

**MELTON CENTER
FOR JEWISH STUDIES**



2010 - 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

This past year felt busy in the Melton offices, but we did not realize how busy it was until we looked back over our programs this summer. There were over two dozen special Melton programs on campus and in the community, in addition to a number of ongoing programs and projects.

Some of our events this past year were unique. We are especially proud to have been the first university to host a major academic conference on Judaism and dance, **"Modern Jewish Experience Through the Lens of Dance."** We also worked with Ohio State's Center for the Study of Religions to help sponsor a terrific conference on **mysticism and magic**.

In our **"Israel and Its Neighbors"** speaker series (co-sponsored with the Columbus Jewish Federation, and hosted by the Jewish Community Center) we learned about doing business in Israel and the Middle East; the concept of chosenness in Israeli and American culture; and the prospects of 2011 being a year of breakthrough in Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

We enjoyed wonderful **music programs**, including a concert of classical music written by Israeli composers and performed by Asian students, a visit by one of Israel's most respected pianists, and a music-enhanced lecture on Italian Jews and opera. We heard lectures on **art and architecture**, Jewish **philosophy and mysticism**, and the place of religion in **Israeli politics**, among other topics.

Look inside and see what the Melton Center has been up to over the past year. We hope you will join us for many Melton events in the coming year, and that you will help us spread the word about Jewish Studies at Ohio State!

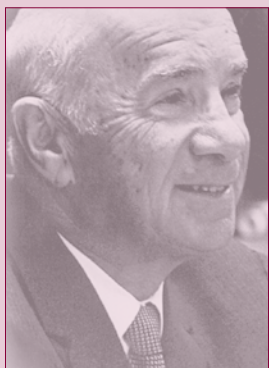
With best wishes for a happy and healthy new year,

Matt Goldish



Photo by Jeffry Konczal

On our cover: A nineteenth century Iranian/Qajar style of painting often found on the back of hand-held mirrors or common illustrations. The inscription reads "Rachel applying a beauty spot and a collyrium (dark eye shadow)," from the private collection of Miryam Rosen-Ayalon.



ABOUT THE MELTON CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

Thanks to the generosity of Samuel M. Melton, the Samuel M. Melton Center for Jewish Studies was established at The Ohio State University in 1976.

Jewish studies at The Ohio State University comprises one of the largest and most diverse programs in the country, offering an impressive selection of courses, a multidisciplinary faculty, and a wide range of events. The Center's work is greatly enhanced by a full time Judaica librarian who manages the Judaica collection (over 300,000 volumes) at the University Libraries — one of the largest and finest of its kind in the United States.

The Melton Center for Jewish Studies remains true to its mission statement:

To develop, promote and support the study, teaching and research of Jewish studies by faculty and students at The Ohio State University;

To encourage an interest in the study of all aspects of the Jewish experience within the central Ohio community, and to sponsor educational programs for the general public service;

To seek outside funding to encourage the growth of the Jewish studies programs at OSU.



Yoram Peri

THE 23RD ANNUAL PEARL AND TROY FEIBEL LECTURE

On October 31, **Professor Yoram Peri**, the Abraham S. and Jack Kay Chair in Israel Studies and Director of the Joseph and Alma Gildenhorn Institute for Israel Studies at the University of Maryland, delivered the Feibel Lecture on Judaism and Law which drew a large crowd at Wexner Heritage Village. His talk, “Between the Knesset and Beit ha-Knesset: State and Religion in Israel,” was an important but controversial analysis of the volatile relations between the Israeli government and Orthodox Jews. Professor Peri fielded questions in the extensive discussion during the program.

Pearl and Troy Feibel’s children, Jim, Don, and Barbara, with the support of Robert Shamansky z “l, who was Troy Feibel’s law partner, created the Pearl and Troy Feibel Lecture on Judaism and Law. This lecture provides a valuable intellectual forum for the Jewish community.



L to R: Jim and Babette Feibel, Professor Peri, Ronnie and Don Feibel, and Robert Shamansky



Robert Shamansky

We mourn the passing of our dear friend and benefactor, Robert Shamansky, who passed away on August 13, 2011 at age 84. He was a longtime law partner of Jim Feibel, a former U.S. Congressman, war veteran, beloved uncle, and friend to many. May his family and friends know no more sorrow.



