los Angeles*

Stanley Chais is a private investor active in a wide range of Israeli and American Jewish charitable activities over the past 30 years. He has sponsored programs in secular Judaic studies throughout the former Soviet Union in association with Hebrew University, the JDC and Hillel.

## Irwin S. Field – *Los Angeles*

Irwin S. Field has been chairman and CEO of Liberty Vegetable Oil Company (LVO) since 2001. He chairs the board of Los Angeles Jewish Publications (publisher of the Jewish Journal) and has served as president of the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles.

## Darrell D. Friedman – *New York City*

Darrell D. Friedman served as president and CEO of The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore for 17 years before joining the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee as special consultant in September 2003.

## Henry Kahn – *Chicago*

Henry Kahn is a consultant in international finance and restructuring. He has served as senior vice president and chief financial officer of Westlake Group, a private \$2 billion global chemical and fabricated products group.

## Gershon Kekst – *New York City*

Gershon Kekst is the founder and president of Kekst and Company, an international corporate and financial communications firm. He is chairman of the board of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Having served previously on the NFJC Board, Kekst is co-chair of the Jewish Scholarship Portfolio.

## Sondra Myers – *Washington, D.C.*

Sondra Myers is a senior associate at the University of Maryland’s Democracy Collaborative. She is founding president of both Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania and the State Arts Advocacy League of America. She is the co-executive producer of the documentary *The Courage to Care*.

## Judy W. Nadel – *San Francisco*

Judy W. Nadel has spent 25 years working in the public sector, currently with the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Transportation. She has served on the boards of the San Francisco Art Institute, University of California Art Museum and Jewish Family and Children’s Service.

## Henry Saltzman – *New York City*

Henry Saltzman is president of Saltzman Associates Intl, a consulting firm specializing in development programs for educational and cultural organizations. He has served as an NFJC consultant since 1991.

## Esther Mallon Sherman – *San Francisco*

Esther Mallon Sherman has directed the Jewish education program in Iowa City and the library program of the Brandeis Hillel Day School in San Francisco. She currently focuses her efforts on support of the San Francisco Contemporary Jewish Museum and the Magnes Museum.

## Malcolm Thomson – *New York City*

Malcolm Thomson is a senior director with Bernstein Investment Research and Management. He served as rabbi of Temple Sholom in Greenwich, Conn. He is on the board of the Jewish Theological Seminary and an overseer of the JTS Rabbinical School.



## More 350th Anniversary Happenings

# NFJC to Sponsor 'American Jewish Icons' Series



Generation after generation, the great theme of American Jewish history has been the interaction of Jewish and American cultures, the continual tension between assimilation and group identity. American Jewry has actively participated in the creation of our national culture. At the same time, mainstream culture – and the culture of other minorities – has decisively influenced American Judaism and American Jewry. The 350th anniversary of Jewish life in America provides an exceptional opportunity to celebrate and deepen public understanding – among both Jews and non-Jews – of one of America's signature values, the pluralism expressed in this dialogue of cultures.

From January through December 2005, the NFJC will sponsor a series of public programs on "American Jewish Icons" in 10 communities throughout the United States. Thirty outstanding humanist scholars, representing a range of disciplines, will unpack iconic experiences, books, films and other "key texts" which speak to the interplay of American and Jewish culture, from George Washington's Letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport to comic songwriter Allan Sherman's "My Son the Folksinger." Funded in

part by a major grant of \$99,520 from the National Endowment for the Humanities, "American Jewish Icons" exemplifies the themes of NEH's special initiative "We the People," reflecting on the historical interplay of minority and mainstream cultures in our "nation of nations." The audiences participating in these presentations, whether live or on-line, will be asked to consider how American and Jewish

cultures have informed each other at particular historical moments, profoundly re-shaping both.

The presentations will be made available to national audiences via the NFJC web site, and scholars will lead weekly on-line discussions of the texts. At the conclusion of the series, NFJC anticipates publishing the collected papers. "American Jewish Icons" seeks to be neither comprehensive nor

canonical, but it will cover the full sweep of American Jewish history and examine some of the most significant texts in American Jewish culture.

The program expands on a groundbreaking conference three years ago on "Key Texts in American Jewish Culture." The conference was convened by Dr. Jack Kugelmass, professor in the Interdisciplinary Humanities Program at Arizona State University.

## Upcoming Jewish Literary Supplement

In celebration of the 350th anniversary of the Jewish community in America, the third Jewish Literary Supplement: For Book Groups of One or More will focus on the ways in which history, language and geography have gone hand in hand to create an American Jewish literature. The supplement will appear in Jewish newspapers and be distributed at Jewish book fairs in conjunction with Jewish Book Month.

First appearing as an insert of the Jewish Bulletin of Northern California in 2001, the second Jewish Literary Supplement was published in 2003 as an insert in the Jewish community newspapers of Baltimore, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, and San Francisco, reaching more than 130,000 newspaper subscribers. An additional 30,000 copies of the Jewish Literary Supplement were distributed at Jewish book fairs in Denver, St. Louis, San Diego, Tucson, Washington, D.C., and West Palm Beach.

To provide both context and illumination, the 2004 issue features Max Apple resurrecting Nathanael West as a canonical Jewish writer; Ellen Miller discussing the importance of Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *Maus* for a new generation of Jewish writers obsessed with history and identity; and Morris Dickstein discussing how place and history are intertwined in the development of an American Jewish literature.

In addition, the Jewish Literary Supplement will continue to publish excerpts from the best forthcoming Jewish literature, including new novels by Cynthia Ozick, Jonathan Rosen, Pearl Abraham, Edeet Ravel and Philip Roth; a new memoir by Nessa Rapoport; and new poetry by Hal Sirowitz and Emmanuel Moses.

Other features include an appreciation of Isaac Bashevis Singer on the 100th anniversary of his birth, a look at the new crop of groundbreaking Jewish writers, and suggested reading for book groups and individual readers.

Support NFJC

### I want to support the National Foundation for Jewish Culture

with my tax-deductible contribution of:  \$100  \$250  \$500  \$1,000  Other

Enclosed is my check, payable to: *The National Foundation for Jewish Culture.*

Contributors receive *Jewish Culture News* and special reports published by the NFJC. Contributors of \$1,000 and over are enrolled in the Patrons Circle and will receive additional benefits.

I prefer to charge my contribution:  Amex  Visa  Mastercard Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_

Name as listed on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Please send me further information about:

Fund for Jewish Documentary Filmmaking  New Play Commissions in Jewish Theater  Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships in Jewish Studies  
 Museums  Libraries and Archives  Planned Giving  Jewish Endowment for the Arts and Humanities  New Leadership Council

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Eve. Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to: *The National Foundation for Jewish Culture*, 330 Seventh Avenue, 21st Floor, New York, NY 10001 or call Carmela Totino at 212-629-0500, x207 for further information.

## Bringing the St. Eustatius Synagogue Back to Life



**From the artist:**

*As I made my first sketches of the Honen Dalim Synagogue, I was thinking back to my visits to the synagogue and the Jewish graveyard. They seem to have a peaceful yet mysterious atmosphere for me: silent witnesses of another era. ... I chose the inside of the entrance as a memory of the holy service you will attend there... in front, you see three of the tombstones, and just above them, to the left, I drew a detail of the one that holds the remains of David De Leo. It shows a symbol of our vulnerability: the hand of the almighty holding an ax, deciding the exact time to cut the "tree of life" for every one of us. ... I hope your visit to St. Eustatius will provide you with good memories and wish that looking at my drawing will keep them alive.*

– Mieke Pičikin-Van Rij

Lithograph of Synagogue Honen Dalim ("the one who is merciful to the poor") by young local artist Mieke Pičikin-Van Rij, presented by the Historical Society of St. Eustatius to the NFJC during the "Life, Liberty and Legacy" voyage, part of Celebrate 350: Jewish Life in America 1654-2004. (Story page 12.)

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEW YORK, NY  
PERMIT NO. 9514

FOR  
JEWISH CULTURE  
NATIONAL FOUNDATION

330 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001  
TEL: 212-629-0500 FAX: 212-629-0508  
EMAIL: NFJC@jewishculture.org  
www.jewishculture.org