



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

PROGRAMS

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**National Museum of American Jewish History Announces
January and February Programs
Held In Conjunction with Upcoming Special Exhibition
Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow: Jewish Refugee Scholars at Black Colleges
AND MORE!**

The Museum kicks off an exciting programs calendar with the upcoming special exhibition opening January 15, *Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow: Jewish Refugee Scholars at Black Colleges*.

This moving exhibition tells the little-known story of Jewish academics who came to America in the 1930s as refugees and found homes, work, and community at historically black colleges in the segregated South.

The following public programs held in conjunction with this exhibition provide an opportunity to further explore the themes found in the exhibition such as mentorship, leadership, identity, and cross-cultural understanding through music, film, theater, and great conversation. The season begins with our annual MLK FREE Family Day on Monday January 21!

■ **MLK Family Day**

Monday, January 21 – 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

FREE and open to the public

On Dr. King's birthday, commemorate the legacy of this American icon by exploring the challenges and blessings of freedom and sharing what freedom means to you.

10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Drop-in Art with Fleisher Art Memorial and Amber Art Collective

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11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. *From Swastika to Jim Crow* (USA, 2000, 60 minutes), the documentary that inspired the current special exhibition. A talkback with filmmaker Steve Fischler follows the 2pm screening.

Advance tickets are not needed; all admission is FREE that day – simply check in at the Admissions Desk upon arrival.

Film courtesy of the Helen Bader Foundation, The Alpern Foundation, and the filmmakers Steve Fischler and Joel Sucher of Pacific Street Films.

Amber Art is collaboration among five international public artists based in Philadelphia committed to creating meaningful public art that is transcendent. Motivated by the pursuit of excellence the collective continually challenges the norm with innovative designs and cutting edge fabrication.

■ **Beyond Race, Beyond Faith: A Musical Evening with Intercultural Journeys**

Wednesday, January 30 - 7 p.m.

\$10/\$5 Members

An evening of world-class performance with Intercultural Journeys featuring acclaimed cellist and IJ founder, **Udi Bar-David**; master storyteller and singer, **Charlotte Blake Alston**; Soprano Virtuoso and Executive Director of Art Sanctuary, **Valerie Gay**; and Freedom Theater actor and dancer, **Khalil Munir**. Light reception to follow.

Intercultural Journeys seeks to promote understanding in pursuit of peace among people of diverse faiths and cultures through dialogue and the presentation of world-class performances in music, dance, the spoken word, and other art forms.

■ **Beyond Color: The Films of Joel Katz**

Strange Fruit

(USA, 2002, 57 minutes)

Wednesday, February 6 - 6:30 p.m.

White: A Memoir in Color

(USA, 2012, 59 minutes)

Wednesday, February 13 - 6:30 p.m.

Individual films: \$8/\$5 Members

2-film package: \$14/\$8 Members

Independent filmmaker **Joel Katz** makes films that expand upon micro-histories to examine broader themes of social history and race in America. His work has been awarded grants by the National Endowment for the Arts and numerous other agencies.

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Strange Fruit examines the alliance between American Jews and African Americans in the struggle for civil rights through the history of the famous anti-lynching song of the same name made famous by Billie Holiday.

White: A Memoir in Color, is a personal exploration of identity, and how the filmmaker's upbringing and relationship with his father came to bear on his own decisions about race and adoption. Discussion with the filmmaker to follow, moderated by **Louis Massiah**, Executive Director, Scribe Video Center.

Co-Sponsored by the Gershman Y's Philadelphia Jewish Film Festival and Scribe Video Center. Discounts available for PJFF Supporter Subscribers and Scribe Members.

Supported in part by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, the Federal-State Partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation.

■ *The Hampton Years* – a play reading with Theatre Ariel

Sunday, February 17 – 2 p.m.

\$5/Free for Members

Presented with Theatre Ariel

See it before the world premiere!

This powerful new work set in the segregated South explores the development of prominent African American artists John Biggers and Samella Lewis under the tutelage of Austrian Jewish refugee painter and professor, Viktor Lowenfeld, at the Hampton Institute.

Lowenfeld joined the Hampton Institute in Virginia in 1939 as assistant professor of Industrial Arts and studio art teacher. He was later appointed as Chairman of the Art Department and in 1945, he was named curator of the distinguished collection of Black African Art at the Hampton Institute. Burgeoning artist John Biggers, who went on to become an internationally acclaimed painter, sculptor, teacher and philosopher, was his student. As was Samella Lewis, artist, printmaker and educator, with whom Lowenfeld had a contentious, but respectful relationship.

Discussion with playwright **Jacqueline E. Lawton** to follow.

This play was originally commissioned and developed by Theater J in Washington D.C.