Photo by Jeffrey Konczal

2011 STUDENT AWARDS

Charlotte Susan Roth Memorial Fund Essay Contest

Gabriel Hall, who is a second year student with a major in History, won first prize in the undergraduate category for his essay, “Jesus and the Essenes.”

In the graduate category, first prize was awarded to **Tyler Yoder** for his paper “Heaven and Earth Collide: Reflections on Ritual and Sacrifice During the Second Temple Period.” Second prize was awarded to both **Miriam Rudavsky-Brody** for her essay, “Lekha Dodi: The Kabbalistic Significance of the Hymn in a Historical Context,” and **Jonathan Leidheiser-Stoddard** for his essay, “Methodology and the Origins of the ‘Amidah Liturgy.’”

Diane M. Cummins Scholarship

Jeffrey Davis and **Leanne Wehl** received the Cummins Scholarship for outstanding achievement in Hebrew. **Peggy Kittila** is this year’s recipient of the Cummins Scholarship for outstanding achievement in Yiddish.

Morris and Fannie Skilken Family Foundation Endowment Fund Scholarship for Yiddish and Ashkenazi Studies

Samantha Melendez, a third year student with a major in Jewish Studies is this year’s recipient of the Skilken Award, which provides a scholarship to students who are actively engaged in Yiddish and Ashkenazi studies.

George and Emily Severinghaus Beck Fund for Study at Vilnius Yiddish Institute

The Severinghaus Beck Scholarship enabled **Allison Davis** and **Jonathan Sobel** to attend a summer program at the Vilnius Yiddish Institute in Lithuania. The Severinghaus Beck Fund was established by an anonymous donor to help support students interested in gaining cross-cultural experience.

Ellen E. and Victor J. Cohn Scholarship for study at Hebrew University

Esther Benatar and **Jeffrey Smagley** are this year’s recipients of the Cohn Scholarship, which supports students who wish to study at Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Esther is pursuing a double major in Sociology and Jewish Studies. Jeffrey is studying Psychology.

The 2011 Norbert and Gretel B. Bloch Endowed Scholarship In Jewish Studies

Rachel Edelman, who is pursuing a double major in Jewish Studies and English, is this year’s Bloch recipient. Rachel will receive a program budget and will collaborate with Melton Center staff to plan, publicize and carry out a program to enhance awareness of topics relevant to Jewish life, culture or history.



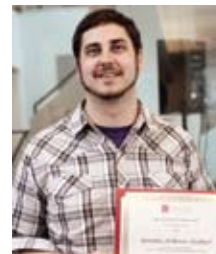
Gabriel Hall



Tyler Yoder



Miriam Rudavsky-Brody



Jonathan Leidheiser-Stoddard



Jeffrey Davis



Leanne Wehl



Peggy Kittila



Samantha Melendez



Allison Davis



Johnathan Sobel



Esther Benatar



Jeffrey Smagley



Rachel Edelman

2011 GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP AWARD WINNERS

George M. and Renée K. Levine Graduate Fellow in Jewish Studies

Tyler Yoder is the winner of this year's Levine fellowship. He is a PhD candidate in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. His work focuses on the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East. More specifically, Tyler is interested in pre-Exilic prophecy and the interface between Mesopotamia and Israel in the Iron Age. The Samuel M. Melton Graduate Fellow in Jewish Studies receives a \$15,000 stipend and a full fee remission for one academic year to work in a core area of Jewish Studies.



Tyler Yoder



Laura Herron

Samuel M. Melton Graduate Fellow in Jewish Studies

Laura Herron is this year's Melton Fellow. She is a PhD candidate in the Department of History. Her doctoral topic concerns Jewish Orientalists from German-speaking Central Europe who adopted Britain as their intellectual home and served colonial interests to varying degrees in Africa or India. The Levine Graduate Fellow in Jewish Studies receives a \$15,000 stipend and a full fee remission for one academic year to work in a core area of Jewish Studies.

