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# The Golden Peacock

Fall 2016

## Major Gifts Establish Two New Series

The Stahl Center has established a new, annual distinguished lecture series in Jewish Studies. The new initiative began with the offer of a matching gift from the Baye Foundation, the Stahl Center's main sponsor. That gift led to a fundraising campaign that culminated in the successful application for a \$40,000 grant from Milwaukee's Bader Philanthropies.

As a result, we are pleased to have launched the Sam & Helen Stahl Center Distinguished Lecture Series, an annual event that will bring notable thinkers from across the field of Jewish Studies to share their ideas with the Milwaukee community. The subject matter may come from any time period, and from any discipline that intersects with Jewish Studies. Over time, the new series will introduce our audiences to many of the leading figures in the field.

The inaugural speaker for this series was culinary historian Michael Twitty, who gave a presentation called "Kosher/Soul: Black & Jewish 'Identity Cooking.'" In an onstage conversation in front of hundreds of audience members in the Milwaukee Public Library's Centennial Hall, Mr. Twitty and Stahl Center Director Joel Berkowitz discussed how the foodways and other cultural and religious traditions of Blacks and Jews, in America and elsewhere, have at times intersected and at other times taken their own distinct paths. The discussion also ranged widely over other topics, including African and Jewish languages, botany, geography, and genetics. Twitty regularly explores many of these issues on his popular blog, *afroculinaria.com*, and will delve into them in even greater depth in his forthcoming book, *The Cooking Gene*.

Michael Twitty's presentation simultaneously launched a second initiative that was seeded with a portion of the Bader Philanthropies grant. "The Color of Jewishness" examines the beliefs, practices, and accomplishments of Jews of color, as well as intersections between Jewish

history and culture and those of people of color, regardless of their religious affiliation. Presentations in this series will include lectures, workshops, and concerts, and will help build intellectual, cultural, and personal bridges across a number of communities, on and off campus, throughout the Milwaukee area.

That process of bridge building was evident during Michael Twitty's visit in a number of ways. The Stahl Center partnered with Be'chol Lashon, a national organization whose mission is to advocate "for the growth and diversity of the Jewish people." Be'chol Lashon's Midwest Director, Shahanna McKinney-Baldon, hosted a reception at the Library before Twitty's presentation, and also brought him to Madison following his visit to Milwaukee.

Twitty's Milwaukee visit, which included a cooking demonstration\* held in the test kitchen at UWM's Zilber School of Public Health, attracted a diverse audience. It also generated wide publicity, including interviews with Mitch Teich on WUWM's "Lake Effect," and 88.9 Radio Milwaukee's Tarik Moody.

The next installment in the "Color of Jewishness" series will feature renowned singer Sarah Aroeste, who performs traditional Ladino music as well as new interpretations and compositions. At the same time, Aroeste educates audiences about this rich, important, but largely overlooked body of work. For further details, see the fall calendar on page 6.

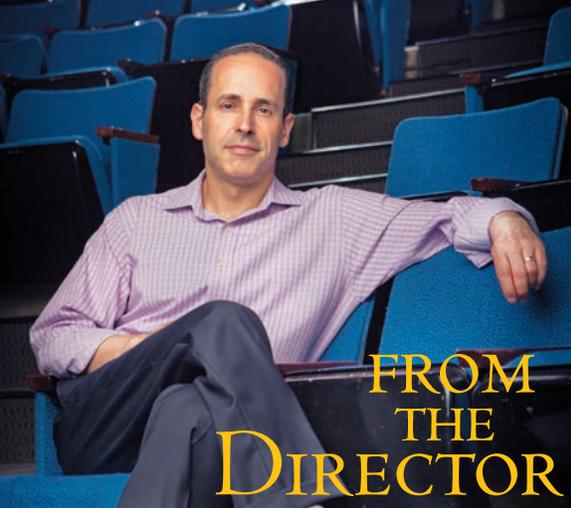
\* Try Michael's recipe! We've included it on the back page.



