

Jacob Perlow Events (2012-2024)

This Is Your Song Too: Phish and Contemporary Jewish Identity

March 2024, Emerson Auditorium

Skidmore alumni Oren Kroll-Zeldin '03 and Ariella Werden-Ryan '04 gave a book talk on their new co-edited work *This Is Your Song Too: Phish and Contemporary Jewish Identity* (Penn State University Press, 2023). Proposed by Ryan Overbey (Religious Studies) and co-sponsored by the Religious Studies Department and the Music Department.

Accessing the Sacred: Creating Torah and Art

February-March 2024, Payne Room in the Tang Museum

Rabbi Linda Motzkin presented a multipart series: a lecture on “Women and the Making of Torah” about women’s involvement in the Jewish scribal tradition and the process of Torah production; a display of Rabbi Linda’s scribal art accompanied by an artist’s talk; and a hands-on educational workshop in which students, faculty, staff, and the public were invited to take part in the Community Torah Project by helping with the preparation of a local deerskin for use as parchment. Proposed by Alexandra Prince & Gregory Spinner (Religious Studies) and co-sponsored by the Religious Studies Department and the Tang Teaching Museum with additional support by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, American Studies Department, History Department, and John B. Moore Documentary Studies Collaborative.

Creation Care and the Climate Crisis: What can we do? A Jewish Perspective

October 2023, Gannett Auditorium and across campus

A residency and lecture by Madeline Hirschland, Executive Director of Creation Care Partners, on climate crisis, social justice, and faith communities. Activities included a multi-faith congregational workshop, a workshop for climate change/activism with Skidmore students, and class visits in Environmental Studies and Sciences and in Religious Studies. Proposed by Nurcan Atalan-Helicke (Environmental Studies and Sciences) and co-sponsored by the Environmental Studies and Sciences program, Religious Studies Department, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, Skidmore Hillel, Skidmore Environmental Action Club, Temple Sinai, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Saratoga Springs, and Presbyterian United Church.

Comedy for Peace

September 2023, Filene Recital Hall

Comedy for Peace features Muslim, Jewish, and Christian stand-up comedians and aims to unite Jewish and Muslim communities through humor and mutual understanding. Co-sponsored by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life.

Reimagining Jewish Life in the Middle East and North Africa, 1800-Present

October 2022, Davis Auditorium

A lecture by Lior Sternfeld, associate professor of history and Jewish Studies at Penn State, on narrating Jewish life in the modern Middle East. Proposed and introduced by Murat Yildiz (History). Co-sponsored by the History Department.

Jews and Latinos: Unlikely Partners

October 2022, Gannett Auditorium

A lecture by Ilan Stavans, Lewis-Sebring Professor of Humanities, Latin American, and Latino Culture at Amherst College. Co-Sponsored by Dean of Students Office, Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies Program, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, and the President's Racial Justice Initiative.

Two Truths in One Heart; Two Peoples in One Land

November 2021, Gannett Auditorium

Shadi Abu Awwad and Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger of Roots/Shorashim/Judur shared personal, interconnected stories and presented the challenging grassroots work of the unique collaboration of Palestinians and Israelis that is Roots/Shorashim Judur. Co-sponsored by the President's Racial Justice Initiative, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, Office of Student Diversity Programs, and Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity.

Israel's Multiculturalism

April 2019, Gannett Auditorium

Lian Ryan-Hume, Israel's first Arab Rhodes Scholar, grew up in a liberal Muslim family, attended a Christian high school, and volunteered in a reform Jewish community center. She spoke of celebrating Israel's multicultural character. Co-sponsored by Jewish Student Life.

Seven Myths About the Holocaust

April 2019, Gannett Auditorium

A presentation by Werner Reich, author, magician, and survivor. Co-sponsored by Jewish Student Life and the Office of Student Diversity Programs, with a generous donation from the Dolores Kohl Educational Foundation.

Kosher/Soul?: Black-Jewish Identity Cooking

March 2019, Filene Recital Hall

Food-blogger, culinary historian, and author Michael Twitty lectured as part of a three-day campus residency that also included a public conversation on "Sugar, Slavery, and Power" with Rachel Seligman, Assistant Director for Curatorial Affairs and Malloy Curator at the Tang Teaching Museum. Twitty is a culinary historian personally charged with preparing, preserving, and promoting African American foodways. His cooking and promoting efforts trace the parent traditions of these foodways in Africa and her Diaspora and its legacy in the food culture of the American South. Co-sponsored with the Environmental Studies and Sciences Program, Tang Teaching Museum, Sustainability Office, Intergroup Relations, and the English Department.