REFLECTIONS OF 2009 MELTON GRADUATE FELLOW CORY DRIVER— *MIXED ETHNO-RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE MOROCCAN HIGH ATLAS MOUNTAINS*



GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS IN JEWISH STUDIES

We invite applications for the George M. and Renée Levine Graduate Fellowship in Jewish Studies and the Samuel M. Melton Graduate Fellowship in Jewish Studies. Each fellowship provides a \$15,000 stipend plus a full tuition waiver for one year. Applications must be made through affiliated graduate programs at The Ohio State University. The application deadline is **February 1, 2012**. For full application information, go to our website, meltoncenter.osu.edu, or contact Matt Goldish, director of the Melton Center for Jewish Studies at goldish.1@osu.edu.

My research focuses on memories of Moroccan mixed ethno-religious communities. I spoke with Moroccan Muslim Imazighen (Berbers) about their memories of Jewish communities in the High Atlas region, and I also was fortunate to be able to speak with Moroccan-Israelis about their memories of the Moroccan communities into which they were born.

The Melton Center funded my research in Israel, and I was able to attend the conference on the 150th anniversary of Alliance Israélite Universelle. I was able to speak with truly wonderful people who had amazing stories. I was also able to take an ulpan at the Hebrew University.

When I wasn't researching, traveling or studying, I was able to volunteer on a Moshav, and even got to drive the tractor a time or two.

The Melton Fellowship made the second phase of my research possible. I was able to conduct a much fuller ethnography as well as improve my Modern Hebrew thanks to the Fellowship.

Cory is currently at Emory University completing his dissertation. He is fluent in Moroccan Arabic, conversational in Spanish and Tamazight, and is proficient in Hebrew and Modern Standard Arabic.

STUDENT INTERNS GAIN VALUABLE EXPERIENCE, SKILLS

For the past two years the Melton Center has worked with Jewish community organizations to create internships for a number of our students. Most were with the Columbus Jewish Historical Society, but others were with a special-needs children's group Friendship Circle and other organizations. Students love these opportunities because they are critical to professional development and networking as well as to academic growth. Examples of projects our students have done with the CJHS are: Creation of various panels for a major exhibit on the history of Jewish life in Columbus; a history of Ohio State's Hillel Foundation; a history of the Jewish community's Gallery Players theater group; and the organization of the enormous historical photograph collection of Herb Topy.



Jeremy Katz explaining an exhibit.

In recognition of our work with Columbus Jewish Historical Society, the Melton Center was awarded the Columbus Jewish Historical Society's Organization of the Year prize for 2010-11.

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GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Beginning with Sam Melton's investment in the establishment of the Melton Center for Jewish Studies at The Ohio State University, private support has been invaluable to our mission of developing and promoting the study, teaching and research of Jewish studies by faculty and students. We hope you will make your investment in our students, faculty research, and programs today!



You can make your donation online by going to: www.meltoncenter.osu.edu/giving, (be sure to include fund number **306429**), or complete this form and mail it to us along with your contribution. Many employers offer matching gifts to Ohio State. Go to www.matchinggifts.com/osu/ to see if your company participates.

Enclosed is my gift of: \$1,000 ___ \$500 ___ \$360 ___ \$108 ___ other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(_____) _____ Email _____

Make checks payable to The Ohio State University Development Fund and return with this form to:
The Melton Center for Jewish Studies, 306 Dulles Hall, 230 W. 17th Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1311 **Thank You!**

MELTON CENTER, HILLEL, CHABAD PARTNERS IN PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS



Student led discussion at the Global Day of Jewish Learning.

On November 7, the Columbus **Global Day of Jewish Learning** marked the first event of a partnership initiative by the Melton Center to create programming involving the Melton Center, Ohio State Hillel, and Ohio State Chabad that is appropriate to the missions of all three groups. Melton Center director Matt Goldish presented a short opening talk for this event.

On November 9 we held the second cooperative program involving the Melton Center, Hillel, and Chabad with the screening of the film, “**Theologians Under Hitler**,” in commemoration of Kristallnacht. The film was accompanied by an introduction and question-and-answer session with **Professor Rochelle Millen** of Wittenberg College, a friend of the Melton Center and expert in this area.