Michael Twitty & Rabbi Tiferet Berenbaum of Congregation Shir Hadash, Milwaukee



Dr. Mohammed Dajani (R) with UWM's Doug Savage



It has been a busy year—indeed, a busy six years since a previously unnamed center took the name of Sam & Helen Stahl, and quickly ramped up its activities. Since then we have organized or co-sponsored over 120 public programs on numerous topics and in many different formats: lectures, book launches, concerts, film screenings, art exhibitions, colloquia, workshops, and an international conference. Those events reached thousands of people who attended in person, and gained wider attention through media coverage such as local newspapers and radio stations.

Collectively, our programs have offered a remarkable education, provided by a roster of world-renowned scholars, artists, and thinkers. The subject matter has ranged from ancient texts to 21st-century culture and society, and our speakers, texts, and films have spanned the globe: from the U.S. to Europe to Israel and Palestine; from Buenos Aires to Bombay to Beijing. We have learned from leading scholars, including (to name just a few) Jill Dolan, Sander Gilman, Sam Kassow, Deborah Dash Moore, David Nirenberg, David Shneer, and Alisa Solomon. We have conversed with noted authors such as David Bezmozgis, Simon Sebag-Montefiore, and Jim Shepard, and heard from newer voices who are already shaking up the literary scene, including Boris Fishman, Paul Goldberg, and Stuart Rojstaczer. We have also enjoyed many documentary and feature films, some of them followed by conversations with their directors, like Robin Hessman, Simon Target, and Adam Zucker. Acclaimed performers such as Hankus Netsky, Joanne Borts, and Lorin Sklamberg and the Klezmatics have regaled us in Yiddish, English, and Yinglish, and Sarah Aroeste

will soon expand our repertoire to Ladino as well. And culinary historian Michael Twitty even cooked for us, and attracted a diverse audience to explore the rich, sometimes intersecting histories of Jewish and African-American food traditions.

Our public programs accomplish many objectives, none more important than fostering greater understanding of Jewish history, religion, and culture—a mission at the heart of our formal curriculum as well. Our students, regardless of religious background, learn from faculty dedicated to making the undergraduate experience stimulating and challenging, while actively nurturing the students they teach. We reap the fruits of that labor in many ways: in fostering civil, informative discussions about complex and often emotionally charged issues; in seeing students go from not knowing the *aleph-bet* to gaining a solid foundation in Hebrew; in hearing how study-abroad experiences complement and enrich classroom instruction; and in learning that some of our finest students' intellectual journeys take them from coursework in Hebrew Studies and Jewish Studies to graduate degrees and employment in related fields.

Having an academic center with strong community support also provides us with resources to foster another of the University's central missions: research excellence. This year, UWM became one of 115 institutions nationwide awarded a coveted Research Level 1 designation from the Carnegie Foundation, in recognition of our high level of scholarly research activity. UWM achieved this on a shoestring, with much fewer resources per faculty member than most other institutions on the list, many of them among the most prestigious universities in the world. And faculty in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Studies contributed to that research activity, with books, articles, and conference presentations in such fields as Hebrew poetry, European Jewish history, Holocaust Studies, and Jewish theatre and performance.

The past couple of years, though, have truly been the best of times and the worst of times for UWM. On the one hand, the

Research 1 designation was an unprecedented triumph, and an achievement to be truly proud of. On the other hand, devastating budget cuts and structural changes have shaken the entire UW System to its core, and threatened to permanently damage the noble, important missions it has fulfilled for many decades. We have fallen to historic low levels of state funding, and rely more than ever on alternate sources of revenue. You are therefore likely to find my colleagues and me being more assertive than ever in asking for your financial assistance to help fund our many activities. I would greatly appreciate your supporting us, or increasing your level of support, as you consider the worthy causes on your list, and I am always happy to talk to donors and potential donors about the many worthy uses toward which we put our funding.

The courses and programs on the immediate horizon continue to showcase the high quality of the Stahl Center's offerings. In the coming months, we will again partner with the Milwaukee Film Festival and UWM's LGBT Film Festival. We will partner with Milwaukee's Jewish Community Relations Council to bring to campus an important discussion of reconciliation after violence. We will bring Hasia Diner, a leading historian of American Jewry and a Milwaukee native, to deliver the 2016 Faye Sigman "Woman of Valor" lecture. And we will continue the "Color of Jewishness" initiative with an exciting evening of Ladino music with Sarah Aroeste and her trio. For more details on these programs, see the page 6 calendar.

