

# Newsletter

1 2014

## EXHIBITIONS AT THE ROBERT GUTTMANN GALLERY

### Truth and Lies: Filming in the Ghetto Terezín, 1942–1945

The exhibition *Truth and Lies: Filming in the Ghetto Terezín, 1942–1945* was on view at the museum's gallery until 30. This show was prepared by the museum in collaboration with the National Film Archive in Prague.

This show charted the history behind the making of propaganda films about the Terezín ghetto on the basis of the latest findings. Visitors to the exhibition had an opportunity to see, for the first time, a montage of fragments from the 1942 film that were concealed in the ghetto by prisoners and were later identified at the National Film Archive in 2004. Previously unpublished photographs that were taken in secret during the filming in 1944 and 1945 were also on view, as well as documentary material on the filming in 1942. The exhibition also showed both of the preserved fragments of the second film made at Terezín.

The curators of the exhibition are Eva Strusková (National Film Archive) and Jana Šplíchalová (Jewish Museum in Prague). The exhibition was extended as a result of great public interest – it was seen by more than 13,000 visitors. It also attracted media



Clapper used in the film *Ghetto Theresienstadt*, 1942 © National Film Archives

attention in the Czech Republic and abroad, with reports by Czech Television, Czech Radio, Lidové noviny, Týden, Prager Zeitung, the Prague Post and the Daily Telegraph.

A DVD was released for the exhibition (in Czech, English and German). In addition to expert commentaries, this contains selected film clips, an edition of the most important documents and pictures, as well as a chronology of events which also details the fate of the films and their fragments after 1945.

The exhibition project was made possible with the kind support of the Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund, the City of Prague, the Czech-German Future Fund, the Foundation for Holocaust Victims (NFOH) and the Jewish Museum in Prague Foundation.

Robert Guttmann Gallery, U Staré školy 3, Prague 1,  
Open daily except for Saturdays and Jewish holidays, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. (summer season),  
9 a.m. – 4.30 p.m. (winter season)

### **Under preparation:**

#### ***The Story Continues: Acquisitions in the Collections of the Jewish Museum in Prague, 1994–2014*** (24 April – 3 August 2014)

*Held on the 20th anniversary of the Jewish museum's regaining its independence, this exhibition features more than 100 unique items that have become part of the museum's collections over the last twenty years. Focusing on artworks, manuscripts, books, archival documents, ritual objects and everyday items, it highlights the museum's acquisition activity and tells the stories not only of the objects themselves but also of the people who originally owned them.*

*Visitors to the exhibition will also have an opportunity to see, for the first time, a Torah curtain from Mladá Vožice, dating from the mid-19th century, which is the first ever missing piece of Judaica from Bohemia that the museum has successfully reclaimed from the USA (in March of this year). (For more information, see below)*

*Among the interesting items recently acquired is a piano roll, made by F. L. Hupfeld, AG in Leipzig, 1922. This was purchased by the museum in 2010. It is a recording of Kol Nidrei, Op. 47 by the German conductor and composer Max Bruch (1838–1920). One of the main themes in this piece comes from the Kol Nidrei ("All Vows") prayer which is recited on the eve of Yom Kippur. The piano roll and an audio/video recording of a performance of Kol Nidrei will be featured at the exhibition. The recording was made on one of the few working Hupfeld 'Animatic' piano rolls in the Czech Republic. The instrument comes from the private collection of Jan Hochsteiger, who was kind enough to operate it for the video. The perforated roll mechanism was made by Kastner in*



*Leipzig, the piano case and frame by the German manufacturing company August Förster in 1926 at its Jiříkov (Georgswalde) factory in Czechoslovakia.*

**Refugees** (from 27 August 2014)

*Marking the 100th anniversary of the Great War, this exhibition focuses on a little known topic in the Czech lands – refugees from the First World War. In addition to exploring the fate of Jewish refugees in Bohemia and Moravia, it will deal with the broader context of refugees and refugee policy within the entire Habsburg Empire.*

## **GALA CONCERTS AT THE SPANISH SYNAGOGUE**

### **International Holocaust Remembrance Day**

On 27 January, the Jewish Museum and the Jewish Community in Prague hosted the traditional gala concert at the Spanish Synagogue to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Barbora Perná (soprano), Ladislav Horák (accordion) and Petr



The concert was held with the kind support of the Foundation for Holocaust Victims.

