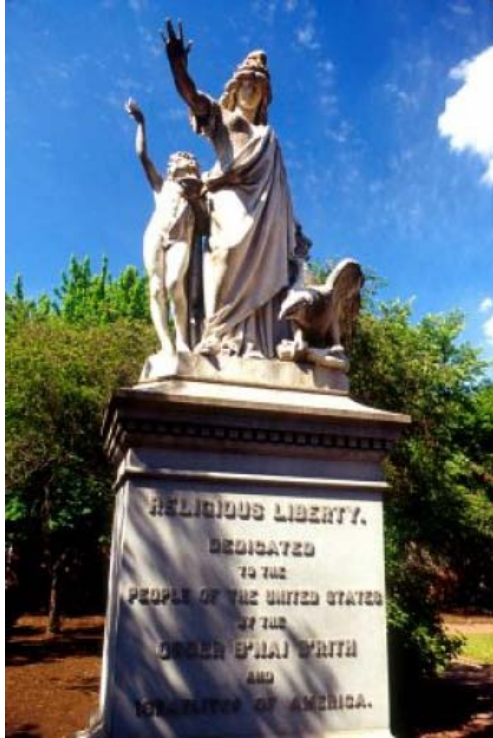


## Museum of American Jewish History offers special



Written by Bobbi Booker

Sunday, 07 July 2013 14:09

Religious Liberty, located on the grounds of the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia, is a 25-foot marble monument that was created for the nation's Centennial Exposition to honor the Constitutional guarantee of religious freedom. Sir Moses Jacob Ezekiel, the first Jewish-American sculptor to gain international prominence, created the piece. - Photo/B. Krist for GPTMC

Every Wednesday night this summer, the National Museum of American Jewish History opens its Old City doors for free (or for any sized donation) from 5 to 8 p.m. for its brand new Pay-What-You-Wish Wednesday events. This makes for a wonderful opportunity to discover one of the region's latest charms by exploring upcoming exhibitions.

Acclaimed Philadelphia-based artists Keir Johnston and Ernel Martinez of Amber Art Collective have developed "Hemmed Up: Stories through Textiles" (July 9 - Aug 25) for the inaugural year of the Museum's "OPEN for Interpretation" artist-in-residence program. Inspired by the American Jewish relationship to the textile industry and the broader themes of immigration, labor, and struggle that it represents, the artists applied a unique color-coding system to texts from the exhibition where each letter of the alphabet corresponds to a fabric color. A short film of their experiences has been captured by filmmaker Kevin Shields, who will firsthand insights from the artists on Aug. 7.

"The Snowy Day and the Art of Ezra Jack Keats" (July 19 - Oct. 20) is the first major exhibition in this country to pay tribute to award-winning author and illustrator Ezra Jack Keats (1916-1983), whose beloved children's books include "Whistle for Willie," "Peter's Chair" and "The Snowy Day."

The exhibition invites visitors to discover more than 80 original works by this groundbreaking American Jewish artist, the first to feature an African-American protagonist in a modern full-color picture book. Featuring works ranging from preliminary sketches to final paintings and

collages, the exhibition also offers a reading area for visitors of all ages to explore and enjoy Keats's art and stories.

In addition to the regular museum programming, every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., themed tours will make their way around the the museum. Weekly themes include Creativity, Art, and Design; Jews and the Law; Women in American Jewish History; and American Jewish Writers. The museum's Pomegranates Cafe will serve complimentary wine and hors d'oeuvres for guests.

The Pay-What-You-Wish event runs through Aug. 28 at the National Museum of American Jewish History (NMAJH), 101 S. Independence Mall East at 5th and Market Streets. For more information, visit [www.nmajh.org](http://www.nmajh.org).