Thank you for your interest, and we hope to see you at one or more of these events this fall.

# Scott Noegel Receives Honorary Doctorate

## *Reflections on Hebrew Studies at UWM*

UWM awarded alumnus Scott Noegel (B.A. *summa cum laude* in Hebrew and History, 1989) an Honorary Doctorate of Letters in May 2016. Dr. Noegel, Professor of Biblical Languages and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Washington, was awarded the Honorary Ph.D. for “significant contributions in the field of Ancient and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures” and for an “extraordinary reputation as a highly distinguished scholar, a respected artist, and community supporter.” At our request, he kindly shared these thoughts with us.

I’ve been asked to reflect on my time studying Hebrew at UWM and its legacy in my work.

Things were so very different in those days. First, there existed a Hebrew Studies Department. That’s right, an entire unit devoted to the study of Hebrew. While it also offered other courses, such as the Literature of Modern Israel, and courses on the Holocaust (which, by the way, included incredibly moving discussions with local survivors), it seemed to me, at least at the time, as though the department had a decided leaning toward things biblical. Since the Hebrew Bible was my primary interest, I could not have been happier.

What I remember most were the people. Foremost among them is Prof. Alan Corr e, formidable in erudition, but serene in disposition. To this day, I regard Alan as the most important figure in my academic life. He was, and continues to be, my first and only true mentor. It was Alan who first convinced me to learn Aramaic and Arabic in addition to Hebrew, since they were, as he related to me, “merely sister languages that would not require too much of a jump.” Okay, I bought that. Of course, there was a jump, but I learned to leap. I remember fondly studying one-on-one with Alan in the Hebrew Studies library. I use the term “library” loosely—it was a windowless room in Bolton Hall that probably would have measured 6 feet by 9 feet, if not for the wall-to-wall books that encouraged an even more intimate form of learning. Those could have been painfully intimidating courses—after all, Alan has the Bible memorized—but instead they were

wonderfully enriching times of discovery. I never left a single class without my head spinning, so excited that such a course of study even existed. He inspired me in ways I can never repay.

It was Alan who also later sat me down, as he was wont to do, chair-to-chair in front of his desk, to ask me what I thought of graduate school. I think I probably shocked him when I asked, “what is graduate school?” He saw promise in me, when I did not see it myself, but then again, to this day I think he possesses a little bit of *nevu’ah* (prophecy). I truly believe that such one-on-one Hebrew classroom settings played a huge role in helping advance my learning. They are far better than the 500-person auditoriums in which we sometimes find ourselves teaching these days.

The other major figure then in the department was the late Bernard Grossfeld, of blessed memory, from whom I primarily studied Hebrew grammar and Aramaic, and Aramaic grammar, and other things grammatical, and oh, did I say grammar...? I loved Bernie. He had a wonderful sense of humor and a friendly glint in his eyes, especially when someone would catch a particularly difficult linguistic point or show adeptness for memory by rote. I can still hear his Viennese German accent in my head saying “don’t forget to read your BDB.” This was the acronym for our Hebrew dictionary. Bernie was the first to introduce me to the study of the Targumim, a topic of research that I have kept close ever since.

Alan and Bernie were forces of nature. In addition to taking turns chairing the



**Prof. Scott Noegel delivering his acceptance speech at UWM’s Spring 2016 commencement ceremony**

department, they brought in a number of important visiting scholars. I especially recall the renowned Bible scholars Moshe Garsiel, from Bar-Ilan University, and Yair Hoffman, from Tel-Aviv University. While I was a student, I benefited enormously from their courses, and I am proud to say that both remain dear friends and correspondents, who since also have been visiting scholars at my current academic home. Such visitors were a testament to the high esteem that the department once had under Alan and Bernie’s leadership.

