



**2015 CONNEY CONFERENCE ON**  
**JEWISH ARTS**

**Jewish/American/Israeli:  
INTERTWINED IDENTITIES  
IN THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

**March 24 – 26, 2015**

Co-sponsored by:  
The Mosse Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
and  
The Initiative for Israeli Arts and Humanities,  
University of Southern California

Conference Co-Convenors; Professor Douglas Rosenberg (UW-Madison) and Professor Ruth Weisberg (USC).

## Welcome to the 5th biennial Conney Conference on Jewish Arts.

This year, we are celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Conney Project on Jewish Arts, an initiative of the Mosse/Weinstein Center For Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In addition, we are pleased to collaborate this year with The University of Southern California Initiative for Israeli Arts and Humanities, directed by Professor Ruth Weisberg.

The Conney Project on Jewish Arts has evolved from its initial idea stage to its current form over the last ten years. Initially begun with a symposium called “Experimental Jews: Projecting Jewish Identity in the New Millennium,” a one-day gathering of ten invited artists from around the country, the mission of the project has expanded to include an undergraduate seminar on Jewish Arts, a website, a conference component, and a number of other initiatives that address Jewish art and culture. In April 2007, we presented our first Conference on Jewish Arts, called “Practicing Jews: Art, Identity and Culture.” Since then we have continued to build on that foundation and to expand the presence and scope of the Conney Project on Jewish Arts.

A major goal of the Conney Project on Jewish Arts is to facilitate dialog about all of the arts in relation to global Jewish identity and culture. To that end, our past keynote speakers have included Norman Kleeblatt, Senior Curator from the Jewish Museum in NY; Kalman Bland, Chair of Department of Religion, Duke University; MacArthur Fellow and choreographer Liz Lerman;

curator Connie Wolfe; scholar Catherine Sousloff; and USC’s own Professor Josh Kun. This year, for the first time, we have two keynote speakers representing both scholarly and practice-based approaches to the conference theme of Jewish/American/Israeli: Intertwined Identities in the Contemporary Arts and Humanities. Our keynote speakers this year are Stanford Professor Janice Ross and renowned Israeli artist Andi Arnovitz.

I would like to offer my thanks to Keshia Weber, Laurie Silverberg, Melissa Miller, Rebekah Sherman, Nathan Jandl, and Melanie Zarrow, and also to Simone Schweber, chair of the Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies. Without the support of these people and many others, this conference would not be possible. I am grateful to my colleague Ruth Weisberg who is the co-convenor of this conference and whose vision has greatly extended my own understanding of the breadth of this community. Finally, I want to especially thank Marv and Babe Conney for their extraordinary commitment to this initiative and for their visionary endowment that supports this conference.

Wishing you a great conference.

Douglas Rosenberg, *Director*  
Conney Project on Jewish Arts  
Professor of Art, UW-Madison

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**Monday, March 23**

**5:00-6:30pm**

Reception & Registration

The Lab

<http://thelab.usc.edu/#/intro>

3500 S Figueroa St, Los Angeles 90089  
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**Tuesday, March 24**

**8:30-9:00am**

Registration

*Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library*

*3550 Trousdale Parkway, Los Angeles*

*90089*

**9:00-9:30am**

Douglas Rosenberg, Ruth Weisberg,

Simone Schweber

Welcome Remarks

**9:30-10:00am**

Joshua Lander

Marks of (Jewish) Identity: Presence  
through Absence in Philip Roth's

*American Pastoral*

*Doheny Library*

**10:00-10:30am**

Ben Schachter

Conceptual Jewish Art

*Doheny Library*

**10:30-11:00am**

Jill Fields

Mid-Century Moderns: Peggy

Guggenheim's "Abstract and Surrealist  
Paintings" at the Tel Aviv Museum of  
Art, 1955

*Doheny Library*

**11:00-11:30am**

Break

**11:30am-12:00pm**

Jeremy Kagan

Jewish Characters in Film and  
Television: A Personal Journey

*Doheny Library*

**12:00-1:00pm**

Lunch (campus eateries—list provided)

**1:00-2:00pm**

KEYNOTE #1: Janice Ross

The Hasidic Swan: Ballet as Subversive  
in Israel

*Doheny Library*

**2:00-2:30pm**

Reception

**2:30-3:00pm**

Tara Kohn

All of our History is Waiting Here:  
Encircling and Returning through

Visions of Israel

*Doheny Library*

**3:00-3:30pm**

Lidia Shaddow

1001 Looted Magic Carpets and Prayer  
Rugs

*Doheny Library*

**3:30-4:00pm**

Ken Goldman

Mixed-Media and Mixed Identities:  
The Influence of American and Israeli  
Identities in the Art of Ken Goldman

*Doheny Library*

**4:00-4:30pm**

Elke and Saul Sudin  
Jewish Art Now: Unifying Efforts for A  
Global Community  
*Doheny Library*

**4:30-5:00pm**

Sagi Refael  
Jewishness of the Body in  
Contemporary Israeli Art  
*Doheny Library*

**5:00-7:00pm**

Dinner (on your own)

**7:30-9:00pm**

PANEL: Eric Owen Moss (moderator),  
with Robert Eisenman and Russell  
Thomsen  
What is a Holocaust Memorial?  
*Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute  
of Religion (HUC)*  
*845 W. 32nd Street, Los Angeles 90007*

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**Wednesday, March 25**

**8:30-9:00am**

Registration, coffee, etc.  
*USC Hillel*  
*3300 South Hoover Street, Los Angeles  
90007*

**9:00-9:30am**

Richard Hecht  
Ivan Schwebel, David, The Three-Sewer  
Hitter, and the Great Self-Liberator:  
The Painting of an American-Israeli  
Identity  
*USC Hillel*

**9:30-10:00am**

Jana Zimmer  
Closing the Circle, Redux  
*USC Hillel*

**10:00-10:30am**

Jesse Zaritt  
Embodied Affiliation and the Politics of  
Availability  
*USC Hillel*

**10:30-11:00am**

Break

**11:00-11:30am**

Josh Feldman and Miriam Heller Stern  
Dream Lab: an Infusion of Creativity in  
Jewish Education  
*USC Hillel*

**11:30am-12:00pm**

Rachel Kupferman  
Adi Ness: Portraiture, Identity, and the  
Market  
*USC Hillel*

**12:00-1:00pm**

Lunch (variety of LA food trucks,  
including Kosher food trucks)

**1:00-2:00pm**

Judith Brin Ingber  
Jewish Men on Stage: Boris Aronson  
and Baruch Agadati *and introduction  
of the Jewish dance lab participants*  
*USC Hillel*

**2:00-2:15pm**

Community Discussion/Conference  
Feedback  
*USC Hillel*

**2:15-2:30pm**

Break

**2:30-3:00pm**

Itamar Paloge and Hillel Smith  
Illuminated Streets: Jewish Mural Arts  
in Los Angeles and Israel  
*USC Hillel*

**3:00-4:00pm**

PANEL: Anne Hromadka (moderator),  
with Andi Arnovitz, Helène Aylon,  
Dvora Liss, and Doni Silver Simons  
Matronita 2012: The Groundbreaking  
Jewish Feminist Exhibition  
*USC Hillel*

**4:00-5:00pm**

KEYNOTE #2: Andi Arnovitz,  
introduced by Shulamit Nazarian  
Entwined Identities/Mutual Concerns:  
The Art of Andi Arnovitz  
*USC Hillel*

**5:00-6:00pm**

Arnovitz Exhibition Closing Reception  
*USC Hillel*

**6:30-7:30pm**

Conney Conference Reception  
Celebrating Ten Years and Honoring  
Marv and Babe Conney  
*HUC*

**7:30-9:00pm**

Performances by Andrea Hodos and  
Rick Lupert with Craig Taubman;  
discussion moderated by Ruth  
Weisberg  
Intertwining Art and Identity (excerpts  
from solo theater projects, plus  
poetry and humorous spoken-word  
performance)  
*HUC*

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**Thursday, March 26**

**8:30-10:30am**

Artists' Tables  
*USC Hillel*

**10:30-11:00am**

Bill Aron  
New Beginnings: What do 120 Cancer  
Survivors Have in Common?  
*USC Hillel*

**11:00-11:30am**

Karen Goodman  
Synthesis in Motion: The Art and  
Identity of Benjamin Zemach  
*USC Hillel*

**11:30am-12:00pm**

Henia Rottenberg  
Batsheva Dance Company—Studying  
and Dancing Graham Style  
*USC Hillel*

**12:00-1:00pm**

Lunch (variety of LA food trucks,  
including Kosher food trucks)

**1:00-2:00pm**

Nina Spiegel  
Choreographing Between Israel and  
America: The Impact of Modern Dance  
on the Development of Dance in Israel  
*USC Hillel*