Jacqueline E. Lawton received her MFA in Playwriting from the University of Texas at Austin, where she was a James A. Michener Fellow. She participated in the Kennedy Center's Playwrights' Intensive (2002) and World Interplay (2003). She is the author of Anna K; Blood-bound and Tongue-tied; Deep Belly Beautiful; The Devil's Sweet Water; The Hampton Years; Ira Aldridge: the African Roscius; Lions of Industry, Mothers of Invention; Love Brothers Serenade, Mad Breed, and Our Man Beverly Snow.

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■ *Dialogues & Divergences: the Ongoing Evolution of Black-Jewish Relations in America*

Wednesday, February 20 – 6:30 p.m.
\$8/Free for Members

Presented with the African American Museum in Philadelphia and the Jewish Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania

Sara Lomax-Reese, President and General Manager of WURD Radio in Philadelphia, moderates a conversation between **Cheryl Lynn Greenberg** and **John L. Jackson, Jr.** as they navigate the complexities of historic and contemporary Black-Jewish relations in America.

Dr. Greenberg is the Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of History at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and the award-winning author of numerous articles and books, including “*Or Does it Explode?*,” *To Ask for an Equal Chance*, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century*, and the editor of *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC*.

Dr. Jackson is the Richard Perry University Professor of Communication and Anthropology, Senior Advisor to the Provost on Diversity, and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. His work focuses on ethnography and media, and he is currently doing fieldwork with Black Jews in the US and Israel. He is the author of three books and numerous articles.

This discussion represents the third installment of a new, biannual public forum sponsored jointly by Penn and NMAJH which aims to connect the Jewish experience narrated in the Museum’s core exhibition with larger themes in American history and culture. The series launched earlier this year with *Getting Ahead: Immigrants and Business* (February 2012), and continued this fall with *Religion & Politics: Faith, Democracy, and American Public Life*.

Supported by the Arlene and Stanley Ginsburg Family Foundation

Other Exciting Public Programs Coming up:

■ **Taste of Limmud: Jewish Geography** – Exploring Jewish Communities Around the World

Saturday, January 19 at 7:00 p.m.
6:30 p.m. Registration
\$25 General (Day-of event) /\$18 Members

Presented with LimmudPhilly

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NMAJH is pleased to co-present LimmudPhilly's January *Taste of Limmud* event around the theme of global Jewish communities. Join us for some late night learning (and fun!) as we explore this idea through interactive sessions from dynamic presenters. Dessert reception to follow.

■ **Bryn Mawr Film Institute Comes to NMAJH** **Conscientious Objectors: Post-War Political Films**

4 Tuesdays, February 5 to February 26
10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
At the Museum

4-week class: \$125/\$100 BMFI & NMAJH Members

Call BMFI at 610-527-4008 ext. 106 or click [here](#) to register.

Racism, anti-Semitism, corruption, and political oppression are not just problems that plagued our nation in the 1950s—they are issues that Hollywood addressed in some of its best work of the era. These political films, coming in the relatively comfortable period following World War II, had the luxury of once again taking on domestic social problems after the industry spent years focusing on the more immediate threats abroad.

But filmmakers with controversial political viewpoints needed to tread lightly in this time of HUAC, Joseph McCarthy, and the emerging Soviet threat. As a result, much of the era's cinematic activism was aimed at slightly off-center—yet clearly analogous—targets.

This course examines Edward Dmytryk's noirish *Crossfire* (1947), Richard Brooks's gritty *Blackboard Jungle* (1955), as well as Elia Kazan's *On the Waterfront* (1954) and *A Face in the Crowd* (1957), to consider the factors surrounding the translation of individual social consciousness into mainstream entertainment. Gaining a better understanding of these ideas opens up new cultural and historical avenues to the appreciation of cinema from any era.

Instructor: **Andrew J. Douglas**, Ph.D., Director of Education, BMFI.

■ **Rage is Back (Author event with Adam Mansbach)**

Tuesday, February 26 at 7:00 p.m.

Acclaimed novelist and bestselling author of *Go the F--- to Sleep*, **Adam Mansbach**, returns to the Museum to discuss his new novel, *Rage Is Back* – a love letter to the heart of New York, and the graffiti artists, small-time gangsters, and neighborhoods unknown to those outside the five boroughs of the city.

The New York Times Book Review calls it, simply, "Exquisite."

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The Museum will be closed New Year's Day.

The National Museum of American Jewish History, located on historic Independence Mall in Philadelphia, brings to life the 350-year history of Jews in America. Tracing the stories of how Jewish immigrants became Jewish Americans, the Museum invites visitors of all heritages to share their own stories and reflect on how their histories and identities shape and are shaped by the American experience. An open door for all, NMAJH honors the past and contributes to a better future by sharing the power of imagination and ideas, culture and community, leadership and service, in ways that turn inspiration into action.

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