It now has been almost thirty years since I graduated from the Hebrew Studies Department, but I continue to build upon the foundation I received there. Even my interest in punning in ancient languages, which has become a major feature of my scholarship, was inspired by my studies there, especially with Alan and Moshe. Were it not for my experience there, I would not have made it into graduate school, much less have chosen ancient Near Eastern studies for a career. While I am saddened that one can no longer study biblical Hebrew or Aramaic at UWM, I am encouraged by the presence of the Sam and Helen Stahl Center for Jewish Studies, which since has taken up the mantle of my former teachers. Most of all, I am excited that UWM students still can find inspiration, as I did, in its wonderful teachers.

# The Year in Public Programs

## Established Traditions & New Directions



Katka, from  
*The Return*

Our programming year began with the annual Faye Sigman “Woman of Valor” lecture. National Gallery curator Nancy Yeide gave a fascinating presentation on “Woman’s Work: Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Collecting in Berlin, 1880-1930” before a large audience in the Milwaukee Art Museum’s Lubar Auditorium.

### A Rich Film Repertoire

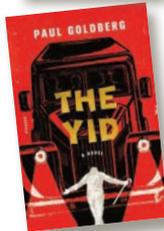
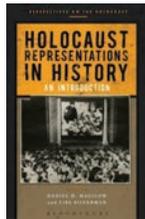
Partnerships with local film festivals gave us the opportunity to co-sponsor compelling feature and documentary films. The Milwaukee Film Festival included screenings of *Lauf Junge lauf* (*Run Boy Run*, 2013), the story of a young boy who flees the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942 and tries to survive on the run. The 30th Annual Milwaukee LGBT Film/Video Festival showed *Feelings Are Facts: The Life of Yvonne Rainer* (2015), about the renowned avant-garde choreographer. The 38th Annual Latin American Film Series screened the moving documentary *Havana Curveball* (2014), about a young American boy who attempts to gather baseball equipment for kids in Cuba, and learns about his family’s wartime ties to the island while running into numerous administrative roadblocks. And the 19th UWM Festival of Films in French offered three films of Jewish interest: *Parce que j’étais peintre* (*Because I Was a Painter*, 2013), *Félix et Meira* (2014), and the late Chantal Akerman’s *Un Jour Pina m’a demandé* (*One Day Pina Asked*, 2014).

We also organized a sort of miniseries of our own, with two documentaries examining Jewish life in Poland, both featuring lively talkback sessions with the directors. Simon Target presented his film *A Town Called Brzostek* (2014) about a noted British anthropologist’s journey to restore

an abandoned Jewish cemetery. Adam Zucker’s *The Return* (2014) follows four young women, each with a very different journey, and collectively illustrating the possibilities and challenges of rebuilding Polish communities. UWM’s Neal Pease, an expert on Polish history, moderated post-screening discussions with both directors.

### Jews in Europe and Beyond

European Jewry was the focus of several of this year’s book events. Our own Lisa Silverman, with co-author Dan Magilow, introduced local audiences to their volume *Holocaust Representations in History*, which guides teachers on how to work with a number of seminal texts. On a related theme, renowned historian Sam Kassow gave powerful lectures on ghetto reportage and Holocaust witnessing, through the lens of activities in the Warsaw and Lodz Ghettos. Best-selling historian Simon Sebag Montefiore regaled a large audience at Boswell Book Company, in conversation with UWM Soviet historian Christine Evans, with tales and insights from his monumental new work, *The Romanovs*. And Joel Berkowitz conducted a live interview with novelist Paul Goldberg about *The Yid*, a gruesome dark comedy about a scheme to subvert a planned pogrom in USSR in the waning moments of the Stalinist era. Moving farther afield, a book launch with local author (and Stahl-wart supporter) Linda Frank offered a glimpse of her latest novel, *The Lost Torah of Shanghai*, in which a sleuthing journalist searches for



## EVENTS to watch for this Fall

### SEPTEMBER 22

**The Parents Circle/ Family Forum: “It Won’t Stop Until We Talk:” Palestinian and Israeli Parents Choose Peace**  
7pm, Ballroom, UWM Union, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., FREE