**2:00-2:15pm**

Community Discussion  
*USC Hillel*

**2:15-2:30pm**

Break

**2:30-3:00pm**

Hannah Kosstrin  
An American in Tel Aviv: Anna  
Sokolow's Dances in Israel, 1962-1964  
*USC Hillel*

**3:00-3:30pm**

Anat Gilboa  
The Jewish Mother: Has Israeli Culture  
Outgrown its Female Stereotype?  
*USC Hillel*

**3:30-4:00pm**

Gilah Yelin Hirsch  
Cabala, Biotheology and the Power of  
Art to Heal  
*USC Hillel*

**4:00-4:30pm**

A showing by participants of the Jewish  
Dance Lab:  
Judith Brin Ingber, Facilitator  
Rebecca Pappas, Alexandra Schilling,  
Naomi Jackson, Karen Goodman,  
Hannah Kosstrin, Hannah Schwadron,  
Jesse Zarritt, Sophia Levine  
*USC Hillel*

**4:30-5:00pm**

Community Discussion/Wrap-Up  
*USC Hillel*

**5:00-7:00pm**

Dinner (on your own)

**7:30-9:00pm**

Performance by Stacie Chaiken;  
Interview by Douglas Rosenberg  
The Dig: An American archaeologist  
summoned to a dig in Jaffa. They've  
found something that could change  
everything. She's the only one who  
can tell them what it is. Following the  
performance, a conversation about  
Tikkun Olam and artistic expression.  
*HUC*

## ABSTRACTS

### **Andi Arnovitz, “Entwined Identities/ Shared Concerns: The Art of Andi Arnovitz” (Keynote #2)**

The shared concerns of Israelis and Americans come directly from their entwined identities. Both populations share the same fears, dreams, aspirations and anxieties. Their starting point for fundamental beliefs about freedom, democracy, equal access, morality and ethics is one and the same.

This lecture will visually demonstrate just how profound and widespread these shared identities and concerns are. All these contemporary topics will be investigated within the artworks of Andi Arnovitz. Worrying global issues about the violent state of the world, fears about Iran and ISIS, nuclear proliferation, sending sons off to war, about terrorism and random acts of violence will feature predominately.

Domestically, Israel and America are both at the forefront of IVF medical technology, with all its ethical and moral implications. I will explore these dilemmas with the artwork—raising profound questions about where these technologies are headed.

Domestic violence and abuse of women will be another topic explored visually—as this occurs within both populations and worldwide. Issues of modesty, hyper-sexualization of little girls—issues of equality within Orthodox Judaism and issues of exclusion within this population will also be visually presented as these rifts

within Orthodoxy occur on both sides of the ocean.

Art very often gives us access and awareness to troubling problems in a way that no other media can. This presentation will feature over 130 visual images that will provide us with a rich and interesting way to view the entwined identities of Israelis and Americans alike.

### **Bill Aron, “New Beginnings: What do 120 Cancer Survivors Have in Common?”**

Jews get cancer too, just like everyone else. New Beginnings consists of interviews and photographic portraits of 120 cancer survivors, ages 2 through 99: rabbis and laypersons, leaders and congregants, exceptional and ordinary people. Each has a poignant and moving story to tell about overcoming adversity of the worst kind, and how it changed them.

In 1971 there were three million cancer survivors living in America. In 2011 there were nearly 12 million, 5 million of which are young adults. This all means that there is a steadily growing population who are asking the question, “What now?”

Cancer forces people to put their lives on hold. It can cause physical and emotional pain, and result in lasting problems. It may even end in death. But many people gain a new perspective on life. It is as if their senses become more finely tuned by facing their own mortality. Their lives take on new meaning.

The strength as well as the fragility

that survivors feel is the story I discovered while researching and talking to other survivors. Rabbi David Wolpe remarked: “What you learn from an experience like this is inexpressible. It’s the deepest message and meaning of life.” Or Megan, a teenager, “It made me who I am, and I like the person I am today.”

New Beginnings is truly unique in its life-affirming presentation with messages of hope and inspiration for every cancer survivor. When the diagnosis is cancer, this is the first book to read.

### **Stacie Chaiken, “The Dig”**

Los Angeles-based performer Stacie Chaiken will perform an excerpt from her play *The Dig*, about an American archaeologist summoned to a dig in Jaffa, Israel. They’ve found something that could change everything. She’s the only one who can tell them what it is. And her mother just died. And there’s a lizard in her bathtub.

*The Dig* is the fruit of a 2003 commission Chaiken received from the Center for Jewish Creativity to write her next play in Israel, and is based on her experience there during a series of residencies spanning 2003 to 2005, during the Second intifada.

We’ll follow with a conversation moderated by Douglas Rosenberg about artistic process and the challenges of creating a nuanced work for a broad audience about the iridescence of our Jewish/American/Israeli intertwined-ness.

The conversation will open to

an inquiry about the effectiveness of artistic work in the transformation of audience perception with regard to narratives involving local and global catastrophe.

What does *Tikkun Olam* mean for the artist? As we stand witness to the world—in our many ways, in our various fields—are we natively driven by the intentionality to heal?

We are traumatized by horrible events, traumatized by a sense of impotence in the face of perceived impossibility. Can art work and the process of creating artistic expression unlock empathy, and move both audiences and art workers towards breath and awareness?

And can now-breathing, now-aware people be inspired to act?

### **Josh Feldman and Miriam Heller Stern, “Dream Lab: an Infusion of Creativity in Jewish Education”**

Jewish education needs an infusion of creativity. The Graduate Center for Education at American Jewish University with AJU’s Institute for Jewish Creativity (IJC), are imagining how to build a pipeline for Jewish artists to enter and redefine the field of Jewish education. Quite simply, what would a cultural shift in Jewish education look like? How might this change our collective and individual identity? This exploration is Dream Lab, a think tank comprised of Los Angeles artists and Jewish Educators formed to consider how to better integrate artists into Jewish Education and to generate more creative Jewish engagement,

interpretation and expression.

Join Miriam Heller Stern, Dean of the Graduate Center for Jewish Education and Josh Feldman, Director of the IJC, for a rich conversation about the methods used and preliminary findings of this process including findings from our Pedagogy Test kitchen, a lab for artist-educators to experiment with different methodologies for training educators. Unlike a traditional presentation, audience members will have a chance to add to the process of Dream Lab itself—an iterative and still evolving conversation seeking to integrate creativity substantively into formal and informal Jewish education settings. Leadership in this think tank include a diverse group of artists working and innovating at the nexus of arts and education in a variety of venues—schools, informal programming, synagogues, museums, higher education and teacher education.

**Jill Fields, “Mid-Century Moderns: Peggy Guggenheim’s ‘Abstract and Surrealist Paintings’ at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 1955”**

Peggy Guggenheim (1898-1979) was born into the wealthy New York German-Jewish circle portrayed in Stephen Birmingham’s *Our Crowd*. She lived in Europe from the 1920s until World War II forced her to return to New York. Living in England in the 1930s, she began collecting art for her London avant-garde gallery, and then for the modern art museum she was planning to open until war made

that impossible. After successfully smuggling her collection out of France, she expanded it further while running her extraordinary Manhattan gallery, Art of This Century. After the war, Guggenheim set up permanent residency for herself and her extensive art collection in Venice by purchasing a palazzo where she could live and also display her collection to the public. In 1952, she met Eugene Kolb, director of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (TAMA) and curator of the first Israeli exhibition at the Venice Biennale. Kolb sought to borrow paintings from her collection to exhibit at TAMA. Instead, Guggenheim decided to donate thirty-six works to the Israeli museum. This little-known donation constitutes her largest gift to any single institution during her lifetime, second only to the bequest of her entire collection to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation upon her death. The 1955 TAMA exhibition built on Guggenheim’s unprecedented donation was attended by over 50,000 people, and enabled Israelis to further access the imagery, sensibilities, and aesthetics of abstract and surrealist paintings.

**Anat Gilboa, “The Jewish Mother: Has Israeli Culture Outgrown its Female Stereotype?”**

The traditional stereotype of the “Jewish Mother” has been an important component in the culture of European *Shtetl* and later in neighborhoods of American Jewry during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Distinguished as a dominant and

sometimes arrogant, the Jewish Mother was a recurrent subject in popular culture such as American comedies, cinema, songs, and in Yiddish theater.