Nouzovský (cello) performed works by Ernest Bloch, Holmer Becker and the contemporary composer Jeff Hamburg, who attended the concert in person.

### **Commemorating the liquidation of Terezín Family Camp in 1944**

On 8 March, a gala concert was held at the Spanish Synagogue for the anniversary of the liquidation of the Terezín Family Camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau and was broadcast live by Czech Radio Vltava. Works by Zikmund Schul, Stanislav Jelinek, Noam Sheriff, Ervín (Erwin) Schulhoff and Felix Mendelssohn were performed by Dominik Weiss Hošková, the Prague Wind Trio and the Nostitz Quartet. During the interval, the hosts of the concert – Vladimír Lukařová and Leo Pavlát, director of the Jewish Museum in Prague – were interviewed by Czech Radio about the exhibition on the persecution of Jews during the Nazi Protectorate, which is on display in the Spanish Synagogue gallery.

**Under preparation:**

**Tribute to Jan Karský** (23 April 2014, 7.30 p.m.)

A concert to be held under the auspices of the Czech Minister of Culture. The main organizer is the Polish Institute in Prague.

**Concert for the Winton Children** (28 April 2014, 7 p.m.)

A concert to be held for the 105th birthday of Sir Nicholas Winton, organized by Muzika Judaika.

**Concert for the 22nd International Council of Jewish Women** (4 May 2014)

A concert to be held under the auspices of the Czech President Miloš Zeman and Prague City Hall. The main organizer is the Czech Council of Jewish Women.



**NEW INFORMATION AND RESERVATION CENTRE**

The Jewish Museum has recently opened its new Information and Reservation Centre in the heart of Prague's former Jewish Town at Maiselova 15. This new site provides visitors with a multimedia information space and offers a range of additional services.

In addition to offering the complete range of tickets for the museum's tours and sites, the new centre is an interactive information gateway with basic details about the monuments and permanent exhibitions in the Jewish Town, as well as specific Jewish monuments in Prague and the rest of the Czech Republic. It also contains information about





current educational and cultural programmes held by the museum and related organizations and institutions. Visitors will also be given useful tips on where to find kosher meals and on services provided by travel agencies specializing in Jewish heritage tours. Audioguides are also available for loan here.



As well as providing services for individual tourists, the new centre will also accept bookings from guides, school representatives and travel agencies. It also includes a rest area with refreshments and toilet facilities, as well as disabled access and a baby changing table.

The centre was designed by the architect Jakub Tejkl, building work was carried out by Kališ and Krátkoruký, and the graphic design was done by Colmo.

In connection with the opening of the centre, the current souvenir shop in the Klausen Synagogue was also expanded by incorporating the area previously used for making bookings. Tickets for the museum's tours can also be bought here.

#### **Contact information:**

Information and Reservation Centre, Jewish Museum in Prague  
Maiselova 15, 110 00 Prague 1  
Manager: Marek Selnekovič

Tel.: +420 222 749 464 (461)  
Fax: +420 222 749 463  
Email: [IRC@jewishmuseum.cz](mailto:IRC@jewishmuseum.cz)

Audio guide: Promotion and Education, s. r. o.  
Manager: Ing. Miroslava Kholová

Café: NOSTRUM, s. r. o.  
Manager: Karel Pospíchal

Opening times:  
Winter season: 9 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.  
Summer season: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

## OVERHAUL OF THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION TOGETHER WITH NECESSARY BUILDING ALTERATIONS AT THE MAISEL SYNAGOGUE

After opening a new Information and Reservation Centre, the Jewish Museum in Prague has prepared an overhaul of its permanent exhibitions. With respect for the architecture of the historical synagogues that house its exhibitions, the museum aims to better reflect current trends in museum presentations, to make full use of technical possibilities and to meet visitor expectations. The aim is not only to make its exhibitions more attractive by incorporating interactive and educational elements, but also to place the museum tour in the real context of the historical Jewish Quarter (Josefov) and to emphasize the *genius loci* of Prague's Jewish Town. In this way, visitors will gain a deeper and more personal experience by visiting sites that are themselves exhibits.

The first of the exhibitions to be overhauled – 19 years after its opening – will be the Maisel Synagogue show, which is focused on the history of the Jews in Bohemia and Moravia from the first Jewish settlements through to the 18th century. In connection with this, necessary building alterations will be made to the synagogue interior, exterior and surroundings, which is why it will be closed from 29 March 2014. It will open to visitors from the Czech Republic and abroad in its new guise in the middle of next year.

Among other things, visitors will be able to look forward to an audio-visual 2D virtual tour of Prague's Jewish Town based on Langweil's famous model of Prague. On display will be a wealth of rare collection objects, each placed in a new layout and proper context. Touch screens will enable visitors to look through old Hebrew manuscripts and to view historical maps of Jewish settlements. Visitors will also be able to search the museum's database for information about prominent Jewish figures. In the evening hours, the exhibition area will be transformed into an auditorium and used as a venue for concerts, recitals and solo theatre performances.

## NOTICE OF A PLANNED CLOSURE OF PART OF THE MUSEUM'S DEPOSITORIES

In connection with the closure of the Maisel Synagogue, a substantial part of the museum's depositories will be closed for reconstruction for about 15-18 months as of 29 March 2014 .

During this time, the objects that are kept in these depositories will not be available for use, i.e. for taking out or depositing, loan, digitization, condition appraisal, study or research purposes, or for the provision of information that is not otherwise available in the museum's database or in other records and documents.

The closure applies to all objects in the metal collection (curated by Jaroslav Kuntoš) and part of the textile collection, in particular the oldest items, small pieces and home-made textiles (curated by Dana Veselská, PhD.). We apologize for any inconvenience caused.

## THE FIRST MISSING ITEM OF CZECH JUDAICA RETURNED FROM ABROAD TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Jewish Museum in Prague and the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic have managed to bring about the first successful repatriation of a missing Jewish ritual object of Czech origin from abroad. Originally from South Bohemia, the Torah Ark curtain went missing from the museum's collections in the mid-1950s and resurfaced in April 2013 in connection with a Judaica auction at Sotheby's in New York. After nearly sixty years, it has finally returned home to the Czech Republic.

On 10 March 2014, a flight from New York landed at the Václav Havel Airport in Prague carrying an inconspicuous but unique object. After decades of being lost, a Jewish ritual object of Czech origin was returning home. This return home brings to a close this object's history, which mirrors the shifting fates of the Jewish communities of Bohemia and Moravia in the 20th century.

This silk and velvet brocade curtain was donated to the Jewish community by Moses and Chayele Lifschitz in 1855. It came to the Jewish Museum in Prague in 1943 from the Jewish community in Mladá Vožice in South Bohemia, which was destroyed in the Second World War. During the war, the Jewish Museum served as a central depository for Judaica from the territory of the so-called Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The curtain was catalogued under the inventory number 31.669 and preserved at the Jewish Museum along with other objects from similarly destroyed communities. It remained in the museum's collections until 1956, when it was taken out of the country under circumstances that have not yet been clarified.



Torah ark curtain from Mladá Vožice

The curtain later resurfaced in a Judaica auction scheduled at Sotheby's in April 2013 under the heading: *A Treasured Legacy: The Michael and Judy Steinhardt Judaica Collection*. After the curtain was identified by staff at the Jewish Museum in Prague, it was subsequently withdrawn from the auction. On the basis of an agreement with Michal Steinhardt, who had put the curtain up for auction, it was then handed over for subsequent shipping to Prague and returned to the museum's curators after the necessary official procedures had been carried out.



Mladá Vožice Synagogue, 1940s

Mapping these losses is one of the tasks carried out by a team of experts comprising art historians, museologists, and librarians currently involved in the systematic provenance research of individual objects and books from the museum's collections. *"Researching ownership history or, as it is often called provenance research, is an integral part of the methodology used by art historians and museums. It is impossible to interpret any work of art or cultural object in a meaningful way without intimate knowledge of their histories, as each object is a reflection of the owner's taste as well as his fate. Knowing the wider context in which an object was created and tracing its journey through the art market and various collections is essential for reconstructing cultural and social history, which is of paramount importance to Jewish museums,"* states Michaela Sidenberg, Visual Arts Curator at the Jewish Museum in Prague. In addition to her work as a curator, Sidenberg had devoted nearly fifteen years to studying the cultural devastation wrought by the Shoah and the Second World War.