The third event in the Melton-Hillel-Chabad cooperation was a screening of the documentary film “**Match and Marry**,” held at Chabad House near campus. Matt Goldish led an excellent discussion on the tradition of matchmaking and how it has adapted to modern times in the Orthodox Jewish community.

Our last event in this year’s series of collaborations with Hillel and Chabad was the screening of the documentary “**A Film Unfinished**,” on May 3 at the Gateway Theater. The film, centered on long-lost footage of Jewish life in the Nazi ghettos, was accompanied by an introduction and discussion by our own **Professor Robin Judd**. The crowd of students, faculty, and community members was so large that people had to be turned away for lack of seats.



Students gathered for a film and discussion.



Matt facilitated discussion about the film.

FACULTY PROFILES



Professor Adena Tanenbaum

Professor Tanenbaum has taught in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Ohio State since 1998. She received her Ph.D. and A.M. from Harvard University. Before coming to Ohio State, Professor Tanenbaum spent twelve years in England at Oxford University, and was a Visiting Lecturer at University College London.

At Ohio State Professor Tanenbaum is the Program Coordinator for Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Contemporary Israeli Culture course. She regularly teaches an Honors section of that course, as well as a variety of medieval and modern Hebrew literature courses. These courses are conducted in Hebrew, and students often tell her how much they appreciate the opportunity to practice speaking while reading and analyzing different types of texts.

Professor Tanenbaum's research focuses on medieval Hebrew poetry and belles-lettres, both as literature and as a source for Jewish intellectual history. She is especially interested in Hebrew literary works from Islamic lands, and the ways in which they incorporate philosophical and mystical themes. Her book, *The Contemplative Soul: Hebrew Poetry and Philosophical Theory in Medieval Spain* (Brill, 2002), was a finalist for the Koret Foundation Jewish Book Award in the Philosophy/Thought category. She is currently writing a monograph on a sixteenth-century Hebrew rhymed prose narrative from Yemen entitled *Sefer Hamusar*. Its author, Zechariah Aldahiri, was a respected religious scholar, bibliophile, and traveler. A colorful and paradoxical work, *Sefer Hamusar* is a rich repository of intellectual history set in a largely fictional framework. Professor Tanenbaum's study aims to bring this engaging work to the attention of a broader readership.

Professor Tanenbaum values the Melton Center for its support of Jewish Studies at Ohio State. She is particularly grateful for the conference travel grants, student fellowships, and academic conferences, speakers, and programs that the Melton Center sponsors.



Professor Joseph Galron-Goldschläger

Professor Joseph Galron is the director of the Hebraica and Jewish Studies Library at The Ohio State University. He began his career as librarian at the Tel-Aviv University's library, where he worked for 15 years before coming to Columbus. He received his Library and Information Science degree from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Under Professor Galron's directorship, the Hebraica and Jewish Studies library at The Ohio State University has the largest Hebraica and Judaica collection (over 300,000 volumes) of all of Ohio's universities. Several special collections include Judaica ephemera (such as a collection of weekly Torah commentaries published in Judea and Samaria); a new acquisition of Jewish sheet-music; and collections on microfilm and microfiche of Israeli newspapers, Hebrew and Yiddish books from the 19th and early 20th centuries, Ladino books from the Netherlands, and a collection of Karaite printing.

Professor Galron has a special interest in modern Hebrew literature. He developed an online bio-bibliographic database in modern Hebrew literature which is supported by Ohio State. Professor Galron has published several books of bibliographies of various authors, for which he received the Bibliography Body-of-Work award from the national Association of Jewish Libraries in 2010. This year he received the Annual Research Excellence award from his colleagues at The Ohio State University Libraries for his bio-bibliographic online project.

Professor Galron is active in the Jewish Studies Librarians community and serves as Vice President for Membership of the Association of Jewish Libraries. He has served on the Board of the Melton Center for Jewish Studies since his arrival at Ohio State.

He values the funding support the Melton Center has provided each year, which has enabled the library to acquire important research materials for students and faculty, as well as funding students to work in the library.

NEW STUDENT SUPPORT ENDOWMENT ESTABLISHED THROUGH PLANNED GIFT

When **Sanford Lipson**, z”l, graduated with a degree in Business Administration from Ohio State in 1939, he was hired by our founder, Sam Melton, to work for him at Capitol Manufacturing Co. Sanford spent his entire career at Capitol Manufacturing and saw it through many successes over the years. Mr. Lipson had a long-standing connection with Jewish life at Ohio State, having served as assistant director of Ohio State Hillel in the 1930s and later on the Hillel board. Inspired by Sam’s passion for innovation in Jewish education, he and his wife Reva established a planned gift to the Melton Center in 1991. The Melton board agreed that the most fitting way to honor Mr. and Mrs. Lipson was to establish the **Reva and Sanford Lipson Student Support Fund**, which will provide financial support annually to Ohio State students studying or researching the history and culture of the Jewish people.



CONFERENCE ON JEWISH LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF DANCE

The Melton Center, with support from Ohio State’s Department of Dance, Center for Slavic and East European Studies, the Columbus Jewish Foundation, and Columbus Jewish Federation’s Jewish Education and Identity department, organized a conference called **“Modern Jewish Experience Through the Lens of Dance”** on February 13 and 14. This was the first conference on dance in Judaism ever held under academic auspices, and included a multimedia performance. Twelve scholars of dance from the U.S. and Israel joined to discuss the history of dance in Judaism, the meaning of performance, and the question of what can be “Jewish” about dance. A master class was also held for advanced dance students using the talents of these visiting scholars. The chief organizer of the conference (together with our staff) was **Dr. Hannah Kosstrin**, a very recent dance PhD from Ohio State, who was supported by a Melton Fellowship a few years ago. Paige Bailey, of our staff, is working with **Amy Schmidt**, an Ohio State dance MFA and conference participant, to create a **video** of highlights from the conference.

Audience members join presenters on stage for a Jewish folk dance.



OSU Dance students perform a modern dance piece by an Israeli choreographer.



Conference Participants. Photos by Catherine Proctor.

ISRAEL AND ITS NEIGHBORS



Rick Schottenstein

On September 19 we welcomed **Mr. Rick Schottenstein** for the first installment of our “Israel and Its Neighbors” community series, which we co-sponsored with the Columbus Jewish Federation. Rick Schottenstein is Managing Director of the Ohio Department of Development’s Ohio Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office in Tel-Aviv, covering Israel, Jordan, and Turkey. Mr. Schottenstein spoke to a large crowd about “Business Cooperation and the Israeli-Arab Conflict: Personal Experiences Doing Business in the Arab World and Israel.” He spoke about aspects of the Israeli economy in a regional context, and the challenges they present to the Jewish State and the Middle East.



Yoram Peri

Professor Yoram Peri, a highly distinguished Israeli editor, politician, and intellectual now teaching at the University of Maryland, spoke on October 31 about prospects for another war in the Middle East in the near future. His talk, “The Middle East in 2011: A Year of Breakthrough or War?” analyzed Israel’s challenges with Iran and the first flotilla incident. His analysis prompted a very active discussion.

MELTON COALITION EVENT EXAMINES JEWS AND THE “OUTSIDE” WORLD

The **Melton Coalition**, consisting of the Melton Centers at Ohio State, Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem organized a traveling panel this year as the Coalition project. The participants, **Professors Robin Judd (Ohio State), Marc Hirshman (Hebrew University) and Benjamin Gampel (JTS)** traveled as a group to Jerusalem, New York, and Columbus to present a discussion called “Inside and Outside: How Jews Regard Outsiders Throughout Jewish History.” Here in Columbus **Mr. Larry Moses**, President of the Wexner Foundation, presented a response to the panel. Sam Melton’s niece, **Mrs. Renée Levine**, and her daughter, **Meryll**, were in attendance along with a large audience at the Jewish Community Center.



Professors Robin Judd (Ohio State), Marc Hirshman (Hebrew University) Benjamin Gampel (JTS) and Mr. Larry Moses (Wexner Foundation)

JEWISH MUSIC, EAST & WEST

Our first concert, “Celebration and Exploration: A Pianistic Journey of Jewish Classical Composers, Concert I” on October 28 featured the celebrated American-Israeli piano virtuoso **Alan Sternfield**. This musical evening was a collaboration with the School of Music, which hosted Professor Sternfield for several days while he taught master classes to graduate students studying piano performance.

The second event in this year’s “Jewish Music East and West” series, “Celebration and Exploration: A Pianistic Journey of Jewish Classical Composers, Concert II: Hands Across Asia---The Far East Meets the Middle East” was held on November 21 at Weigel Hall. This amazing event featured the Graduate Piano Literature Class at Ohio State’s School of Music, taught by our own **Professor Steven Glaser**. The class is made up entirely of Asian piano performers, who all played pieces by 20th century Israeli classical composers. Among the features of this event was a kosher Chinese light dinner served after the concert.

Renowned ethnomusicologist **Dr. Francesco Spagnolo**, Curator of Collections at the Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life at the University of California, Berkeley, gave two presentations on March 13 and 14. On Sunday evening Dr. Spagnolo delivered a public lecture at the Jewish Community Center called, “From Rossi to Rossini: New Approaches to Italian Jewish Musical Culture.” This fascinating talk explored the development of Italian Jewish music in 19th century Italy with musical examples. On Monday Dr. Spagnolo gave a lecture for scholars, hosted at Hillel, discussing the unique resources of the Magnes Collection and how they can be used for research. The Magnes collection is one of the preeminent Jewish collections in the world and has become a resource for academic and curatorial investigations in the context of Jewish and other area studies. **The Diane Cummins Fund for Community Education** helped support Dr. Spagnolo’s visit.

Beyond the Pale, the eclectic klezmer sextet from Toronto performed on April 28 at the beautiful Lincoln Theatre. Their concert included Klezmer, Balkan, and Romanian styles with an eclectic range of North American influences, which delighted the audience. The concert was co-sponsored with CityMusic, the Columbus Foundation, the Ohio Arts Council, Target, Holiday Inns, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council.



Melton faculty with Alan Sternfield. L-R Michael Swartz, Jan Radzynski, Sternfield and Steve Glaser



Professor Glaser with his class



Dr. Spagnolo speaks to a crowd at the JCC



Beyond the Pale

GUEST SPEAKERS EXPLORE HISTORY THROUGH LITERATURE, ART, FILM AND CULTURE

Author Speaks on Biography of Famed Gallerist Leo Castelli

Author **Annie Cohen-Solal**, visiting professor at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, spoke about her widely lauded new biography of Leo Castelli, *Leo and His Circle*, at the Wexner Center for the Arts on October 3. The audience had many questions about Castelli, a leading gallerist and patron of modern art, and Professor Cohen-Solal's process in writing the volume. This event was co-sponsored with the Wexner Center, Jewish Community Center Bookfair, and Ohio State Departments of Art History, French and Italian, and Comparative Studies.



Melton Center Professor Paul Reitter and Annie Cohen-Solal

additional support from the School of Environmental and Natural Resources, the Department of Facilities Operations and Development, Ohio Council of Churches, Ohio Interfaith Power and Light, and Ohio State

Hillel to run a program on March 30 called "Food, Faith, and a Sustainable Future: Eco-Judaism from the Ground Up." This event featured Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, a leading figure in the Eco-Judaism movement. Participants included 100 students, community people, and faculty. Two of our own Ohio State faculty, including Professor Tamar Rudavsky, long-time director of the Melton Center, also participated in the planning.



Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb



Packed crowd in the Union.

Chosen Peoples

Professor Todd Gitlin of Columbia University's School of Journalism discussed his new book *Chosen Peoples: America, Israel, and the Ordeals of Divine Election* on November 3. He talked about how he sees the "special relationship" between America and Israel as a consequence of the two nations' vision of themselves as chosen in some divine or cosmic sense. This event was co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Center's Bookfair.



Todd Gitlin. Photo courtesy of Jill Kremenz

Latin American Jewry

The Melton Center and Ohio State's Center for Historical Research brought **Professors Ra'anan Rein** and **Sandra McGee Deutsch**, two of the top experts in the field of Latin American Jewry, to Columbus March 31 and April 1. On March 31 they presented popular lectures to an engaged community audience at the Jewish Community Center, and gave scholarly papers regarding their research in the Department of History on campus the next day. Professor Rein's study of the role played by soccer in the consciousness of Argentine Jewish communities received particular attention. The event was facilitated and organized by the Melton Center's own **Professor Donna Guy**.



Professors Ra'anan Rein, Sandra McGee Deutsch and Alan Gallay

Magic and Mysticism: Contested Terms, Material Objects, and Charismatic Figures

The Melton Center supported a conference at Ohio State's Center for the Study of Religion called "**Magic and Mysticism: Contested Terms, Material Objects, and Charismatic Figures**" on February 24 and 25. This workshop brought together a top international group of academic scholars to work in this fascinating and important area, whose resonances are constantly with us in today's world. The discussion was deep and lively, and dozens of students from various courses came to hear the sessions. **Professor Ra'anan Boustan** of UCLA delivered the keynote lecture, held at Thompson Library before a large audience from around the university. His topic was, "Rabbinization and the Making of Early Jewish Mysticism."

Bloch Program on Eco-Judaism

Each year the Melton Center awards the Norbert and Gretel B. Bloch scholarship to a deserving student who receives a significant credit toward tuition and a budget to run a program of Jewish interest chosen by the student. This year we received

College of Jewish Knowledge

On Sunday, April 3, the Melton Center participated with the institutions of the Jewish community in presenting the **College of Jewish Knowledge**. A group of our professors joined rabbis and community educators in presenting an assortment of one-hour classes on Judaism in two segments from which the community was invited to select. About 150 people came to the Jewish Community Center to participate; many if not most heard at least one lecture from a member of our faculty.





The day included an evening program, in which a large crowd came to hear the Melton Center's invited guest, **Professor Marc Michael Epstein** of Vassar College. Professor Epstein is a specialist in the history of medieval Jewish art, and he showed the audience how to evoke historical information from an illuminated Hebrew manuscript.



Cohen reads a section of his book to a crowd of students and community members

Professor Epstein spoke the next day to a campus audience on "Jews and Art: Secret Transcripts." He discussed the special ways one "reads" art and the unique aspects of Jewish art from the Middle Ages. The Department of Art History co-sponsored this talk, which was attended by faculty and graduate students.

Allan Wexler: Form Follows Ritual

The Melton Center, along with Ohio State's Knowlton School of Architecture and Department of Art, sponsored a talk by **Allan Wexler**, internationally acclaimed artist and architect, who spoke at the School of Architecture on April 6. His talk, "Form Follows Ritual: Building for Ceremony," concerned his philosophy of design based on the relationships between our physical environments and everyday activities. He attended particularly to religious rituals and settings, specifically those in Jewish culture.



Allan Wexler

Professor Daniel Lasker on Rabbi Judah Halevi, Maimonides, Jewish Critique of Christianity

One of the world's leading scholars of medieval Jewish thought and history, **Professor Daniel Lasker** of Ben Gurion University of the Negev, gave several talks on May 13 and 15 at the invitation of the Melton Center. On Friday Professor Lasker presented a seminar for faculty and advanced students concerning "The Jewish Critique of Christianity: In Search of a New Narrative." This topic engendered a lively discussion, particularly with faculty. The crowd in the University Museum was standing-room-only. On Sunday morning Professor Lasker spoke to a community audience about "Two Models of Jewish Thought: Rabbi Judah Halevi and Maimonides." The discussion was pitched perfectly for an educated lay audience, and many people came to hear him.

Exile of Defiant Women

Novelist **Robert Cohen**, adjunct professor of German at New York University, spoke on October 11 about his work *Exile of Defiant Women*, concerning a trio of anti-fascist female political exiles, two of them Jewish, who were active during the early period of World War II. Professor Cohen's visit was co-sponsored with the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures.