***In Her Footsteps* by documentarian Rana Abu Fraiha**

February 2019, Gannett Auditorium

A screening of award-winning Israeli documentarian Rana Abu Fraiha's film *In Her Footsteps* followed by an interview with Sarah Friedland, director of MDOCS Storytellers Institute. The evening was proposed and introduced by Murat Yildiz, Assistant Professor of History. Co-sponsored with History, MDOCS, International Affairs, Political Science, Gender Studies, Religious Studies, Hillel, Muslim Students Association, and the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life.

From the East Side to the West Side: The Jewish West Side Story

October 2018, Arthur Zankel Music Center, Helen Filene Ladd Hall
A lecture presented by Elizabeth A. Wells, Dean of Arts and Pickard-Bell Chair in Music at Mount Allison University. Co-sponsored by the Music Department and introduced by Sarah Day-O'Connell (Music).

Jews, Muslims, and Music in the 20th Century Maghrib: A History in Three Records

October 2018, Gannett Auditorium

A multi-media lecture presentation by Chris Silver, Segal Family Assistant Professor in Jewish History and Culture in the Department of Jewish Studies at McGill University. Proposed and introduced by Murat Yildiz (History).

The Power of Palestine: Imperishable in a Transnational World

September 2018, Davis Auditorium

Karam Dana, Associate Professor of Middle East Politics and Islamic Studies at the University of Washington Bothell presented a critical analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to a standing-room only audience. Feryaz Ocakli (Political Science) proposed the lecture and introduced the talk.

Gaga: The Movement Language of Physical Research

April 2018, Dance Theater

A residency based on campus-wide participation in Gaga, the language and exploration of physical research developed by the artistic director of Israel's acclaimed Batsheva Dance Company, Ohad Naharin. Culminating in a performance of Naharin's seminal work *Echad Mi Yodea* set on students of the Skidmore Dance Department, the Gaga residency is designed to facilitate a campus-wide physical dialogue surrounding themes in modern Israeli and Jewish culture such as identity, otherness, and humanity. Co-sponsored with the Dance Department.

Inhabiting/Excavating/Sustaining: Understanding *This Place*

March 2018, Tang Museum

A public round-table dialogue inspired by the Tang's exhibition *This Place* to foreground the distinctly Jewish perspective on the land of Israel. This conversation brings together scholar Paul Mendes-Flohr, the Dorothy Grant Maclear Professor of Modern Jewish History and Thought at the University of Chicago Divinity School; archaeologist Jodi Magness, the Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism at UNC-Chapel Hill; and international consultant Michael Ben-Eli, founder of the Sustainability Laboratory. Together they will lead a public conversation about "this place" through three interrelated lenses: the identities and communities that inhabit the land, understanding the land through its archaeology, and the complex environmental issues around sustaining the land. Co-presented with the Tang Museum.

Recalling Jewish Calcutta

November 2017, Davis Auditorium

A lecture by Jael Silliman Scholar, author, and curator of www.jewishcalcutta.in with an introduction by Yelena Biberman-Ocakli (Political Science). Co-sponsored by the Political Science Department and MDOCS.

Reclaiming My Dignity: A Talk with a Palestinian Refugee and Human Rights Activist

October 2017, Gannett Auditorium

World-renowned Palestinian-Muslim human rights activist and political analyst Bassem Eid was born and lived in a Palestinian refugee camp. In this talk, he shares his opinions on some of the problems the Palestinian people face and discusses options for the future. Co-presented with Skidmore Hillel, Skidmore Christian Fellowship, HAYAT, and the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life.

The Long Struggle for Israel-Palestine

October 2017, Davis Auditorium

A lecture by Jeremy Pressman, Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Middle East Studies at the University of Connecticut with an introduction by Feryaz Ocakli (Political Science). Ending the struggle for Israel-Palestine would require Israeli and Palestinian concessions. This talk considered the one-state and two-state solutions, their differences, the pros and cons of each option, and the obstacles standing in the way of realizing a resolution.

The Invention of Judaism: Torah and Jewish Identity

September 2017, Davis Auditorium

A lecture by John J. Collins, Holmes Professor of Old Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale University with an introduction by Gregory Spinner (Religious Studies).

Wrestling with the Dead: Making Art in the Aftermath

June 2017, Tang Museum

Acclaimed graphic novelist Leela Corman spoke about her experience making art and of art's relationship to terrible events in a talk introduced by Gregory Spinner (Religious Studies).

Baruch Spinoza Lectures

February and March 2017, Davis Auditorium

In conjunction with the departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies, the Perlow Series presented a series of three lectures on Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) focusing on his life, his philosophy, and the relation of both to Judaism. Guest lecturers from Johns Hopkins, Yale, and McGill universities presented public lectures, visited Philosophy classes, and conversed over shared meals with our faculty and students. Lectures were introduced by William Lewis and Larry Jorgensen (Philosophy).

