

5th Annual Community Lecture Series  
OF THE CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

## 'WAS ISLAM GOOD FOR THE JEWS?' & other topics

The University of Minnesota Center for Jewish Studies is pleased to present its Fifth Annual Community Lecture Series, in cooperation with synagogues, community centers, and sponsoring partners across St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Between October 2008 and May 2009, the series will bring to the Twin Cities six prominent writers and thinkers from varied scholarly backgrounds. Their talks will address intriguing, provocative, and timely questions relevant to Jewish experience today.

Events are free (or a nominal cost of \$3–5). A reception follows each.

The 2008–09 Community Lecture Series is made possible by the generous support of the Sabes Foundation (Robert and Janet Sabes, trustees). The foundation's mission is to support Jewish identity and community through the humanities and the arts, in part by bringing Jewish culture and learning from universities to the community at large.

OCTOBER 5, 2008 11 a.m. St. Paul JCC



### CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: JEWISH SURVIVORS IN OCCUPIED GERMANY

ATINA GROSSMANN, Cooper Union

IN 1946–47, strangely and unexpectedly, over 250,000 Jews were gathered in Germany, most of them in the American zone. About 15,000 were German Jews, of whom almost half were in Berlin; most were Eastern European Jews who had survived death and labor camps, hiding, and harsh refuge in the Soviet Union. Atina Grossmann will discuss the mostly forgotten experience of this diverse *She'erit Hapletah*—the remnant of European Jewry—that now found itself, under Allied supervision, on “cursed” German soil.

Atina Grossmann is professor of history at Cooper Union in New York City, where she teaches modern German and European history as well as gender studies. She also is seminar associate at NYU's Remarque Center for European Studies. In 2009, she will be a guest professor at Humboldt University, Berlin. She is the author of *Reforming Sex: The German Movement for Birth Control and Abortion Reform, 1920–1950* and *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany*, and the coeditor of *Crimes of War: Guilt and Denial in the Twentieth Century* and *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany*.

St. Paul Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Avenue, St. Paul ■ 651-698-0751

Free and open to the public ■ Co-sponsors: St. Paul JCC, Women's Philanthropy of the Minneapolis Jewish Federation, United Jewish Fund and Council of St. Paul

OCTOBER 29, 2008 7 p.m., Sabes JCC



### THE PSALM AS A VEHICLE FOR SELF-EXAMINATION: A READING OF PSALM 139

ROBERT ALTER, University of California, Berkeley

PSALM 139 is one of the most profound expressions of introspective spirituality in the Bible. Robert Alter will lead an evening of study for the community focused on Psalm 139 as a vehicle for self-examination. He will focus especially on how this psalm uses the resources of poetry to articulate an inward sense of the individual's relation to God.

Robert Alter is the Class of 1937 Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. He has published widely on the modern European and American novel, on modern Hebrew Literature, and on literary aspects of the Bible. His 17 books include *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, which won the National Jewish Book Award for Jewish Thought, and acclaimed translations of Genesis and of the Five Books of Moses. Among his other works are *The Art of Biblical Poetry* and most recently, *The Book of Psalms: A Translation with Commentary*. He is past president of the Association of Literary Scholars and Critics and was twice a Guggenheim fellow.

Sabes Jewish Community Center, 4330 S. Cedar Lake Road, St Louis Park ■ 952-381-3400

Open to the public, nominal charge: \$3 JCC members, \$5 non-members ■ Co-sponsors: Sabes JCC, B'nai Emet Synagogue, Beth El Synagogue, Adath Jeshurun Congregation, Darchei Noam Congregation, U of M Classical & Near Eastern Studies

JANUARY 29, 2009 7 p.m., Sabes JCC



### JESUS AND JUDAISM: THE CONNECTION STILL MATTERS

AMY JILL LEVINE, Vanderbilt University

JESUS OF NAZARETH followed the Torah of Moses, found inspiration in the Prophets of Israel, and offered a teaching that some Jewish men and women found compelling. Yet too often Christians and Jews incorrectly regard Jesus as rejecting Judaism. Understanding Jesus in his Jewish context brings new meaning to his parables, his politics, and his piety—and also offers a new path for Jewish-Christian relations.

Amy-Jill Levine is E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University. Her publications include *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*, the edited collection *The Historical Jesus in Context*, and the 14-volume series *Feminist Companions to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings*. Her New Testament courses are featured on CD/DVD by the Teaching Company. A self-described “Yankee Jewish feminist who teaches in a predominantly Protestant divinity school in the buckle of the Bible Belt,” Levine combines historical-critical rigor, literary-critical sensitivity, and a frequent dash of humor with a commitment to eliminating anti-Jewish, sexist, and homophobic theologies.