**Milwaukee Film Festival: *There Are Jews Here* (2016)**

**SEPT. 25:** 8pm, Oriental Theater **OCT. 5:** 9:30pm, Fox Bay

**OCT. 1:** 1:30pm, Downer Theater **OCT. 6:** 3:30pm, Oriental Theater

**OCTOBER 9:** 2016 Faye Sigman “Woman of Valor” Lecture

**Hasia Diner (NYU): Jewish Women in America: A History of Their Own**  
2pm, Alumni Fireside Room, UWM Union, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., FREE

### OCTOBER 20

**Milwaukee LGBT Film Festival, *Political Animals* (2016)**

7pm, UWM Union Cinema, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd.; \$10 / \$8 campus community, seniors, Union Cinema pass holders / FREE for students with ID

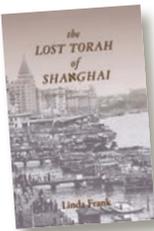
### NOVEMBER 9

**The Sarah Aroeste Trio: The Sephardic Experience in Ladino Song: from Past to Present**, 7pm, United Community Center, 1028 S. 9th St., Milwaukee  
To purchase tickets online: [www.saraharoeste.mivoz.com/](http://www.saraharoeste.mivoz.com/)



FROM LEFT: Hankus Netsky, Lorin Sklamberg & Joanne Borts with Hebrew National Salvage

# FACULTY UPDATES



a historic Torah scroll that has gone missing from the home of a Chinese official—a quest that becomes intertwined with 2,500 years of Jewish Diaspora.

## Yiddish Music and Drama Return to Milwaukee

The Stahl Center continued to serve as a beacon of Yiddish culture. In October, a three-day workshop of the research consortium the Digital Yiddish Theatre Project (DYTP) spawned two public programs. David Mazower, an authority on Jewish culture in the East End of London, examined the life and times of Fanny Epstein, a London chorus girl turned Bombay brothel owner who returned to the East End to become one of its leading Yiddish stars. Two nights later, a concert led by noted musician and scholar Hankus Netsky and featuring Grammy Award winner Lorin Sklamberg and Broadway actor Joanne Borts, set out on a wide-ranging tour of the Yiddish musical theatre. In March, audiences encountered a

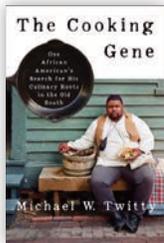


Josh Krause & Jade Taylor in *Miriam*

different type of Yiddish theatrical entertainment: a staged reading of Peretz Hirschbein's *Miriam*, in an English translation by Joel Berkowitz and Jeremy Dauber. The reading, our first collaboration with the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, was directed by the Rep's Artistic Director, Brent Hazelton.

## Programs Fostering Peace and Understanding

Finally, two major events



sought to build intercultural bridges in these troubled times. In April, culinary historian Michael Twitty, in an onstage interview with Joel Berkowitz at Milwaukee Public Library's Centennial Hall, explored "Kosher/Soul: Black and Jewish Identity Cooking": how Jewish and African-American food traditions

interconnect, part company, and shed light on one another. And in June, Dr. Mohammed Dajani, Weston Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and founder of the Al-Wasatia movement of moderate Islam, moved listeners with his impassioned lecture, "The Enemy Is Fear," a Palestinian perspective on reconciliation in the midst of conflict.

**Joel Berkowitz** published the annotated bibliography "Yiddish Theater" in the Oxford University Press online collection of Jewish Studies bibliographies. The Digital Yiddish Theatre Project (DYTP), co-founded by Prof. Berkowitz and Prof. Debra Caplan (Baruch College, CUNY), launched a new website ([yiddishstage.org](http://yiddishstage.org)), made possible by generous grant funding from UWM and the City University of New York. Berkowitz also served as Yiddish Consultant to Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel's new play, *Indecent*, which opened at the Yale Repertory Theatre, then moved to the La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego and the Vineyard Theatre in New York City.