Leo Pavlát, the director of the Jewish Museum in Prague, adds: *"Along with its role as a unique cultural institution of its kind that educates the public about various aspects of Jewish history, culture, and thought from the very first Jews to settle here to the present day, the Jewish Museum has another special mission, and that is to safeguard and preserve the material legacy of the Jewish communities in Bohemia and Moravia. The memory of those communities, almost all of which were entirely decimated during the Second World War, fortunately lives on in the form of the museum's unique collections, archives, and library. The efforts of all who work at the museum are focused not only on maintaining the integrity of this extraordinary legacy but also on trying to rectify property losses suffered by individuals. The Jewish Museum in Prague, therefore, continues to search for the persons who owned the artworks and books that are housed in its collections, and whenever possible to return objects that have been properly identified to rightful claimants. In so doing we go above and beyond the conditions stipulated by Czech restitution law, which in terms of righting the injustices suffered by*



*the victims of the Shoah and their descendants is in a number of respects rather limited."*

The restitution of the Torah Ark curtain from Mladá Vožice is the first successful repatriation to the Czech Jewish community – represented by the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic – from abroad. The federation's president, Petr Papoušek, remarks: *"I greatly appreciate the goodwill and respect extended to the Czech Jewish community by Michael Steinhardt and Sotheby's in New York. The example they set should be emulated. The Torah Ark curtain belongs to the Czech Republic, and its place in the Jewish Museum in Prague's collection is irreplaceable as only within its historical context is the object's intrinsic value realized. I would like to believe that we will soon see the return of other unique Judaica that were wrongfully taken out of the country. They are an essential element underpinning the collective memory of today's Czech Jewish community."*



The Torah Ark curtain from Mladá Vožice is one of the items featured in the exhibition, ***The Story Continues: Acquisitions in the Collections of the Jewish Museum in Prague, 1994–2014***, which runs from 24 April at the museum's Robert Guttman Gallery.

## JEWISH MUSEUM PROGRAMME FOR COMMEMORATING THE VICTIMS OF THE TEREZÍN FAMILY CAMP

This year marks the the 70th anniversary of the extermination of the inmates of the Terezín Family Camp in the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau. More than 9,700 men, women and children were slaughtered on the night of 8/9 March 1944 and on 10-12 July 1944. Although this tragic event was the largest single murder of Czechoslovak citizens during the Second World War, it has so far had a marginal role in the Czech historical consciousness. In cooperation with other partners, the Jewish Museum in Prague has therefore prepared a special programme for the whole of 2014 with the aim of commemorating the event from various perspectives.



The focal point of the commemorative programme in March was a concert at the Spanish Synagogue on the evening of 8 March (see above) and a memorial ceremony in the Pinkas Synagogue memorial to the victims of the Shoah from Bohemia and Moravia on 9 March. Members of the public had free access to the Pinkas Synagogue on the day of the memorial ceremony, and the museum's specialists were on hand to acquaint visitors with the history of the synagogue memorial. Staff and volunteers helped people search for the names of murdered Jews in the museum's Database of Holocaust Victims, in the Terezín Memorial Book and on the walls of the synagogue memorial. Visitors also had the opportunity to see the exhibition *Truth and Lies: Filming in the Ghetto Terezín, 1942–1945* at the museum's Robert Guttman Gallery where guided tours were provided by the exhibition curator. In addition, the museum's Department for Education and Culture hosted a public meeting and discussion with survivors of the Terezín Family Camp. In Brno a concert was held in memory of the Terezín Family Camp victims on 9 March.



So far, 630 people have been involved in the museum's commemorative programme. Both Czech Radio and Czech Television have provided considerable information about the events being held.



A number of thematic lectures and discussions will be held over the course of the year. Aside from conveying new insights about the history of the camp, particular scope will be given to the testimonies of survivors and to a dialogue with those who are still capable of appearing at schools and in public.



#### Individual events:

3 March 2014

**'Special Treatment'**. Journalist Adam Drda discussed the historical context and bring to attention new material and information from his forthcoming book about the family camp. Attended by the Shoah survivor and historian Toman Brod.

8 March 2014

**Murder in Auschwitz.** Tomáš Fedorovič, Milan Hes and Michal Frankl (Jewish Museum in Prague) discussed the liquidation of the Terezín Family Camp as guests of the journalist Vladimír Kučera in the television programme Historie.cs. (<http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ivysilani/10150778447-historie-cs/214452801400010>).