Sabes Jewish Community Center, 4330 S. Cedar Lake Road, St Louis Park ■ 952-381-3400

Open to the public, nominal charge: \$3 JCC members, \$5 non-members ■ Co-sponsors: Sabes JCC, Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota & the Dakotas, Jay Phillips Center for Jewish-Christian Learning

MARCH 24, 2009 7 p.m., Mount Zion Temple



### THE BONE OF CONTENTION: JERUSALEM AND THE ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE PROCESS

YITZHAK REITER, University of Minnesota/Hebrew University of Jerusalem

THE JERUSALEM QUESTION is the bone of contention in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The holy city is a “protected value” involving religious discourses, mythology, and the core of national identity for both Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Muslims. Yitzhak Reiter will explore the religious-political barriers hampering a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He also will offer ideas for solving the Jerusalem problem.

Through the Center for Jewish Studies, Yitzhak Reiter will spend 2008–09 at the University of Minnesota as the Schusterman Visiting Scholar in Israel Studies. Reiter teaches conflict studies at Hebrew University of Jerusalem and lectures on political science at Ashkelon Academic College. He has advised three Israeli prime ministers on Arab affairs and is involved in projects of Jewish-Arab dialogue as well as think-tanks concerned with Israeli policy. His expertise on Middle Eastern affairs is often featured in the media. His many books include *Jerusalem and its Role in Islamic Solidarity* and *National Minority, Regional Majority: Palestinian Arabs versus Jews in Israel*.

Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Avenue, St. Paul ■ 651-698-3881

Free and open to the public ■ Co-sponsors: Mount Zion Temple, Beth Jacob Congregation, Upper Midwest Region of Hadassah

APRIL 19, 2009 7 p.m., Beth El Synagogue



### THE TRAGEDY OF TRANSCENDENCE: ON THE MEANING OF THE ARTS OF THE HOLOCAUST

PHILIP BOHLMAN, University of Chicago

ARTISTIC CREATION DURING THE HOLOCAUST is often taken as a sign of the power of the arts to effect spiritual resistance and transcendence in the face of tragedy. But are we missing a deeper understanding? Reflecting upon the literature and music of the concentration camps, Philip Bohlman examines how the arts gave voice to the unsung—and confronts the deeper meaning of tragedy in Jewish history. **SPECIAL PERFORMANCE:** With Christine Wilkie Bohlman, Philip Bohlman will perform Czech composer Viktor Ullman's work for stage by Jewish artists in the Terezin concentration camp. Also featured: Members of the MN Cantors Association.

Philip V. Bohlman is Mary Werkman Distinguished Service Professor of the Humanities and of Music at the University of Chicago, where he also has chaired Jewish studies. He has published 17 books and won the Edward Dent Medal of the Royal Music Association. He is a pianist and artistic director of the New Budapest Orpheum Society, a cabaret ensemble. Christine Wilkie Bohlman is a University of Chicago lecturer in piano and chamber music.

Beth El Synagogue, 5224 West 26th Street, St. Louis Park ■ 952-920-3512

Free and open to the public ■ Co-sponsors: Jewish Community Relations of Minnesota & the Dakotas, Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, U of M School of Music

MAY 19, 2009 7 p.m., Adath Jeshurun Congregation



### WAS ISLAM GOOD FOR THE JEWS? Muslim-Jewish Encounters from Fez to Baghdad

DANIEL SCHROETER, University of Minnesota

CONFLICTS OF THE 20TH–21ST CENTURIES make it easy to forget the many centuries that Jews and Muslims shared common histories, spoke the same languages, and interacted daily. This rich experience of coexistence and conflict has been the backdrop for debating: Was Islam good or bad for the Jews? Daniel Schroeter will address this question while also exploring the many ways in which Jews and Judaism have been shaped by encounters with Muslims, from the rise of Islam in the 7th century to the present.

Daniel J. Schroeter is the Amos S. Deinard Memorial Chair in Modern Jewish History in the University of Minnesota history department, where he also is a core member of the Center for Jewish Studies. An expert on the Jews of Morocco and the Mediterranean, he is author of *The Sultan's Jew: Morocco and the Sephardi World* and an editor of the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of the Jews in the Islamic World*.

Adath Jeshurun Congregation, 10500 Hillside Lane W., Minnetonka ■ 952-545-2424

Free and open to the public ■ Co-sponsors: Sharei Chesed Congregation, Temple Israel, Shir Tikvah Congregation, Jay Phillips Center for Jewish-Christian Learning



### SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY, 2008–09

SPONSORED BY THE CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

**COMMUNITY CLASSES:** Join renowned Israeli professor Yitzhak Reiter for informal community classes. Prof. Reiter is the 2008–09 Schusterman Visiting Scholar in Israel Studies at the University.