**Rachel Buff's** essay "We Are Here Because You Were There': Refugee Rights Advocacy and Anti-Semitism" will appear in *On Political Solidarity and Justice: Rethinking How We Talk about Anti-Semitism in Our Times*, edited by Judith Butler, forthcoming from Haymarket Press in Spring, 2017. Professor Buff is the founding President of UWM's chapter of the Association of American University Professionals, formed in the summer of 2015.

**Dana Margolis** led 18 women on a journey to Israel sponsored by the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project (JWRP) and the L'Chaim Center of Deerfield, IL. To date, thousands of women from 21 different countries have already experienced this trip with the goal of forging a deep and knowledgeable connection to Israel, inspiring community involvement and leadership, and encouraging deeper appreciation for Jewish learning and values.

Margolis participated in a panel presentation following Skylight Music Theatre's performance of the musical *Crowns*, crafted around the tradition of African-American women wearing elaborate hats to church. The Interfaith Conference and Calvary Baptist Church co-sponsored the talkback, led by participants from several faith traditions.

This year **Lisa Silverman** published three pieces of work: "Art of Loss: Madame d'Ora, Photography, and the Restitution of *Haus Doranna*" in the *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*; the epilogue to Meinrad Hofer's *Witness: Realities of Forced Emigration, 1938-1945*; and "Leopoldstadt, Judenplatz, and Beyond: Rethinking Vienna's Jewish Spaces" in East Central Europe. She also gave lectures with co-author Dan Magilow on their book *Holocaust Representations in History* at the Harry & Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center and the Milwaukee Jewish Studies Colloquium at UWM.

**Marc Tasman** (Senior Lecturer, JAMS) gave a presentation as an invited speaker at the 7th Kern Conference on Visual Communication: Selfies, Self-Portraits, Social Media, hosted by the Rochester Institute of Technology. At the conference, where scholars and practitioners discussed the significance of the selfie, self-portraits, and social media, Tasman contextualized several daily photo projects, including his own, in which he made a Polaroid self-portrait every day for 3,654 consecutive days—10 years and one day.



To keep up with Stahl Center news, 'like' us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter: @UWMJewish.



# Ruth Schwertfeger, Jewish Studies Affiliate Faculty Member, Retires

It seems surreal to be wishing Ruth Schwertfeger a happy retirement. Ruth was one of the first people I met when I joined the faculty at UWM back in the fall of '87. She was the heart and soul of the old German department (one of the departments that later formed FLL), and she soon became a peer-mentor to me.

Of course, I couldn't have known back then that we would end up working together for almost 30 years. In those days we were both just starting to establish our careers in teaching and research. Ruth was several years ahead of me in queue for the harrowing process of tenure, and she blazed a trail that I was only too happy to follow. She would soon go on to achieve many additional scholarly milestones, including the later publication of several influential books that I'll discuss a bit later.

Things changed for Ruth after tenure, as they always do. She was immediately co-opted into serving as Chair during an era when academia was changing rapidly and challenges were everywhere. One stands out: A senior colleague slipped on the ice one winter and broke his hip about a semester before his planned retirement. Our little department worked together to cover his courses so that he could retire at the scheduled time.

I don't think the effort would ever have come together without Ruth, and I'm also not sure we would have survived the myriad program reviews, reports, and a thousand other issues that came our way without Ruth's sense of humor and good cheer. That humor and good cheer helped us transition into FLL (Foreign Languages and Literature) sometime in the mid-'90s. Ruth's collegiality and gentle demeanor helped to integrate us into the new department as we built rapport and bonded with new colleagues, and faced new challenges with confidence and good cheer.

Throughout this time, Ruth was steadily and impressively productive in her scholarship. The years yielded several influential books: *Else Lasker-Schüler*, *In Transit*, and *The Women of Teresienstadt*. These volumes were all very different, and were all widely acclaimed.

While her book on *Else Lasker-Schueler* (an understudied and somewhat enigmatic Jewish-German writer of the 1930's and '40s) was perhaps most appreciated by scholars, her books *In Transit* and *The Women of Teresienstadt* struck cords of interest in a broad range of readers. Ruth once told me that she resisted projecting too much of herself onto these works, lest she overshadow the voices of those she chronicled. She has always worked to give a voice to those who were denied it in their own time; to help restore dignity to those from whom dignity had been taken.

I suspect that is why readers find *The Women of Teresienstadt* to be a powerful witness that transcends all manner of cultural differences. The appeal of that volume was obvious in an incident that took place not long after *The Women of Teresienstadt* was first published. A woman who had just finished the book, and didn't know Ruth, stopped by to meet the author and tell her just how much she had been moved by it. I had a good vantage point to see the surprised look on her face when she heard Ruth's pleasant Irish accent for the first time! (This was a frequent surprise for the uninitiated, since Ruth's last name is *Schwertfeger*, after all!)

Not coincidentally, a pleasant Irish accent was also a prerequisite for the successful memoir that Ruth penned about her childhood in Ballycoan in Northern Ireland titled *The Wee Wild Ones: Stories of Belfast and Beyond*. It's a popular and entertaining read that allowed Ruth to show her own creative skills as a storyteller, to honor her father, and to remember her own childhood in a beautiful and fascinating landscape. It's the kind of book that makes readers long for home and days gone by no matter where they might be today.

Ruth's latest project is a study of the development of the Stutthof camp near present-day Gdansk. If this is an example of what she plans to do over the next few years, then the term "retirement" is obviously a misnomer. But I'm happy that Ruth will continue to do what she has always done—finding important and meaningful stories to research, and sharing the fruits of that labor with others in both a scholarly and personal way. Even in retirement, our own "Wee Wild One" shall always remain a colleague and a dear friend. —Garry Davis, Professor of German and Linguistics



With her husband Fred (to her left) and her children and grandchildren, Ruth celebrates after her valedictory UWM lecture, held at the Stahl Center.

# HERC and the Stahl Center Offer New Initiative in **HOLOCAUST STUDIES**

**Dr. Shay Pilnik, Executive Director of the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center, recently led students from UW–Oshkosh, UW–Madison, and UW–Milwaukee to Poland and Lithuania on a study-abroad trip on the Holocaust. He offers these reflections.**

“Auschwitz was a different planet,” wrote Holocaust survivor and novelist Yehiel Dinur. As a Holocaust educator, I am often approached by students who confess how difficult they find it to deal with the subject. Like Dinur, such young Midwestern students’ encounter with the subject leads them to feel that the Holocaust defies human imagination.

Fortunately, we do not live in a reality where the cruelty of the Nazis can be experienced firsthand. But if humanity is to learn from this low point in the history of humankind, we need to be able to glimpse life on the planet that, according to Dinur, was governed by its own laws of nature. And I know of no more-powerful way to teach the Holocaust than by traveling to Poland and Lithuania and exploring the labor and death camps, the ghettos and killing fields—by standing on the soil where the majority of the six million Jews and five million non-Jewish victims of the Nazis were killed.

Facilitated through a gift from an anonymous donor and by the work of faculty and administrators, we were able to provide scholarships to 14 bright and passionate students from three UW campuses, and make this educational experience a reality. With co-instructor Dr. Karl Lowenstein (History, UW–Oshkosh), I designed a course that, rather than merely looking at the Nazi killing machine, also offered a profound investigation into the life, religion, and culture of Eastern European Jews prior to World War II.



**Dr. Karl Lowenstein (left), and participants of the Study Abroad Trip during the guided tour of the barracks at Auschwitz I.**

Our course examined the life Jews lived in Poland and Lithuania for centuries. We visited such places as Kazimierz, the medieval Jewish quarter of Krakow, with its seven splendid synagogues; Krakow’s old town; the Lublin Yeshiva and Lublin Castle; and the Vilnius Cathedral and the city’s ghetto. All of these milestones highlighted the diverse and vibrant Jewish and Christian civilizations that flourished in the region before xenophobia, racism, and hatred led to their decimation.