Bringing the Past into the Future

February 2017, Zankel-ELM

Rachel Fidler from the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust shared the impact that has emerged through "With Voices of History," a Museum project working with youth and Holocaust survivors. Moderated by Dan Nathan (American Studies). Co-sponsored by MDOCS.

The Search for Major Plagge

November 2016, Davis Auditorium

Author and medical doctor Michael Good lectured on "The Search for Major Plagge, the Nazi who saved Jews: a story of moral courage in the midst of the Holocaust." Bernie Possidente (Biology) introduced the speaker.

Is There A Jewish Art?

November 2016, Gannett Auditorium
Leading art critic Jed Perl delivered a lecture entitled "Is There A Jewish Art?" Robert Boyers (English) introduced the speaker.

**Rising Challenges from the Middle East:
Living and Working for Peace between Israelis & Palestinians**

February 2016, Gannett Auditorium

Dr. Gershon Baskin discussed how the turmoil in the Middle East region impacts the chances of peace. Co-sponsored by the Office of Jewish Student Life, Skidmore College Hillel, Temple Sinai, and J Street Albany/Capital District.

Italian Jews: An Evening of Cultural History and Cinematic Representation

March 2015, Gannett Auditorium

Dr. Risa Sodi delivered a lecture on "Pitigliano, the (Italian) Little Jerusalem" followed by a film screening of Ferzan Ozpetek's *Facing Windows* (2003). Co-sponsored by the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department and the History Department.

Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project

March 2015, Filene Hall

A play dramatizing Jewish life in the Warsaw Ghetto during the war and the heroic story of the 'righteous gentiles' who risked their lives to save others by forging documents and hiding and placing Jewish children in convents and Polish homes. Co-sponsored by the Office of Jewish Student Life, the Office of the Dean of Special Programs, Skidmore College Hillel, Temple Sinai, Congregation Shaara T'fille. With the participation of Honors Forum students Lainie Oshlag '16, Anna Kasok '16, David Glassman '17 and Cody Couture '16.

Celebrating the Music of Jewish Composers:

Milhaud, Schoenfield, Mendelssohn, Schulhoff, and Schoenberg

October 2014, Arthur Zankel Music Center, Helen Filene Ladd Hall

Acclaimed pianist and Skidmore faculty member Pola Baytelman played the music of Jewish composers. Pola has toured extensively in China, Europe, Hong Kong, South America, and across the United States. Her broad repertory spans from the 18th to the 21st centuries, contributing to her strong reputation as both an artist and an educator.

One Land, Two Worlds, One Painful Hope

September 2015, Inter-Cultural Center

Ali Abu Awwad spoke on new approaches to peace building in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Co-Sponsored by the Office of Jewish Student Life, the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, the Government Department, Hillel, Hayat, J Street U and the Newman Club.

Graphic Jews: Negotiating Identity in Sequential Art

February 2014, Tang Museum

Sequential artists Ben Katchor, Leela Corman, and James Sturm spoke about their work in the medium of comics and discuss the ways in which their work engages with contemporary constructions of Jewish identity. Co-moderated by Dr. Gene Kannenberg Jr., historian, director of ComicsResearch.org and author of *500 Essential Graphic Novels*; and Gregory Spinner, Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion, Skidmore College. Sponsored by the Jacob Perlow Lecture Series and presented in collaboration with the Tang Museum, Skidmore College. A related, semester-long exhibit at the Tang was co-curated by Rachel Seligman and Greg Spinner.

Identities Conference

November 2013, Gannett Auditorium

The Perlow fund co-sponsored the Identities Conference in conjunction with SALMAGUNDI magazine, the Zankel Fund, and the English Department.

Allen Guttman lecture: Jewish Athletes and the 'Nazi Olympics' of 1936

October 2013, Davis Auditorium

With the American Studies Department and the History Department, the Perlow fund co-sponsored a lecture by scholar Allen Guttman. Guttman, recently retired from Amherst College after teaching there for more than 50 years, discussed the 1936 Olympics, the Nazi refusal to allow participation by German Jews, the boycott controversy in the US, and the Jewish athletes who did or did not compete in Berlin.

Howard Fishman presents "No Further Instructions"

March 2013, Helen Filene Ladd Concert Hall, Arthur Zankel Music Center

Howard Fishman uses his music to develop a more profound understanding of his heritage and identity as a Jewish American. The content is personal, the voice is Jewish and the music is incredibly American. Howard Fishman's 'No Further Instructions' is a multi-generic, multi-media song cycle that seeks to unravel the complexities of the American Jewish identity. In an effort to understand his heritage Fishman traveled to rural Romania. The songs work to develop an introspective narrative about the rich experiences and eccentric people that Fishman encountered on his trip. "At its core, NO FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS is about community and spirituality in the 21st century – about what it means to live a mindful life, and what connects us all as humans and citizens of the world."