**In Memory of the Terezín Family Camp.** A discussion under the supervision of the teacher and historian Petr Sokol with five survivors of the Terezín Family Camp:

Dagmar Lieblová, Evelina Merová, Pavel Werner and Pavel Stránský. More than a description of the history of the family camp, this event was given over to the personal reminiscences of the survivors and to a discussion about how they feel about the commemoration or non-commemoration in post-war Czech society of the liquidation of the family camp. This event met with a great response from the public, in particular from young people.

**In Memory of the Murdered Jews from the Terezín Family Camp.** Compositions by Gideon Klein, George Gerschwin, John Williams and others performed by Šárka Králová (piano) and Jakub Výborný (violin), presented by Zuzana Prudilová.

18 March 2014

**Words Heard from Behind Walls – Texts by Terezín Boys Set to Music.** Texts by Hanus Hachenburg and other boys from the Terezin ghetto magazine *Vedem* set to music, interspersed with words about the creators of the magazine and the family camp, whose victims included Hanus Hachenburg in July 1944. This event was held in association with Gymnázium Přírodní škola (Nature School).

#### **Under preparation:**

9 June 2014

Lecture by historian Jan Lániček about the Terezín family camp.  
Venue: Jewish Museum in Prague – Department of Education and Culture, Maiselova 15. Time: 6 p.m.

4 September 2014

Lecture by historian Michal Schuster about the liquidation of the Gypsy Family Camp on the night of 2/3 August 1944 and a discussion with the Roma survivor Mária Kormanová.  
Venue: Jewish Museum in Prague – Department of Education and Culture, Maiselova 15. Time: 6 p.m.

#### **NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM'S DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE**

The Brno office of the museum's Department for Education and Culture invited the founder of the League against Anti-Semitism Věra Tydlitátová to a joint discussion on 18 March 2014. The discussion was moderated by Erika Bezdíčková, a Shoah survivor, journalist and administrator of the Brno Jewish Community website. It provided a comprehensive overview of the spread of anti-Semitism on the internet since 1989.

A week later, the Brno office was visited by the actors Stano Slovák and Markéta Sedláčková from the Brno City Theatre. As part of the popular *Reading Suits Everyone* series, they read from Vlasta Schönová's book *Chtěla jsem být herečkou* [I wanted to be an Actress] and from Juraj Spitzer's *Nechcel som byť Žid* [I Didn't Want to be a Jew].





## OURS OR FOREIGN? JEWS IN THE CZECH TWENTIETH CENTURY

The “Ours or Foreign? Jews in the Czech Twentieth Century” project was held in 2011–2013 and was organized by the Jewish Museum in co-operation with the Terezín Initiative Institute. As many as 27,000 pupils/students took part and more than 400 teachers attended seminars that were held as part of the project.

One of the main results of the project is a four-volume publication intended for schools, which provides a range of new perspectives, details and suggestions for teaching modern Jewish and Czech history. The four volumes are as follows:

### 1. Big and Small History

A non-traditional textbook dealing with hitherto little-known topics. In addition to brief texts, it contains 400 documents that have been adapted for use in school and includes individual life stories, statistics and maps. The extensive chapters also cover the changes in Jewish identities in the 19th and 20th centuries, the history of anti-Semitism, migration, refugees and people’s actions during the Holocaust. This volume is distributed as a ‘folder’ from which the individual chapters and pages can be taken out and loosely combined. The individual sections are also available for download.

### 2. Narrated History

Fifteen interviews with Shoah survivors and witnesses from the Jewish Museum’s oral history collection, adapted for use in education. The introductory texts touch upon the methodology of oral history and its application in school. As yet, this volume is only part of the publication that is sent out to schools and is not available for download.

### 3. Methodological Materials

Methodological materials created as part of the project and linked to the publication’s other volumes. Other methodological materials, including dozens of audio-visual testimonies of Shoah survivors and witnesses, are available on the project’s website.

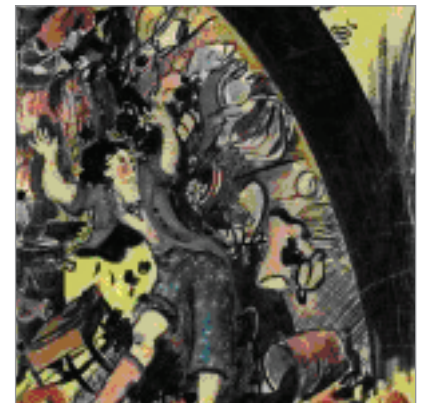
### 4. Why and How Deal with Anti-Semitism. A Guide for Educators

An unofficial Czech translation of an edited version of the manual *Addressing Anti-Semitism: Why and How? A Guide for Educators*, which was published in 2007 by Yad Vashem and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. As part of the project, internet links of relevance to educators in the Czech Republic were added to the publication. The Czech text is on the project’s website and the original English version is also available online.