I will analyze the representations of the Jewish Mother from pre-modern European culture to its reception and interpretation in current Israeli culture. During the formative years of creating the Jewish nation, motherhood was perceived and described as a symbol of protection. With the maturing of the state of Israel a broader sensitivity to notion of the mother is seen in juxtaposition of Palestinian and Israeli motherhood. With an increasing understanding of and compassion for the role of the mother, there has been a gradual change in Israeli culture in which a more personalized and individualized image of motherhood can be seen. Current artists in Israel have been portraying their mothers as children or as unidealized individuals. I will conclude that the image of the “Jewish Mother” has been undergoing a thorough change from a traditional cliché, deeply founded in Jewish communities, towards seeing more complex aspects of motherhood in current Israeli visual culture.

### **Kenneth Goldman, “Mixed-Media and Mixed Identities: The Influence of American and Israeli Identities in the Art of Ken Goldman”**

For the last thirty years I have been living and creating art in Israel. I am an American, an Israeli, an observant Jew, and a kibbutz member. At the 2015 Conney conference I will present a

selection of my art that best expresses the influences of a dual identity on my art.

The works I will present cover a large variety of subject matter such as; gender, religion, politics, ritual and community. The various mediums I use are: body art, video, sculpture, painting, drawing, and photographs of my performance based pieces.

### **Karen Goodman, “Synthesis in Motion: The Art and Identity of Benjamin Zemach”**

Benjamin Zemach (1901, Bialystok – 1997, Israel) was one of the most important Jewish choreographers of early to mid twentieth-century America to create work drawn from his identity. He was a unifier of tradition and new thought, both artistic and Jewish.

In post-Revolutionary Moscow, an important concept in dance was “synthesis,” a fusing of movement, music and line, to which Zemach added gesture. His artistic training, was grounded in this concept as a student of Ina Chernetskaia who taught dance synthesis, also in Moscow’s Dalcroze Institute, and as a member of the Hebrew-speaking Habima Theatre, then a studio company of Stanislavski’s Moscow Art Theatre. In late 1920s New York, he shared programs with modern dance pioneers Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman and Michio Ito. He choreographed and performed from Europe to Broadway to Hollywood film and theatre. On stage, his primary goal was to express the range of Jewish experience and

aspiration whether through work based in the Bible, Yiddish literature, Jewish ritual, the Holocaust or the work and spirit of Zionism. His life experiences included a pogrom, displacement, war and McCarthyism.

Because of this background, Zemach was well suited to artistically mediate between the emergent mid-century Israeli culture and the comfort of Yiddish culture for his American Jewish audiences and he remained a unifying voice for both. His fame and his training also enabled him to be an effective link to mainstream dance and theatre for his students and audiences. The presentation will include film clips and archival photos.

**Richard Hecht, “Ivan Schwebel, David, The Three-Sewer Hitter, and the Great Self-Liberator: The Painting of an American-Israeli Identity”**

Ivan Schwebel (1932-2011) routinely used the streets of Tel Aviv for his painted narratives of Hollywood starlets like Clark Gable and Ginger Rogers as in *Shall We Dance? Entrance to the Carmel Market* (1984). However, he always returned to his central mythological narrative, King David and the city of Jerusalem. Schwebel would painted over 200 separate representations of the biblical narrative of David onto detailed etchings of the contemporary architecture of Jerusalem as we find in *David Dancing before the Ark of the Covenant*, accompanied by two lionesses and a Peugeot station-wagon on Jaffe Road (1984). Schwebel's David would unfold to render the entire

biblical narrative of David against the backdrop of Mahaneh Yehudah, the Old Mamilla, and many other spaces in the city. But there were two other figures who were central to Schwebel's painting, the mythological hero of New York street baseball, the Three-Sewer Hitter, standing in the middle of a Bronx street or waiting to come the plate between two parked cars in Bronx *Stick-Ball Hero* (1981) and Harry Houdini, the Great Self-Liberator, as in *Houdini the Great Self-Liberator* in the Bronx (1996) where Houdini stands in the middle of the street bound in chains and locks. King David, the Three-Sewer Hitter, and the Great Self-Liberator where the powerful heroic paradigms that were central to Schwebel's work. All three figures were representations of freedom and liberation, and his own identity fusing the mythology of America and Israel.

**Gilah Yelin Hirsch, “Cabala, Biotheology and the Power of Art to Heal”**

Combining years as an artist in solitary wilderness sojourns with biomedical and neuroscientific investigation concerning mind/body patterning, I have blended art and science to reveal existing relationships between form in nature, form in human physiology and behavior, and alphabetic morphology. I discovered five forms in nature that are first found in the earliest of 54 iterations of the Hebrew alphabet and have been used universally in alphabets ancient to modern. I hypothesized that these

five forms were chosen because they mirror the shapes of neurons and neural processes in perception and cognition. Understanding that the artist brings abstraction into form while the scientist brings form into abstraction, coupled with my experiences in diverse world cultures, I have recognized the hardwired wisdom of the body as the repository of intrinsic knowledge leading toward health and behavior benefitting the greater good.

This vision has consistently underscored my visceral understanding of Cabala as both an art and science of elevation/healing in which each letter alone and in combination changes the psychophysiology of the practitioner/viewer. With this recognition I have consistently and purposefully encrypted letters and words in my art to animate the power of form to heal both the artist and the viewer.

**Anne Hromadka (moderator), Dvora Liss, Andi Arnovitz, Helène Aylon, Doni Silver Simons, “Matronita 2012: The Ground Breaking Jewish Feminist Exhibition”**

There is a very important universal conversation regarding the marginalization of women and Jews that leads so many Jewish women to create art from this vantage point. We want to push the conversation beyond sweeping overviews by looking at the unique role of Jewish American and Israeli female artists. To tell a larger and more nuanced story of the Jewish feminist experience we will re-examine the exhibition, *Matronita—Jewish Feminist Art*,

Museum of Art, Ein Harod Mishkan Le’Omanut, and its groundbreaking results. These panelists all participated in the *Matronita* exhibition.

**Judith Brin Ingber, “Jewish Men on Stage: Boris Aronson and Baruch Agadati”**

This paper introduces Agadati, the first solo dancer of the Yishuv, and Aronson, noted American set designer for *Fiddler on the Roof*. They met in Berlin in 1923 and created several collaborative stage works which resonated with audiences in the Galut and the Yishuv. Their creative output had several influences: their common Russian, observant Jewish backgrounds; historical political movements including the Russian Revolution and Zionism; and the modernism movement in the theatre. Through photographs and set design, autobiographical accounts as well as articles by contemporaries, these two extraordinary artists and their work together will come to light.

**Joshua Lander, “Marks of (Jewish) Identity: Presence through Absence in Philip Roth’s *American Pastoral*”**

This interdisciplinary paper explores Philip Roth’s treatment of race and ethnicity in his novel, *American Pastoral*. In this text, Roth situates the minority bodies of the Jew as a subject trapped within the realms of his/her exterior, created and maintained by what Laura Levitt calls “Impossible Assimilations”: the *American Pastoral* itself. As I will argue, America promises

social elevation through self-definition but defines and categorizes its citizens according to race, thus disturbing and ultimately crippling the pastoralized promise of “Americanization.”

By reading Roth’s fiction through postethnic and postcolonial theories such as David Hollinger’s *Postethnic America*, Shaul Magid’s *American Post-Judaism*, and Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, this paper will show how Roth’s characters subvert and re-write their ethnic and racial identities, only to be eradicated and re-aligned.

I thus link Roth’s meta narrative strategies to racial performativity, drawing parallels to the present absent nature of race’s performative structures and Roth’s complex narratological devices. This paper will closely analyse the role of Nathan Zuckerman in terms of how Roth frames his text, considering the metanarrative forms of American Pastoral in relation to ideas of Jewish assimilation. By focusing on Roth’s unflinching critique of America’s racial structuring and scathing dissection of the false fabrications of assimilation, I will uncover how Roth probes and questions the alternative possibilities of racial and historic subversion in both novels, considering what is at stake in using fiction as a means of engaging with race and ethnicity.

### **Jeremy Kagan, “Jewish Characters in Film and Television: A Personal Journey”**

A presentation of clips from a variety of movies that Professor

Kagan has written, produced and directed illustrating portrayals of Jewish characters. He will also discuss the images from both the past and the present of American Jews and European and Israeli Jews examining stereotypes as well more individuated presentations from the religious to the secular.

### **Tara Kohn, “All of our History is Waiting Here: Encircling and Returning through Visions of Israel”**

*Behold a Great Image: The Contemporary Jewish Experience in Photographs*—an anthology conceived in the context of counter-cultural Jewish spiritual collective in 1975 and completed by writers Arthur Kurzweil and Sharon Strassfeld after the New-York based fellowship began to collapse—began as a charitable project. A record of the “best entries” submitted to an amateur photography contest on Jewish themes, the book was designed to support underfunded artists, endorse the flourishing of Jewish creativity, and produce proceeds for future philanthropic and activist work. This paper focuses on the visions of Israel that surface in the anthology: photographic traces of prayer, ritual, trade, loss, and political strife printed side-by-side on sleek, glossy pages, interspersed with quotations from religious literature and punctuated with visual allusions to themes of dispersal and return. I suggest that in the context of *Behold a Great Image*, Israel emerges as a metaphor with particular resonances for assimilated Jews who

were born in the United States and raised at a distance from the cultural traditions of their ancestors—a symbol for the fractures of the Jewish past and a platform for ethnic pride and cultural solidarity in the present. Through these photographic traces of Israel, I argue, viewers found visual pathways into distant losses and inherited traumas as a means of recovering a deeper sense of self, a deeper sense of Jewishness.

### **Hannah Kosstrin, “An American in Tel Aviv: Anna Sokolow’s Dances in Israel, 1962-1964”**

From 1962-1964, American Jewish choreographer Anna Sokolow presented work throughout Israel with her company Lyric Theatre based in Tel Aviv. Lyric Theatre performed dances from Sokolow’s existing repertory from the U.S., including *Rooms* (1954), *Opus* (1958), and *Forms* (1964) that were considered quintessentially American due to their themes of urban alienation and disaffected youth, and their compositional elements based in abstraction and jazz forms. For Lyric Theatre she made *Odes* (1964), which addressed similar thematic and aesthetic issues. Meanwhile, divergent American modern dance influences, from Sokolow and from Martha Graham, replaced German expressionist dance in Israeli modern dance in the 1950s. This paper addresses the following: What happened to Sokolow’s dances in Israel at mid-century? What about her work is American, Jewish, or Israeli, and did it become Israeli through the bodies of

the dancers who performed it? Does the reception of these dances by the Israeli public suggest that elements or codes were lost in translation, or does critical response suggest consistency or change in these dances on Israeli soil? Through an examination of the dances as Lyric Theatre performed them, oral histories with Lyric Theatre dancers, and Israeli critical reviews of performances, this paper argues that Israeli response to Sokolow’s so-called “American” work reveals the influence of American modern dance and American culture in Israel in the 1960s. The intertwined categories of Jewish, American, and Israeli in Sokolow’s work are significant when considering these works’ legacies in relation to cultural trends in the U.S. and in Israel.

### **Rachel Kupferman, “Adi Ness: Portraiture, Identity, and the Market”**

Adi Nes’s work is largely related to Middle Eastern politics, identity, and sexuality. Interwoven throughout his projects are photographs that are reverential and take Bible stories as subjects. Even his secular projects are sprinkled with religious arrangements and iconography. His works also take up political issues.

For many people, religious art seen as reflective of group experience and group thought. As a result, religion in art is seen as a mechanism that filters the artist’s individuality through a simple pipeline. Secularism dictates that religion does not have a place in the art world. While religious art is being made, this art is not recognized

in institutions of fine art or high art. However, there are break-through artists, like Adi Nes who negotiate a space of high art while being iconographically noticeable as religious.

Much of his Euro-American reception embraces the many aspects of his work: sexual, religious, political, social and identity driven. These channels claim that looking and recognizing the local nature of his works become a strength within his photography. Others ignore the personal aspect of Nes's own identity, and the work's locality and choose to apply readings of his works that are more formal. Nes can't seem to have it both ways. He is either an Arab artist and political, or he is a Holy land storyteller speaking to a Western public that is religious and art historically informed. His audience is divided as it appreciates different components of his art and its identity as Jewish, Israeli, or global.

**Eric Owen Moss (moderator), Robert Eisenman, and Russell Thomsen, "What's a Holocaust Museum?"**

The design vision must be ecumenical and egalitarian. It needs to hear and re-echo the voices that were lost. The project must be conceptually legible and accessible, not one that makes a puzzle of its contents. This does not obviate the sublime and the esoteric, but it insists on their clarity. The form(s) are not yet invented to do this job. And form may not be the ultimate key. But the project won't belong to a recognized pedigree of buildings, monuments, landscapes,

installations, sculptures, or high-rise office precedents, though it may include aspects of all those.

Architectural proposals to this point have chosen one side or the other; normalcy or abnormalcy; horror or horror transcended; history or history revised. Architecture has the potential to transcend the (intellectually) irreconcilable.

**Itamar Paloge and Hillel Smith, "Illuminated Streets: Jewish Mural Arts in Los Angeles and Israel"**

Illuminated Streets is a collaborative mural arts project by artists Hillel Smith and Itamar Paloge. Raised in Los Angeles, one of the most ethnically rich and one of the most segregated cities in the US, Hillel saw himself as part of a minority culture, a hyphenated Jewish-American. His academic and professional interest in graphic design led him to embrace Hebrew typography as a way to express his identity through his work. Raised in Israel, Itamar's experience is by nature the opposite—Hebrew being the common language and Jewish identity the norm, with other divisions in place. Illuminated Streets, supported by Asylum Arts, brings each artist to the other's city to experience art-making as an outsider and insider.

Both artists utilize the Hebrew alphabet as a design element in creating work rooted in a rich tradition of Jewish typographic art. Both work with spray paint and other "counterculture" media that appeal to young people outside traditional art channels. The unusual

juxtaposition of Jewish tradition and these contemporary media is thought-provoking, and, we hope, compelling to those in both the Jewish and creative communities. And it is the way in which both artists approach using art as a vehicle for identity, long a driving force of street art, that begins a conversation about what it means to be a Jewish artist today.

### **Sagi Refael, “Jewishness of the Body in Contemporary Israeli Art”**

My presentation deals with representations of “Jewishness of the Israeli body” by contemporary secular Israeli artists. The time frame for this presentation starts with Max Nordau’s “Muscular Judaism”, that wanted to transform the image and the being of the Zionist Jew from the one who was perceived as weak, feminine, lean and victimized, to the one who shapes his/her body and soul by working the land in Zion, functioning as new and well-trained, body and spirit, group of people. The contemporary Israeli artists presented in this lecture, don’t only turn their backs on the concept of the strong, independent Jew, but present it as a self-victimized body, self-sacrificed, weak by choice, wandering and misplaced.

### **Janice Ross, “The Hasidic Swan: Ballet as Subversive in Israel” (Keynote #1)**

In 1949 Shulamit Roth editorialized about the impossibility of ballet as a medium of Jewish expression in an article appearing in Israel’s leading Hebrew newspaper, *Haaretz*. As

absolute as Roth’s condemnation was about ballet as inimical to Israel’s social and cultural values, by the early 21st century the Jewish state would in fact be home to a growing practice of ballet as a site of resistance for a surprising population—Orthodox Jewish young women. Ross explores how individuals inhabiting spaces at the cultural margins of society can invest mainstream embodied practices, like ballet, with complex and double coded meanings, gaining agency for counter narratives. There is a unique resonance to messages of change delivered through classical ballet because the deep political and cultural values inherent in its technique and structure can be in such productive tension with modernist dispatches. *The Hasidic Swan: Ballet as Subversive in Israel* takes as its focus ballet as the historically impossible dance in Israel. This view of ballet as incompatible with the ideals of the Jewish state is still strongly in place among many contemporary non-Russian Israelis. The contrast of a nation where Jewish identity is an accepted nationality and ballet a minority practice are explored in relationship to the most recent global migrations of one million Jews from the former Soviet Union to Israel in the 1990s and their efforts to make ballet a common cultural form in Israel.

### **Henia Rottenberg, “Batsheva Dance Company—Studying and Dancing Graham Style”**

Batsheva Dance Company was established in Tel Aviv 1964 by the

Baroness Bethsabée de Rothschild (1914-1999) as a joint venture with the American dancer and choreographer, Martha Graham. It was a joint venture that transformed theatrical dance in Israel and brought to an end the era of German expressionist dance.

This paper investigates the construction of the American-Graham style and school by the Israeli dancers and the dance company. The uniqueness of the Batsheva Dance Company was created by Graham's deep involvement—by her active artistic consultation, by coaching the dancers in the Graham style, and by being the first dance company, other than her own, receiving the right to perform her repertoire. Graham, who chose the dancers, nurtured and taught them the secrets of the stage. This combination of talented dancers, Rothschild's financial support, the intensive training process, and the high artistic standards created by Graham, and Graham's own reputation, all brought unprecedented success to the Batsheva Dance Company in Israel and abroad.

But how one brings a young Israeli dance group to study and comprehend a technique, repertoire and style of an American choreographer? I will attempt to discuss these issues by focusing on the first decade of the company that started in its formal establishment in 1964, and ended in 1975, when Graham stopped allowing Batsheva to perform her repertoire anymore. In order to learn about Graham's teaching techniques, the

secrets of internalization of her style, the teaching choice of her dances, and the encouraging creativity within the dancers, I will examine the link between Graham's aesthetics and technique as formulated in the work with her own company in comparison with her work with Batsheva.

### **Ben Schachter, "Conceptual Jewish Art"**

Fifty years ago Harold Rosenberg delivered his landmark address, "Is there a Jewish Art?" In it is a most interesting, yet neglected thought: "The Old Testament is filled with a peculiar kind of 'art,' which we have begun to appreciate in this century." Furthermore, "In our day, an anti-art tradition has been developing, within which it could be asserted that Jewish art has always existed in not existing." In these imaginative musings from 1966, Rosenberg teased a connection between the avant-garde of the time and Jewish thought that remained mostly unspoken until now.

Today artists examine Jewish texts with strategies associated with Dada, Fluxus, Post-Modern Dance and other "non-arts." Rosenberg's suggestion that Jewish aniconism can be reconciled with the avant-garde's anti-art tradition is now fully joined as Conceptual Jewish Art. As the conceptualists used rules to guide and limit their work, so too do these artists who engage the Torah, the Talmud and even *minhagim*. The definition of text is broadened to include traditions and sayings that are clearly grounded in Judaism. Artists

for whom these concerns are visible in their work include: Ken Goldman, Jacqueline Nicholls, Allan Wexler, and several others.

What is becoming undeniable is the increased artistic desire to integrate Jewish tradition and law with contemporary art not to subvert religion but to understand its place in lived experience. The strategies put to best use in the past are not the ones leveraged by the current generation; shock has turned to humor and cynicism has become wit.

### **Lidia Shaddow, “1001 Looted Magic Carpets and Prayer Rugs”**

This series of paintings was created in the summer of 2014 in the shadow of the last Palestinian-Israeli war.

A rolled up rug was standing in my parents’ house for at least five years. Every attempt to send it to the Salvation Army ended up with three attempts by my father to find new locations for it back in the house. The unsettling emotional attachments to material things and consumerism on one side and the lethargy of watching a distant war on the other was what inspired me to give the first rug an action paint treatment.

The number “1001” in my title derives from the magic carpets in the ancient Arabian folk tales *One Thousand and One Nights* which my father, who immigrated to Israel from Iraq, frequently told me in my early years. The “prayer rug,” is a rug on which Moslems bow to recite their prayers. It is a symbol of hope and good

will, senselessly tainted today by the rise of Islamic extremists. The reference to “looting” comes from disturbing memories of war and terrorism in which I grew up in Israel.

As I was pouring paint under the burning sun two visions came to mind. One was of the American artist Jackson Pollock and the other was of our old Bedouin neighbors. Black tents, colorful rugs, hospitable women wearing black dresses adorned with intricate hand woven embroidery, sheep and sweet tea. This kind of romantic pastoral idealism interrupted by unsettling emotional attachments to material things and consumerism, gives rise to this body of work.

### **Nina Spiegel, “Choreographing Between Israel and America: The Impact of Modern Dance on the Development of Dance in Israel”**

American modern dance greatly impacted the development of dance in Israel in the 1950s and beyond. Choreographers such as Martha Graham, Jerome Robbins, Anna Sokolow, Sophie Maslow, and Pearl Lang traveled to Israel, trained dancers, and choreographed in Israel in the early years of the state. Martha Graham’s influence was extensive, especially in the foundation of the world renowned Batsheva Dance Company, now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. Institutionally, the America Israel Cultural Foundation fostered the development of dance in Israel. In addition, many well-known Israeli choreographers, including the

acclaimed Ohad Naharin, artistic director of the Batsheva Dance Company, spent time studying American modern dance in the United States.

This paper will examine how the American interchanges impacted the development of dance in Israel. How extensively did this American influence shape the development of modern dance in Israel? What was the full range of the American impact on dance in Israel and what does that tell us more broadly about the development of Israeli society in these years? The paper will investigate the cultural exchanges between American and Israeli dancers, as well as the character of the dance creations in Israel. It will also examine the impact of tours of Israeli companies to the United States.

To date, this subject has been largely overlooked in the history of Israeli society, dance, and culture. This research sheds new light on the formation of Israeli society and on the relationship between Israeli and American cultures.

### **Elke and Saul Sudin, “Jewish Art Now: Unifying Efforts for A Global Community”**

In the past five years Jewish Art Now has facilitated the development of a young global Jewish art community by providing a unified gateway to existing prospects and creating opportunities where there were none. Jewish Art Now rebrands Jewish visual art with a vision for how it could advance in the twenty-first century through blogging,

interactive art parties, exhibitions, workshops, mini documentaries and community advocacy that reflect both contemporary art and fresh authentic approaches to Judaism. Founders Elke Reva Sudin and Saul Sudin explain their vision and how their work is part of a larger effort in what is still an upward battle.

### **Jesse Zaritt, “Embodied Affiliation and the Politics of Availability”**

I grew up in a Religious Zionist family in the United States. Although I am no longer religiously observant and do not identify as a Zionist, my affiliation to Jewish Israeli culture is visceral, deeply embodied, and profoundly puzzling to me. How is it that my body often betrays my critical, rational and ethical consciousness in the face of criticism and threats to Israel? How is it that the romantic mythology of Zionism’s muscular, masculinist Jewish body still fills my diasporic flesh with longing and feelings of inadequacy? Through physical research and performance, I examine my embodied affiliation. Armed with an effort to queer dominant paradigms of national belonging, religion, and gender, the lecture/performance I will present at the Conney Conference enacts both an annihilation and a re-making of my body.

Central to my research is an engagement with Gaga—the physical training practice developed by Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin. Naharin developed Gaga to train his dancers to release habits that rigidly compel the

body into predetermined shapes and modes of self-presentation. The Gaga practice has grown to become both a new standard for dance training and a recognizable aesthetic of the body. Despite its international popularity, there is a lack of scholarship—both written and embodied—that investigates this practice in a political context. Although Naharin distances his work from politics, I am drawn to interrogate Gaga's emergence within the political reality of Israel, a state that imposes a range of disciplining systems on its subjects.

### **Jana Zimmer, “Closing the Circle, Redux”**

My artwork generally reflects the recurrent Jewish themes of memory, exile and return. In this presentation I will introduce new work for an exhibition in Germany in April, 2015, commemorating the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Flossenberg/Freiberg camp and the final transport to Mauthausen of one thousand Czech women, including my mother. The exhibition will include the work of two other artists: Helga Weissova, a Czech Jew who began to draw in the Terezin ghetto, Stephanie Busch, a “third generation,” non-Jewish German artist, and will also feature some drawings done in the Terezin ghetto by my own half-sister, a student of Friedl Dicker Brandeis, who perished in Auschwitz with Friedl.

## **BIOS**

**Andi Arnovitz** was born and raised in the United States. She has a BFA from Washington University in St. Louis. In 1999 she immigrated with her family to Israel. A conceptual artist, Arnovitz lives and works in Jerusalem. Her work focuses on the tensions of politics, religion and gender. Arnovitz's work has been shown all over the world and are in the collections of United States Library of Congress, The Israel National Library, museums in both the United States and Israel, and foreign ministries. She is represented by galleries in the United States and in Israel, including Shulamite Gallery, Venice, California.

**Bill Aron** first gained international recognition for his book, *From The Corners Of The Earth*, chronicling Jewish communities in Russia, Cuba, Jerusalem, New York and Los Angeles. A second volume followed, *Shalom Y'all: Images of Jewish Life in the American South*. *New Beginnings: The Triumph of 120 Cancer Survivors* focuses on people, from rabbis to professional athletes, whose diagnosis of cancer led to profoundly positive life altering experiences. His message makes an important contribution to the growing field of survivorship. Aron holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, and lives in Los Angeles with his wife and two sons.

**Helène Aylon** thinks of her multimedia work as a “rescue” of the Body, the Earth, and G-d—all stuck in patriarchal designations. Aylon showed at Betty

Parsons Gallery from 1975 to 1982. Her work has been shown at the Whitney, The Warhol, The Jewish Museum, the Aldrich Museum, and SFMOMA. Her recent memoir, published by The Feminist Press, is called *Whatever Is Contained Must Be Released: My Jewish Orthodox Girlhood, My Life as a Feminist Artist*. She will be receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award granted by the Women's Caucus for Art on February 4, 2016, coincidentally the day of her 85th birthday.

**Stacie Chaiken's** plays include *Looking for Louie* (immigrant family secrets), *The Dig* (Israel) and *What She Left* (Holocaust narratives). A Fulbright Senior Specialist in Performance and Story, she facilitates What's the Story?, a Los Angeles-based studio for writers and performers. As artist-in-residence at Hebrew Union College, she created *Personal Midrash*, a story workshop for rabbinical students. Former faculty of the USC School of Theatre, she teaches master classes in autobiographical performance. She served as International Creative Director for Kwibuka, the 20th commemoration of the Rwandan genocide. Her current project *Witness : Responsibility* invites artists to interact with catastrophic narratives. [staciechaiken.com](http://staciechaiken.com) [witness-responsibility.com](http://witness-responsibility.com)

**Robert Eisenman** is Emeritus Professor of Middle East Religions, Archaeology, and Islamic Law and Director of the Institute for the Study of Judeo-Christian Origins

at California State University Long Beach and Visiting Senior Member of Linacre College, Oxford, and Senior Fellow of the Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, Oxford University. In 1985-86, he was an N.E.H. Fellow-in-Residence at the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, Jerusalem. He is the author of numerous books, including *Islamic Law in Palestine and Israel*, *A Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the First Christians*, *James the Brother of Jesus: The Key to Unlocking the Secrets of Early Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, and *The New Testament Code: The Cup of the Lord, the Damascus Covenant, and the Blood of Christ*.

**Josh Feldman** is the Director of the Institute for Jewish Creativity and Assistant Dean of the Whizin Center for Continuing Education at American Jewish University. Most recently Josh was the Director of the Six Points Fellowship for Emerging Jewish Artists. Prior to that, Josh was the Jeremiah Fellowship National Director for the Progressive Jewish Alliance, now known as Bend the Arc. He is a trainer for Presentense and a co-founder of East Side Jews. He comes to his work with over ten years of non-profit and informal education experience. He holds a BFA in Performance Studies and Media Production from Emerson College.

**Jill Fields** is Professor of History and Founding Coordinator of the Jewish

Studies Certificate Program at Fresno State. She is the author of *An Intimate Affair: Women, Lingerie and Sexuality*, which won the Sierra Book Prize awarded by the Western Association of Women Historians, and editor of *Entering the Picture: Judy Chicago, the Fresno Feminist Art Program, and the Collective Vision of Women Artists*. Inspired by her Italian Jewish great grandmother, Sabina Camerino, Jill began her Jewish Studies research during an NEH Summer Institute held in Venice, Italy.

**Dr. Anat Gilboa** is a Visiting Professor of Israeli visual culture and film at UCLA. Dr. Gilboa is an art historian specializing in early modern art, Jewish and Israeli visual culture and film. She has taught at universities in Israel, Canada, and the U.S. Last year she was the recipient of the AICE/Schusterman Visiting Israel Professor Fellowship. Dr. Gilboa's research, academic courses and public talks reflect a focus on a cross-disciplinary analysis of Jewish and Israeli visual culture and film, history, politics, religion, gender themes, music and literature. She is the author of two books and numerous publications in American and European journals and conferences. Anat Gilboa's current research and courses examine the core themes that define modern Israeli identity and its complex representation in Israeli visual culture and film.

After completing his degree in fine arts at Brooklyn College and Industrial design at Pratt Institute, **Ken Goldman**

made Aliyah to Kibbutz Shluchot. For over three decades Goldman has been working to balance his creative endeavors alongside all the traditional obligations of a kibbutz member. Goldman's work is influenced by the lifestyle and culture of the kibbutz—the trials and tribulations of living in such a unique society as well as his connection to the land and Israel. Ken's mixed media works have been shown in Israel, Europe, and the United States. In the fall of 2015, Ken will be having a solo exhibition at the Temple Rodeph Shalom Museum in Philadelphia.

**Karen Goodman** is a critically acclaimed modern dancer/choreographer and teacher. Awards include a National Endowment for the Arts Choreographers Fellowship. She wrote/directed the 2002 documentary on Yiddish folk dance, *Come Let Us Dance* and shot archival footage of the Yiddish folk dance classes for Yiddish Summer Weimar 2011-2012 and interviews with leading Yiddish dance authorities. She speaks on Yiddish folk dance and 20th century modern choreographers working from their Yiddish roots and has presented at the Conney Conference, AJS, IAYC and universities. Her latest paper was recently published by the Institute for Modern Russian Culture at USC in its annual journal, *Experiment*.

Richard Hecht is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara where he offers courses on Judaism and on religion and culture.

He is the author with Ninian Smart of *The Sacred Texts of the World: A Universal Anthology*, To Rule Jerusalem with his colleague Roger Friedland, and the editor with Vincent Biondo of *Religion and the Practice of Everyday Life and Religion and Culture*. He is currently completing a book on religion and contemporary art.

**Gilah Hirsch's** work, informed by solitary sojourns in the wilderness and extensive world travels, encompasses art, architecture, film, theology, philosophy, cross-cultural medicine, psychiatry, psychoneuroimmunology, anthropology of consciousness, science of consciousness and world culture. Her grants and awards include the NEA (US), Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Fellowship, and ISSSEEM's Elmer and Alyce Green Award for "innovative blending of science and art revealing existing relationships between forms in nature, human psychology, and those present universally in all alphabets." As artist and scientist, she has devoted her life to investigating imagery as a psychoneurological tool for healing body and mind. Hirsch resides in Venice, California and holds the position of Professor of Art at CSUDH.

**Andrea Hodos** is the creator of *Moving Torah*, a method for interpreting traditional Jewish texts using writing, movement and theater exercises alongside traditional study methods. She teaches workshops and performs her solo show, "Cutting My Hair in Jerusalem" in Southern California

and nationally. Andrea holds a B.A. in English Literature from Yale University, an M.Ed. in Dance Education from Temple University and has studied at the Pardes Institute in Jerusalem. Her current work is a community-based project between the Jewish and Muslim communities of LA called "Sinai and Sunna: Women Covering, Uncovering and Recovering."

**Anne Hromadka** holds Masters Degrees in Public Art Studies from USC and Jewish Nonprofit Management from Hebrew Union College (HUC-LA). These degrees unite her passions for exploring cultural heritage and for exhibitions that create open, unexpected conversations. Those values have guided all her curatorial work—including, her time as founding co-Director of Shulamit Gallery, as arts administrator for the Y&S Nazarian Family Foundation, and as the current curator for HUC-LA. Recently she founded AMH Art Advisory and runs her own nonprofit, Nu ART Projects, which raises funds to support regional Jewish artists.

**Judith Brin Ingber** choreographs, dances, teaches, and writes about Jewish dance and Israel. The new Batsheva Dance Company archives includes her teaching and choreography for the company. During the 1970s when living in Israel, she also assisted Sara Levi-Tanai, director of Inbal Dance Theatre. A new book about Levi-Tanai (edited by Henia Rottenberg and Dina Roginsky for Resling) will include

Brin Ingber's article. Her book *Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance* was published by Wayne State University Press in 2011. In December 2014, she taught at the Prague Arts Academy and the Jewish Museum; she is leading the 2015 Conney Conference Dance Lab.

**Naomi Jackson** is Associate Professor at Arizona State University. Her articles appear in such publications as *Dance Research Journal*, *Dance Chronicle*, and *Dance Research*. She has served as a member of the boards of the Society of Dance History Scholars and Congress on Research in Dance, and has helped to organize various conferences, including the first International Dance and Human Rights Conference in Montreal in 2005. Her books include, *Converging Movements: Modern Dance and Jewish Culture at the 92nd Street Y*, *Right to Dance/Dancing for Rights*, and *Dance, Human Rights, and Social Justice: Dignity in Motion* (edited with Toni Shapiro-Phim).

**Jeremy Kagan** is an internationally recognized award winning director/writer/producer of feature films and television and a well-known teacher. He has made many movies about Jewish subjects and worked with many Jewish actors. Among his feature credits is *The Chosen* (2 time Grand Prize winner) from Chaim Potok's classic novel, and of his many television films are *Descending Angel* for HBO about former Nazi criminals disguising themselves in the US and *Crown Heights* about the struggles of

the Chassidic and African American communities in Brooklyn which won the Humanitas Award for "affirming the dignity of every person." His "hybrid" movie *Golda's Balcony* shot all against green screen was based on the one-woman play about Golda Meir. Mr. Kagan is a Tenured Professor at the School of Cinematic Arts at USC where he teaches graduate courses in directing and he is the founder of the Change Making Media Lab. [www.cmml-usc.org](http://www.cmml-usc.org), [www.theneardeathandlifeofjeremykagan.com](http://www.theneardeathandlifeofjeremykagan.com)

**Tara Kohn** is an art historian with an expertise in twentieth-century American art and photography. She received her PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in December of 2013, and she is currently a full-time lecturer in the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies at Northern Arizona University. Her research works to draw out histories of immigration and assimilation that have been flattened in traditional discourses of American art by deeply-rooted myths of national distinctiveness. Engaging with traumatic legacies of rupture and resettling, she explores the process of assimilation as both an achievement and as a painful loss of cultural distinctiveness.

**Hannah Kosstrin**, Ph.D., engages dance, Jewish, and gender studies. At The Ohio State University, she is Assistant Professor in the Department of Dance and is affiliated with the Melton Center for Jewish Studies. Her book examines Jewishness and gender

in Anna Sokolow's choreography in the U.S., Mexico, and Israel. She is project director for KineScribe, a Labanotation iPad app supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and Reed College. Kosstrin is Treasurer of the Congress on Research in Dance, and a member of the Society of Dance History Scholars Editorial Board and the Dance Notation Bureau Professional Advisory Committee.

**Rachel Kupferman** is a Visiting Fellow at the Center for Israel Studies at Yeshiva University. She received her MA in Art History from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. There, she was a New Arts Society Fellow from 2012 through 2014. Her MA thesis, titled *Markets and Mystics: The Institutional Reception of Contemporary Asian Art with Religion as Subject*, was overseen by Jim Elkins and Nora Taylor. Her more recent projects focus on depictions of the human form and range from Late Renaissance Dutch prints and ethnography, 20th century fashion photography of Horst P. Horst, to contemporary portraiture.

**Joshua Lander** is a first year PhD student at the University of Glasgow. He is researching the thematic concerns of absence and excess in the late works of Philip Roth, examining how these themes interlink with questions of American and Jewish identities. Joshua reads Roth's literature through postcolonial theorists such as Homi K. Bhabha and the post-structuralist works of Judith Butler and Michel

Foucault. At the 2015 Conney Conference, he will be presenting a paper on Philip Roth's award winning novels, *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*, illuminating on Roth's intricate narrative strategies and how they interact with racial performativity.

**Sophia Levine** is a Yinzer and wanderer. She has performed in Pittsburgh, Boston, New York, Vermont, the Dominican Republic, Switzerland and southern Italy with companies including Yes Brain Dance Theater, ResExtensa Danza and interdisciplinary group Co(lab)trix. A graduate of Middlebury College with the Mahalingiah Prize in Dance, she is currently an MFA candidate and Teaching Assistant at University of Illinois. Illinois exploits include editing *Big Tiny Little Dance*—an experiment in choreographic “wrecking”; and *you love me*—an evening-length duet created/performed with Jessie Young. Additional choreographic credits include explorations into embodied Judaism (*Gait/Gate*, *Shishe*) and solo work (*Etude Edited*, *A Momentary Monument*).

**Dvora Liss** has been the Judaica Curator at the Museum of Art, Ein Harod since 1998. In addition to curating she teaches art history at Yeshivat Maale Gilboa and runs an American style summer camp. Liss is currently working on a new visualized concept for the new Ein Harod Judaica Wing. Some of her most recent exhibitions include: *Eliyahu's Vision*, Eliyahu Sidi (2010), *Zimmun*, Ken

Goldman, Dov Abramson, Arik Weiss (2011), *Matronita: Jewish Feminist Art*, (2012) (together with David Sperber) *Nationality: Jewish*, Eric Eliahou Bokobza, (2013), *Tosafot, Women Drawing Talmud*, *Jacqueline Nichols and Yonah Lavery-Yisraeli*, (2014), *Good Jew*, Haim Maor, (2015). She lives on Kibbutz Shluchot.

**Rick Lupert** (poetrysuperhighway.com) has been involved with Los Angeles poetry since 1990. He's hosted the weekly Cobalt Cafe reading since 1994. He's authored 16 collections of poetry including *The Gettysburg Undress* and *I'm a Jew, Are You?* and edited the anthologies *A Poet's Haggadah* and *Ekphrastia Gone Wild*. He has performed his work all over the world including at Limmud in England, the URJ Biennial in San Diego and at the annual Hava Nashira Jewish music educators workshop in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. He works as a graphic and web designer and in Los Angeles synagogues as a songleader.

**Eric Owen Moss** was born and raised in Los Angeles, California. He received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California at Los Angeles. He holds Masters Degrees in Architecture from both the University of California at Berkeley, College of Environmental Design and Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. Eric Owen Moss Architects was founded in 1973, and the Culver City-based office has been the recipient of over 100 local, national, and international design

awards. Eric Owen Moss has held teaching positions at major universities around the world including Harvard, Yale, Columbia, University of Applied Arts in Vienna, and the Royal Academy in Copenhagen. Moss has been a longtime professor at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), and has served as its director since 2002.

**Shulamit Nazarian** has an extensive background in arts, architecture and philanthropy. She first conceived of the Shulamit Gallery in 2006 and recently expanded to the Venice location. Born in Tehran, Shulamit studied architecture at University of Southern California and then completed her degree at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. Shulamit has served on many boards; presently, she sits on the Milken Community High School Board of Trustees, the Art Advisory Board at the USC Hillel, Zimmer Children's Museum YouThink Advisory Committee, and Board of Trustees at the Santa Monica Museum of Art (SMMoA). Shulamit is also a supporter of arts and education in the Los Angeles community through her gallery's nonprofit entity, Shoe-LA.com.

**Itamar Paloge** was born in Jerusalem and studied classical drawing and painting at the Jerusalem Studio School of painter Israel Hirshberg. From 2004 to 2008, he studied at the Jewelry and Object Design Department at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design. In 2006, he went for a summer semester

at the Sommeracademy in Salzburg, Austria, for a conceptual jewelry course with Prof. Johanna Dahm. In 2007, he went on a student exchange for six months in Pforzheim, Germany, and in 2010 went on a marble sculpting course in Carara, Italy. He has done all sorts of artistic freelance work.

**Rebecca Pappas** makes dance that addresses the body as an archive for personal and social memory. Her choreography has toured nationally and internationally, and has received residencies from Yaddo and Djerassi, and support from organizations such as the Mellon Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Foundation, and CHIME. She currently creates work in Los Angeles, and Indianapolis, and is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Ball State University. [www.pappasanddancers.com](http://www.pappasanddancers.com)

**Sagi Refael** is an independent art curator, writer and consultant, living in Los Angeles and Tel Aviv. He has contributed articles to many art catalogues published in Israel in the past decade, and has curated in leading venues such as the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, as well as many galleries in Tel Aviv such as Sommer contemporary art, Hezi Cohen gallery and Shay Arye gallery. He was co-curator and director at Tavi Art Gallery in Tel Aviv in 2011-2012.

**Douglas Rosenberg** is an artist, filmmaker and author and Professor of Art at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the founding director of the Conney Project on Jewish Arts and a

member of the Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies. Rosenberg's films have been screened internationally, most recently at Lincoln Center in New York as part of the Dance on Camera Festival and in Limerick, Ireland where he was also the symposium's keynote speaker. His photographic work appeared in and on the cover of TDR's Jewish American Performance issue and his most recent book is *Screendance: Inscripting the Ephemeral Image* (Oxford University Press).

**Janice Ross**, Professor, Theatre and Performance Studies Department, Stanford, is the author of four books, including *Like A Bomb Going Off: Leonid Yakobson and Ballet as Resistance in Soviet Russia* (Yale University Press, 2015). Her previous books include: *Anna Halprin: Experience as Dance* (UC Press, 2007) and *San Francisco Ballet at 75* (Chronicle Books, 2007). Her awards include Guggenheim and Fulbright Fellowships, Stanford Humanities Center Fellowships, Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture and Israel Institute research awards. For 10 years she was dance critic for *The Oakland Tribune* and for 20 years contributing editor to *Dance Magazine*. She is past president of both the international Society of Dance History Scholars and the Dance Critics Association.

**Dr. Henia Rottenberg**, senior lecturer in Theatre Studies Department and Head of Dance Theatre Track, Western Galilee College. Her PhD thesis

(University of Surrey, UK, 2004) deals with hybrid relationships between dance and painting in postmodern culture. Henia co-edited the book *Dance Discourses in Israel* (Resling, 2009), and her co-edited book *Sara-Levi Tanai: A Life of Creation* (Resling) is about to be published. Her articles are published in books, magazines and conferences in Israel, USA, and Europe. She curated photo exhibitions about Anna Sokolow (2010), Yardena Cohen (2011) and Sara Levi-Tanai (2011) at the Israeli Dance Archive, Beit Ariella, Tel Aviv. Henia is co-founder and a board member of The Israeli Society for Dance Research.

**Ben Schachter**, Professor of Visual Arts at Saint Vincent College, received his MFA and MS degrees from Pratt Institute. His work was shown at Yale University, Yeshiva University, the American Jewish Museum and many other venues. His writing focuses on contemporary art and Jewish law and appeared in *Milim Havivin* and *Images: Journal of Jewish art and Visual Culture*. Forthcoming publications include a chapter in *Drawing in the Twenty-First Century: The Politics and Poetics of Contemporary Practice* (Ashgate) and his first book, *Contemporary Jewish Art: Graven Images, Melachot and Conceptual Art* (The Pennsylvania State University Press).

**Hannah Schwadron** (MFA, PhD) is a dance artist and researcher working on the intersections of Jewishness, gender and sexuality through theory and performance. Her first book manuscript

focuses on the curious return of the 19th century “belle Juive” across contemporary US spectacle formats on stage and screen, and is currently under review for publication. Hannah joined the dance faculty at Florida State University this year, and is happy to be back at Conney for the second dance Lab and more provocation.

**Simone Schweber** is the Goodman Professor of Education and Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She received her PhD from Stanford University and, since coming to UW-Madison, has authored two books and numerous articles. She studies teaching and learning about the Holocaust in K-12 school settings. Her research has investigated how students at fundamentalist schools learn about the Holocaust, how young children are affected by learning about it, and how exceptional public high school teachers instruct about its historical content and moral lessons. In recent years, Schweber has also investigated the way state policies that eviscerate collective bargaining reshape teachers’ working conditions, their sense of themselves as career teachers and their relationships to their students, their schools and their districts. Schweber lives in Madison with two teen-age kids, a dog, a rabbit and not enough wine.

**Lidia Shaddow** is a Los Angeles-based artist who was born and raised in Israel. After initially studying at the School of Visual Arts in New York, she received her BFA from Art

Center College of Design in Pasadena. Shaddow's art work consists mainly of painting, collages, paintography, photography and book making. Lidia's art work has been exhibited in numerous galleries, including The Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles Municipal Art, Pomegranate Gallery NY, Hebrew Union College, Hillel USC, AJU, Sherry Frumkin Gallery and the Arad Arts Museum in Israel. Shaddow is a recipient of The Educational Award Grant from VBS H. M. Schulweis Day School and the Arad Artist residency in Israel.

**Alexx Shilling**, A.D. *alex* makes *dances*, is fully committed to the infinite investigation of movement and its potential to transform and allow us to remember. Her original choreography has been presented in New York, Los Angeles, Munich, at the America Dance Festival, Redcat, Jüdisches Museum München, Los Angeles Movement Arts, Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust, Yeshiva University, Pieter Performance Art Space, Made in L.A. at the Hammer Museum, MTV's 9-11 Video Postcards and others. Shilling co-directs FIELDSHIFT | FURTHER with interdisciplinary artist Quintan Ana Wikswo and makes dances on a daily basis. She has been performing with Victoria Marks since 2010 and currently collaborates in work by Laurel Tentindo, Sarah Leddy, Alison D'Amato and Rebecca Pappas. Shilling is on faculty at The Wooden Floor, Loyola Marymount University and UCLA.

**Doni Silver Simons** earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and holds a Master of Fine Arts from Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Across multiple mediums, Silver Simons explores the marking of time, memory, and identity. Silver Simons' work has been shown in the Detroit Institute of Art, Michigan; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Santa Monica Museum of Art, California; the Museum of Art, Ein Harod, Israel; the Wolfson Museum, Jerusalem; the Jerusalem Biennial and in galleries throughout the United States. Her documentary film *Omer 5769* premiered at the 22nd-annual Washington D.C. Jewish Film Festival. Silver Simons lives and works in Los Angeles. She is represented by Shulamit Gallery, Venice, California.

**Hillel Smith** is an LA native. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in Visual Studies. With a professional background in graphic design, he's explored large-scale public works, the flat yet textured world of silkscreen, the clean lines of digital illustration, the gritty feel of spray paint, and the surprise of mechanical papercutting. His work utilizes contemporary media techniques to create new manifestations of traditional forms. He teaches a street art-style spray paint stenciling class with a focus on artistic empowerment and manifesting identity through democratic media. He also lectures on the history of Hebrew typography.

**Nina S. Spiegel** is the Rabbi Joshua Stampfer Assistant Professor of Israel Studies at Portland State University. Her book, *Embodying Hebrew Culture: Aesthetics, Athletics, and Dance in the Jewish Community of Mandate Palestine* (Wayne State University Press, 2013) was recognized as a finalist for both the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature and a National Jewish Book Award. She holds a PhD in history from Stanford University, and her articles have appeared in publications such as *Jewish Cultural Studies*, *Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Review*, and *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*.

**Dr. Miriam Heller Stern** is Dean of American Jewish University's (AJU) Graduate Center for Jewish Education in Los Angeles, where she has trained and mentored Jewish educators since 2005. Dr. Stern earned her Ph.D. in education and MA in history from Stanford University as a Wexner Graduate Fellow. She is also the founding Director of Dream Lab, a think tank and pedagogy test kitchen for artists and educators dedicated to infusing the field of Jewish education with creativity through the arts.

**Elke Reva Sudin** is a Brooklyn based visual artist and founder of Jewish Art Now, a resource for contemporary Jewish art and design from around the world. Sudin received a BFA in Illustration from Pratt Institute and has been profiled in the *New York Times*, *Haaretz*, *EL PAÍS*, and *Tablet Magazine*,

among others. She received acclaim for her "Hipsters & Hassids" paintings and has exhibited at Art Basel Miami, the Canton Museum of Art, and sold internationally. Recently Sudin founded NY Drawing Booth providing quick portraits drawn on iPads for events. View her work at [www.elkerevasudin.com](http://www.elkerevasudin.com) and follow @elkerevasudin.

**Saul Sudin** is a narrative and documentary filmmaker pushing for a new voice in Jewish film. His latest documentary production *Punk Jews* was released to acclaim and has screened on five continents. In 2013 the viral video "Sleeping on Strangers on the Subway," which he directed, received over 500,000 views in its first two days. Saul holds degrees in Film and Art History from Pratt Institute and was the recipient of the 2006 Outstanding Merit Award in Media Arts & Film. Saul is co-founder/Creative Director of Jewish Art Now, a resource for contemporary Jewish visual art & design. [www.saulsudin.com](http://www.saulsudin.com) @smsudin.

**Craig Taubman's** musical stylings have made his recordings an integral part of the Jewish community, bridging ancient teachings with contemporary Jewish experiences. Having traveled for years, Craig became passionate about using his talents to bring diverse people together through programs like Friday Night Live. Inspired by the history of the Pico Union Project building, Craig is using his gift for creating community connections through worship and arts to build a multi-faith and multicultural

center...a place where all who enter learn to love themselves, and thus, become able to open their hearts to their neighbors in friendship and love.

**Russell Thomsen** is an architect in downtown Los Angeles and a senior design studio faculty at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc). He is the recipient of both the Young Architects and Emerging Voices awards sponsored by the Architectural League of New York. Together with his late partner, Eric Kahn, he has spent the past eight years working on a self-initiated project entitled, *Thinking the Future of Auschwitz*. The project was supported by a grant from the Graham Foundation for the Arts and exhibited this past fall at SCI-Arc. The work investigates the long-term future of the infamous Nazi concentration camp in Poland and speculates about the role of memorials to the Shoah. It will be published as a book in 2016.

**Ruth Weisberg**, artist, Professor of Fine Arts, former Dean Roski School, University of Southern California, is the Director of the USC Initiative for Israeli Arts and Humanities. Weisberg's work is included in sixty major museums, among them the Metropolitan, the Whitney and the Art Institute of Chicago. She is the recipient of numerous awards, most recently the Foundation for Jewish Culture's 50th Anniversary Award, 2011, and the Southern Graphic Council International's Printmaker Emeritus

Award, 2015. Weisberg has had over 80 solo and 190 group exhibitions, including a major exhibition at the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, a retrospective at the Skirball Museum, Los Angeles and a solo exhibition at the Huntington, San Marino, California.

**Jesse Zaritt** is the inaugural 2014-2015 Research Fellow in the School of Dance at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. He is a former LABA and Dorot Fellow; both platforms enabled him to research relationships between Jewish text and dance practice. He has performed his solos in Russia, Korea, Germany, New York, Japan, Mexico and Israel. Jesse's solo "Binding" is the recipient of three 2010 New York Innovative Theater Awards. Jesse was a member of the Shen Wei Dance Arts Company (2001-2006), the Inbal Pinto Dance Company (2008). He currently works with Faye Driscoll and Jumatau Poe.

**Jana Zimmer** is a Czech-born artist, whose home is in Santa Barbara. She came to art in middle age, and her training primarily has been in printmaking workshops in Santa Barbara, New Mexico, and Florence, Italy. She makes monotypes, collographs, assemblage, digital images and combinations thereof. Her work has been exhibited in Prague & Terezin, Czech Republic; Cadaques, Spain; Hartford, Connecticut; Auckland, New Zealand, and various other venues in Southern California over the last fifteen years.



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