I hope the students who bore witness with me to the lost world of Polish and Lithuanian Jews will remember this course for the rest of their lives. I also hope that through the dedication and vision of HERC’s volunteers and supporters, together with our partners Joel Berkowitz and Rachel Baum at UWM, we will turn this compelling educational experience into a tradition, and take future cohorts of students to Poland and Lithuania

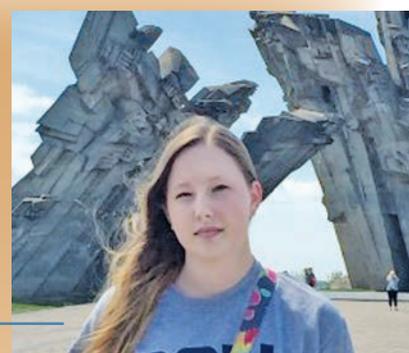
***For commentary from the student participants themselves, see the blog at [holocaustcentermilwaukee.org/media-resources/blog/](http://holocaustcentermilwaukee.org/media-resources/blog/)***



**UWM student Rachel Bogotay at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw.**

*“As a future high school teacher, I want to allow my students to see the monuments through my pictures, or follow along with my silent videos as we walk down the road that led millions to their deaths. I will no doubt encourage my students to take a Jewish Studies class in college if they can, because I feel that it would have helped me know even more about the persecution the Jews faced during this time.”*

*“I feel that actually visiting the places where those horrendous events took place helped me truly understand what happened there. I learned so many new things that you can’t get solely from reading a book.”*



**UWM student Kaila Klawes in front of the Ninth Fort Memorial in Kaunas, Lithuania.**

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## The Golden Peacock

*The bird that gives its name to this publication, and its image to our logo, figures prominently in Jewish folklore. In folk song, the golden peacock frequently arrives bearing some important message. We proudly adopt this figure as a symbol that connects us to the long tradition of Jewish learning and creativity.*

Black-eyed peas produce a denser hummus than you are used to. They also suck up a lot of lemon juice. My best advice is: do not use reconstituted juice. Use the real thing—and be prepared to use more than average to ensure that the tang and smack of the lemon penetrates the earthy-pasty taste of the peas. Once you season it and mix it to taste, it's such a delicacy you'll appreciate all the trouble you had juicing lemons. All the traditional dips and more pair wonderfully with my "Kosher/Soul" take on this ancient classic. The spices mimic the flavors of my favorite homestyle barbecue rub. I use organic, plain, canned black-eyed peas. Why not cook your own dried peas? You run the risk of overcooking them. Steamed, soft, canned black-eyed peas are much easier to work with and are the right consistency for easy mashing.

—Michael Twitty

## Michael Twitty's *Black-eyed Pea Hummus*

### INGREDIENTS

1 (15-ounce) can plain black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained, preferably organic  
½ cup of freshly squeezed lemon juice  
¼ cup of extra-virgin olive oil  
⅓ cup of tahini  
4 minced or chopped cloves fresh garlic  
1 tablespoon of preserved lemon juice brine OR 1½ teaspoons kosher salt  
1 teaspoon mild or smoked ground paprika  
½ teaspoon cumin  
½ teaspoon coriander  
½ teaspoon chili powder  
1 teaspoon brown or raw (turbinado) sugar  
1 teaspoon hot sauce  
GARNISH: 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley (flat-leaf preferred), sesame seeds, some paprika from above

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mash or process the black-eyed peas in a food processor. Mashing makes for a chunkier hummus, while processing makes for a smoother dip. Pulse for about 15 seconds at a time until the peas are broken down. Continually scrape the processor so that everything gets mixed in. (You may choose to reserve a few black-eyed peas as a garnish or to vary the texture. A few will work for a garnish, but for texture add a half a can of whole black eyed peas to your mashed or processed mixture.)
2. Mix the olive oil and tahini together with a whisk. Turning the hummus into a mixing bowl, drizzle this in a bit at a time until everything is incorporated. Add the lemon juice, garlic, paprika, cumin, coriander, chili powder, sugar, and hot sauce and mix well, adding more to taste if necessary. Remember, black-eyed pea hummus swallows flavors—so you may have to adjust to your or your guests' tastes.
3. Transfer the black-eyed pea hummus to a bowl. Sprinkle with a bit of paprika, the fresh parsley and sesame seeds. Drizzle with extra olive oil if you so choose.