The publication is available to educators free of charge. If interested, please contact [jiri.tejkal@jewishmuseum.cz](mailto:jiri.tejkal@jewishmuseum.cz) and state the name of your teaching institution.

You can find more information and downloadable materials on the project’s website at [www.nasinebocizi.cz](http://www.nasinebocizi.cz) (in Czech).

The “Ours or Foreign? Jews in the Czech Twentieth Century” project is co-financed by the European Social Fund and the state budget of the Czech Republic as part of the Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme.



## JIŘÍ FIEDLER (1935–2014)

It is with great sorrow that we announce the tragic death of Jiří Fiedler, an employee of the Jewish Museum in Prague for many years. The circumstances of his death have not yet been fully clarified. His funeral was held in Prague on Monday, 3 March 2014.

Jiří Fiedler was born in Olomouc and graduated from the Philosophy Faculty at Charles University in Prague. During the Communist regime he worked as an editor, mainly at the children's publishing house Albatros. He was also an acclaimed translator of Serbo-Croatian and Polish literature.

From the 1970s onwards, Jiří Fiedler documented Jewish sites in Bohemia and Moravia out of personal interest. In so doing, he compiled thousands of photographs of synagogues, cemeteries, rabbi's homes and former Jewish schools – many of which were destroyed in subsequent years. In addition, he obtained factual information relating to the photographs, which he meticulously extracted from countless sources. At a time of destruction, Jiří Fiedler did what specialist institutions should have devoted their time to. On account of his work, he earned the animosity of the secret police and aroused the suspicion of others. At a time when the Jewish cultural heritage in Bohemia and Moravia was treated with utter contempt, he produced a trove of work that can be drawn on by future generations of researchers in the area of Jewish topography.

After the fall of the Communist dictatorship, Jiří Fiedler published the book *Židovské památky v Čechách a na Moravě* [Jewish Sites of Bohemia and Moravia], which to this day is the key source of information on Jewish settlements in what is now the Czech Republic. In 1996 he became employed as a specialist by the Jewish Museum in Prague, where he further developed the results of his many years of research. His findings were gradually transferred to an electronic encyclopaedia of Jewish communities in Bohemia and Moravia, which is being continually updated – it now has as many as 1,670 entries. Without all the information that Jiří Fiedler selflessly gathered and brought to the museum, several of the museum's projects would never have come to fruition and the work of numerous researchers in the Czech Republic and abroad would not be possible.

Jiří Fiedler was employed at the Jewish Museum in Prague until the end of 2012 but continued to work closely with the museum on an external basis. His sudden death has come as a painful shock to all of the museum's staff who knew Jiří Fiedler as a helpful colleague and a wonderful person.



## NEW ACQUISITIONS

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, the Jewish Museum recently managed to enrich its collections by making acquisitions from Colorado and Massachusetts in the United States. As the items from Colorado contained elephant and walrus ivory, it was necessary to apply for a special export permit in accordance with CITES (the 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the Washington Convention) and for a permit in accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act. After dealing with all the necessary documentation, the two consignments arrived safely in Prague in the first half of March.

The Colorado acquisition includes a group of personal items that were previously owned by the Frankl, Utitz and Bauer families in Prague. Among these items are early 19th-century miniatures, which probably belonged to the above-mentioned families whose descendants emigrated to the USA from Innsbruck, Austria, in 1938. Together with the purely personal and practical items, these artefacts give us an idea as to the household objects of a typical middle-class family in Prague at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries: such as a coffee set, Wilhelm Bauer's silver seal, a set of razors, a gilt hairpin and a silver cigarette case with Wilhelm Bauer's monogram.

The Massachusetts acquisition includes items from the estate of Mary Ellen Baker-Salus (1920–2012), the widow of Wolfgang Salus (1909–1953) who was the only son of Hugo Salus (1866–1929) and Olga, née Engel (1874–?). The Jewish Museum's Visual Arts Collection has been enriched by the addition of several portraits and caricatures of Hugo Salus by famous artists (M. Švabinský, V. Hofman, F. Gellner), as well as a portrait that was drawn in the Terezín ghetto in 1943 and a later photograph of his Hugo's son Wolfgang (Václav). We have also acquired a manuscript containing lyrical verses about love written by Wolfgang Salus, a unique testimony to his literary skills. A total of six books, mostly from the 19th century and with the bookplate of Hugo Salus, have also been added to our library collection. The oldest printed book dates from the early 18th century.



## THE OLD JEWISH CEMETERY IN ŽIŽKOV BACK IN THE CARE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN PRAGUE

On 1 January 2014, following a joint agreement, the Jewish Museum handed over the care of the Old Jewish Cemetery in the Žižkov district of Prague back to the Jewish Community of Prague.

This cemetery was established in 1680 as a plague burial ground for the Prague Jewish community. In 1999 the community handed it over to the care of the Jewish Museum in Prague whose main challenge was to deal with the consequences of the damage done to the cemetery in connection with the construction of a television tower on its site in the 1980s. In an attempt to prevent further deterioration of the cemetery, museum staff prepared a comprehensive project for its rescue and renovation. This project, which cost almost CZK 5 million, mainly involved the erection of a new wall around the cemetery and the construction of a caretaker's lodge. In addition, utilities were connected to the site and landscaping and gardening work was carried out, including specialist tree care by arborists. Rescue and conservation work started in 1999; this involved piecing together fragments, reconstructing broken tombstones, repairing and conserving the tombstones.

The cemetery opened to the public in September 2001 after the bulk of the work had been completed. This did not, however, mark an end to work on the cemetery – as many as 336 tombstones and three vaults were treated in the next two years. By the end of 2013, when the cemetery was handed back into the care of the Jewish community, the museum had managed to restore 164 tombstones and four vaults. The total cost of the tombstone restoration project between 2000 and 2013 was CZK 4 million.

For more information about current visitor services, see [www.kehilaprag.cz](http://www.kehilaprag.cz).

## NEW STORAGE AREA FOR CHEMICALS AND HAZARDOUS WASTE

Conservation and restoration work is an integral part of the care of objects in the museum's collections. This work is carried out in the museum's restoration workshops and involves the use of chemical substances and preparations, some of which have specific hazardous properties such as flammability, toxicity, carcinogenicity and corrosiveness.

The museum's new storage area for chemical substances, preparations and hazardous waste fully meets the current fire-regulation, sanitary and environmental requirements for the safe storage of such material. This storage area is located in the basement of the museum's office building and was designed by the architectural studio Znamení čtyř with specialist supervision from the architect Juraj Matula. The entire project was consulted with the Prague Fire Brigade, the Prague Public Health Authority and the Environment Department of Prague City Hall. A building permit for the storage area was issued by the Construction Department of the Prague 1 authority in August 2013.

The storage area was built in the winter of 2013 by the construction firm Kališ and Krátkoruký, which had won the tender for the job. Technical supervision of the construction and engineering work was carried out by Vladimír Maxa. The total cost of the project implementation was CZK 540,000. The building acceptance procedure will take place in April 2014, after which time the storage area should be available for use.



## SEMINAR ON MODERN JEWISH HISTORY

In co-operation with the Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the Jewish Museum in Prague prepared a special seminar with a view to creating a platform for academic discussion on the latest research projects on the history of the Jews in the past three centuries.

Despite its emphasis on a historical perspective, this course takes a multidisciplinary approach and seeks to explore selected topics viewed from the perspectives of sociology, political science, history of religion and art history. In addition to the history of Central Europe, attention will also be drawn to the history of the Jewish population in other territories.

### Under preparation:

**14 May 2014**

**History of Hasidism: New Trends** (Marcin Wodziński, University of Wrocław, Poland)

**4 June 2014**

**Post-Normal: Jewish-State Relations during the Last Decade of Czechoslovak-Communist Rule** (Jacob Labendz, Washington University, St. Louis, USA):

A seminar comprising an introductory lecture and subsequent discussion, to be held at the museum's Department for Education and Culture (Maiselova 15, Prague 1) at 6 pm.

## PROMINENT VISITS

### February

- H.E. Paskal Stojcheski, Ambassador of the Macedonian Republic in the Czech Republic,



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