The Crisis of Zionism: Panel discussion featuring Peter Beinart

November 2012, Gannett Auditorium

The featured speaker for the Fall 2012 Jacob Perlow Lecture Series, Peter Beinart addressed politics, the presidency, elections, and the American Jewish establishment. The evening features a panel discussion with Robert Boyers, English Professor and Editor of Salmagundi Magazine, and Jennifer Delton, Professor of History. A reception and book signing follow. Peter Beinart is hailed as a wunderkind by peers, colleagues, and politicians. He is the associate professor of journalism and political science at The City University of New York, a senior political writer for The Daily Beast-Newsweek, and a Schwartz senior fellow at the New America Foundation. Beinart burst onto the punditry scene immediately after graduating from Oxford in 1995. Since then, he has been editor of The New Republic magazine, written widely acclaimed books, and been a featured player on the television news circuit for his expertise and articulate analysis.

DNAWORKS presents "HaMapah"

October 2012, Dance Theater

A multimedia dance journey tracing the intersections of African, Jewish and Native American heritages. In Hebrew, "HaMapah" means "the tablecloth" or "the map." "HaMapah" weaves contemporary dance with archival material, personal interviews, Yiddish and American songs, and video set to traditional, contemporary, and classical music. In "HaMapah" performed Adam McKinney explores issues of identity, culture, self-hood, and community. As part of the program, immediately following the performance, DNAWORKS Co-Directors McKinney and Banks lead a community dialogue about the audience's relationship to the core ideas of the piece the personal and the collective, the present and the past.

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf: "Advancing Peaceful Coexistence between Christians, Jews and Muslims"

September 2012, Filene Recital Hall

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf has received numerous awards including Time magazine which named him among the 100 most influential people of the world and Arianna Huffington's "2010 Game Changer" Award, and was listed as one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers of 2010 by Foreign Policy magazine. Serving as respondents to Imam Feisal's talk will be Gregory Spinner, Assistant Prof. of Religion and a specialist in Judaism and Islam, and the Rev. Richard Chrisman, Ph.D., Director of Religious and Spiritual Life. A question and answer period will follow. The event is a collaboration of Skidmore's Office of Religious and Spiritual Life and the Saratoga Peace Week Committee. Co-sponsoring groups on the Skidmore campus include the Jewish Student Life Office, the Jacob Perlow Fund, the Religion and Philosophy Dept., the International Affairs Dept., and the Intercultural Center. This event is also supported by funding from the President's Discretionary Fund and from the Nordlys Foundation.

In Between: A one man show written and performed by Ibrahim Miari

March 2012, Dance Theater

"In Between" is a semi-autobiographical one man show that portrays the complexities and contradictions inherent in Palestinian-Israeli identity. On the precipice between two cultures stands Ibrahim Miari. His play recalls his childhood in Acco, memories of his Jewish and Palestinian grandmothers, of war, and of the struggle to shape and understand his own multi-faceted identity. The performance was co-sponsored by the Office of Jewish Student Life and the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life.

Isle of Klezbos

February 2012, Helen Filene Ladd Concert Hall, Arthur Zankel Music Center

A Jacob Perlow Series Event sponsored by the Office of the Dean of Special Programs, the visit from the Klezbos also featured a lunchtime jam session in the Dining Hall and a visit to the American Studies course, AM 260J Diversity in the U.S. Isle of Klezbos is a six-piece women's klezmer band. A versatile, neo-traditional ensemble, the group plays imaginative versions of eclectic Eastern European-rooted Jewish folk music, Yiddish swing and tango, plus an ever-expanding repertoire of vibrant originals. The sextet brings together a rare combination of talent inspired by extensive experiences in a kaleidoscopic array of styles, from klezmer to Cajun, funk, reggae, classical, punk, and Latin jazz.

Faces of Israel

February 2012, Gannett Auditorium

A panel discussion featuring a delegation of six Israelis representing a variety of religions, cultures, and political views who shared stories that emphasized the pluralistic, multicultural, and democratic character of the state of Israel. "Faces of Israel" was a dialogue-enhancing team of young Israelis – Jews and Arabs natural-born and immigrants; gay and straight; religious and secular – on a world tour to engage with college students and communities from around the globe about their personal experiences, without shying away from the complex political and cultural issues Israel faces. Participants were from the Galilee, the Negev, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa and places in between; they were aspiring lawyers, social workers and diplomats; they were communications professionals and economists. The panel addressed current Israeli issues, including women's rights, Israeli-Palestinian relationships, and the effect of war on civilians. Skidmore sophomore Erika Wohl coordinated the program as her Honors Forum citizenship project. Following the performance, the 5 presenters visited the History course, HI-335R German History Since 1918.