Ohio State Judaica Library Acquires Jewish Sheet Music Collections

In the last five years the Hebraica and Jewish Studies library purchased several collections of Jewish sheet music owned by cantors in the San Diego area. The collections came from the archives of four cantors: Sheldon F. Merel, cantor emeritus of Congregation Beth Israel; Cantor Charles S. Kodner, who was cantor at Congregation Beth Am in San Diego; Howard Fried z"l, an operatic baritone who studied at the Manhattan School of Music with Fredrich Schorr; and Harold Elijah Katz, who was a cantorial soloist at several synagogues, most notably the Vine St. Temple in Nashville, and soloist at Temple Solel in the San Diego area. For more information about the collection, email Joseph Galron, galron.1@osu.edu.

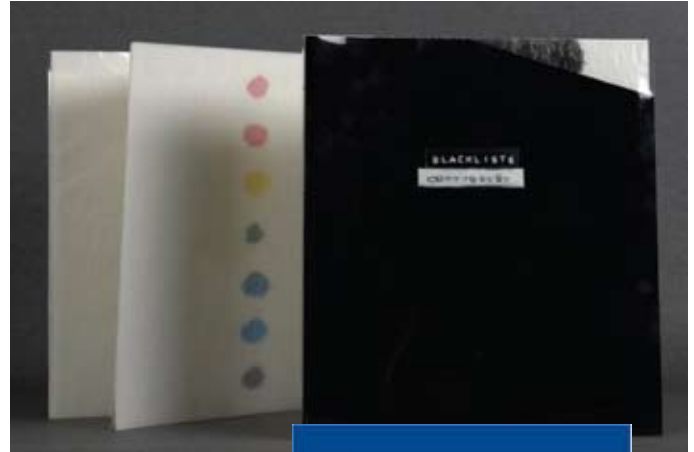


Songs of Israel, Settings by Reuven Kosakoff, Metro Music, NY. Three Gifts - A Cananite for Narration and Unison Chorus with Folk Melodies from Israel, adapted, arranged & composed by Harold Elijah Katz. Based upon a story by I.L. Peretz and a script by Rabbi David Polish, 1966, self-published.

FACULTY BOOKS AND HONORS

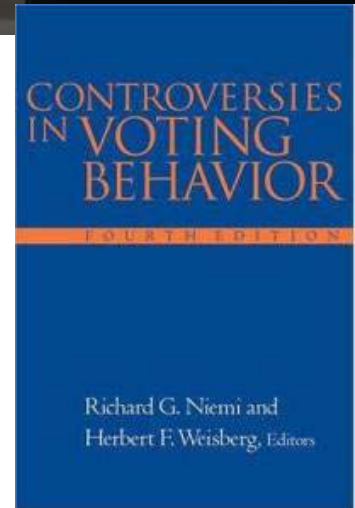
Steven Fink was the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Distinguished Visiting Professor in Judaic Studies at the College of William and Mary's Program in Judaic Studies and Department of Religious Studies, March 22-March 24, 2011.

Suzanne Silver's solo exhibition "Broken English" was featured at the Semantics Gallery in Cincinnati, Ohio. Hand-printed copies of her artist's book, *Blacklist/Whitelists*, have recently entered the rare books and manuscripts collections of libraries at The Ohio State University, Smith College, Swarthmore College, and the University of Virginia. She is also the recipient of the Greater Columbus Arts Council Visual Arts Award in 3-d art for 2011.



Suzanne Silver's
hand-printed book,
Blacklist/Whitelists

Herb Weisberg was selected to be a Fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan in Autumn 2011 to do research on "The Distinctive Jewish-American Voter". He co-edited *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, 5th ed., (CQ Press, 2011) with Richard Niemi and David Kimball.



MEET NEW MELTON BOARD MEMBER, PROFESSOR HERB WEISBERG

Professor Weisberg teaches in the Department of Political Science, which he chaired for many years. His latest research is on Jewish voting patterns. He is currently a visiting fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan to work on a project entitled "The Distinctive Jewish-American Voter." His research and teaching interests include voting behavior, legislative behavior, survey research, and statistical methods.



Herb Weisberg

FACULTY, 2011-2012

Alan Beyerchen, Associate Professor
(PhD, University of Calif., Santa Barbara)
Modern German History

Naomi Brenner, Assistant Professor
(PhD, University of Calif., Berkley)
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