■ **FALL CLASS—SABES JCC, MINNEAPOLIS: ISRAEL AT THE CROSSROADS: CHALLENGES OF WAR, PEACE, JUDAISM, AND DEMOCRACY.** Part of the Jewish Institute for Lifelong Learning. Six Wednesday evenings starting Nov. 5. Time TBD. Fee: \$75. Info/registration: [www.sabesjcc.org](http://www.sabesjcc.org) or 952-381-3453.

■ **SPRING CLASS—ST. PAUL JCC: ISRAEL AND HER NEIGHBORS.** Six Tuesday evenings starting Feb. 3. 7:30 p.m. Fee: \$30. Info/registration: 651-698-0751.

**ISRAEL UPDATES:** Join us for a free lecture/discussion series on Israeli current affairs. Featuring Yitzhak Reiter, Schusterman Visiting Scholar at the University, and Noga Shavit, Minneapolis Community Shaliach (emissary). Attend one, two, or all three: Sept. 23, Oct. 7, Oct. 28—Sabes JCC, 7:30 p.m.

**SPONSORING THIS COMMUNITY LECTURE SERIES** is one of many ways that the Center for Jewish Studies is moving to distinguish itself as a premier center for scholarship, education, and dialogue about Jewish history and culture.

Part of the the University's acclaimed College of Liberal Arts, the center is home to an undergraduate program in Jewish studies and is an intellectual home for distinguished scholars from many fields.

The center sponsors classes and conferences, promotes research, supports emerging scholars, partners with the community on cultural activities, and creates bridges for University-community dialogue.

## CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES: POISED FOR GROWTH



With strategic investments in faculty expertise and student support, the Center for Jewish Studies is well-positioned to become a preeminent research and curricular center in Jewish studies. A \$5-million capital campaign will ensure the center's future excellence.

Thanks to the support of the Kelen Family Foundation and others, renowned scholar and teacher Daniel Schroeter now holds the center's endowed professorship in modern Jewish history, the **Amos S. Deinard Memorial Chair in Modern Jewish History**. Prof. Schoeter, an expert on North African and Mediterranean Jewish history, also is a bridge between the center and the Jewish community.

**An endowed chair in Israel studies is a critical priority.** Your gifts will support study and teaching about Israel and its Arab neighbors—as well as the interplay between Israel and Jews across the globe. Fellowship gifts of \$25,000+ will be matched by the University, greatly increasing their impact.

**DONORS TO THE CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES:** The center expresses its appreciation to the generous donors who are helping to increase the center's impact on campus and in the community.\*

Bradley Ackerman Berman	Jessie Lynn Berman	Dean Greenberg	Rabbi Harold J Kravitz & Cindy Reich	Sharon Snyder
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\*2006-08 gifts of \$500+

Above photo: Center director Leslie Morris, left, with community leader and center supporter Theresa Berman. Cover: Restored windows in historic Nolte Hall, home to the Center for Jewish Studies. Photo courtesy of Marvin Windows & Doors.

## CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES ONGOING ACTIVITIES

**RESEARCH** on language, literature, culture, history, and social experience involving Jewish people.

**JEWISH STUDIES MAJOR** and minor, spanning ancient times (including historical analysis of the Bible) and modern life.

**RESEARCH SUPPORT** for faculty and research opportunities for students.

**LEARNING EXPERIENCES** including trips to Prague and internships at the Jewish Federation.

**STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS**, via the annual Leo & Lillian Gross Scholarship and the Barbara & Lee Bearmon Family Scholarship in Jewish studies, and the Goldenberg Prize in Jewish ethics.

**LECTURES & CONFERENCES** for the campus and community to address timely issues in Jewish studies.

**CULTURAL ACTIVITY PARTNERSHIPS** with the Jewish Federation and synagogues.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH** including speakers, discussion materials, and many other resources.



## THE FACULTY OF THE CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

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Medieval Jewish history

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**Bruno Chaouat**  
Holocaust studies, French anti-Semitism

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19th–20th-century Jewish contributions to music

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History of Jewish education

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Jewish music

**Leslie Morris** (center director)  
German-Jewish studies

**Karen Painter**  
German-Jewish music



**Riv-Ellen Prell**  
American Jewish cultural studies

**Yitzhak Reiter** (Schusterman Visiting Scholar in Israel Studies, from Hebrew University)  
Islamic & Middle Eastern studies

**Calvin Roetzel**  
New Testament & early Christian studies

**Philip Sellw**  
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To learn how you can support the growth of the Center for Jewish Studies, please contact Professor Leslie Morris, center director: [jwst@umn.edu](mailto:jwst@umn.edu) or 612-624-4914.

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COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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## CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES FIFTH ANNUAL COMMUNITY LECTURE SERIES 2008–09

# 'WAS ISLAM GOOD FOR THE JEWS?'

& OTHER INTRIGUING TOPICS

Center for Jewish Studies  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA