

# Newsletter

4 2014

## EXHIBITIONS IN THE ROBERT GUTTMANN GALLERY

### **The Orient in Bohemia? Jewish Refugees during the First World War (28 August 2014 – 1 February 2015)**

Marking the centenary of the 'Great War', our current exhibition deals with the little known topic of refugees in the Bohemian lands during the First World War.

The hundreds of thousands of people who ran away from their homes in the Habsburg monarchy during the First World War were the first large group of refugees in the modern history of the Bohemian lands. Poles, Ruthenians, Italians, Jews and many others fled their destroyed and occupied towns and villages out of fear of violence. Although their exodus plays almost no role in the Czech cultural memory, their fate foreshadowed the 20th century as an era of refugees.

The exhibition follows the fate of Jewish refugees in Bohemia and Moravia in the broader context of refugees and refugee policy throughout the Habsburg Monarchy. On display are photographs that have never before been shown in the Czech Republic. These images not only document the life of the refugees and refugee camps, but also point to a fascination with the difference of "Eastern Jews" whose clothing, piety and unusual language attracted great attention at the time. Narrated excerpts from period chronicles and newspapers illustrate how the local population dealt with this difference and reveal the prejudices against Jewish refugees. The exhibition also features items from the Jewish Museum's visual arts collection, which further document the response to the Jewish refugees living in Bohemia.



Arranged photograph of Jewish refugees from the barrack camp in Německý Brod (Deutschbrod, now Havlíčkův Brod), 1915–1917. © Jewish Museum in Prague

The exhibition has been put together by Michal Frankl, Jan Wittenberg and Wolfgang Schellenbacher.

Jewish Museum in Prague – Robert Guttman Gallery, U Staré školy 3, Prague 1  
Open daily, except Saturdays and Jewish holidays 9 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.



A group of students from the Syracuse University visited the exhibition *The Orient in Bohemia* on 10 October 2014 together with Krista Hegburg from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C.

## Under preparation

### ***The Orient in Bohemia? Seminar on refugees in modern history and in history teaching, 16–17 January 2015***

*The aim of this two-day seminar is to acquaint Czech school teachers with refugee issues in the 20th century and in the present by focusing on the example of Jewish refugees. This is a response to the fact that the topic of migration and refugees is hardly at all dealt with in Czech curriculum documents or in educational practice in the Czech Republic. The immediate impulse behind the seminar is the opportunity of showcasing the current exhibition at the Jewish Museum's Robert Guttman Gallery – *The Orient in Bohemia? Jewish Refugees during the First World War* – which focuses on this little-known first major encounter between the Czech population and refugees.*

*The seminar will also include lectures and discussions with experts and will present and test various methodological materials. In addition, there will be meetings with refugees and employees of refugee organizations.*

*Due to unprecedented interest from teachers, we are planning another seminar on the topic of refugees and migration, which will tie in with the exhibition "*Dashed Hopes: Postwar Czechoslovakia as a Crossroads of Jewish Life*". The provisional date for this seminar is April 2015.*

*Both seminars are being organized with the kind support of the Heinrich Böll Foundation.*

### ***Dashed Hopes. Postwar Czechoslovakia as a Crossroads of Jewish Life, 25 February – 23 August 2015***

*The defeat of Nazi Germany and the end of WWII in Europe put an end to the genocide of persons who, based on legislature effective in the territories controlled by Nazi Germany and its allies, were labelled as Jews or members of a "mixed race". Those of the survivors who originally came from the Czech lands gradually returned home to begin a new life. The new exhibition reveals lesser-known aspects of the history of the*

Czech lands after WWII related to the repatriation of the survivors of the death camps and the transfer of dozens of thousands of Jewish refugees via Czechoslovakia. The theme of the exhibition thus builds on the museum's previous project, "Orient in Bohemia? Jewish Refugees during the First World War".



Children's refuge in Dušní Street, Prague, 1946. © Jewish Museum in Prague

## EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM'S EDUCATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT

### Our twentieth century – Big and small history through the eyes of witnesses

In September 2014, the museum's department for education and culture launched a new series of programmes that present a different pair of Holocaust survivors each month.

The aim of the series is to provide the general public with the opportunity of personal meetings with people who faced Nazi persecution and who also suffered under Communism as a result of their Jewish origin or who chose the difficult life of emigrants. The programme is being hosted by Petr Sokol, who has worked with the museum for many years and who has developed the methodology for the project *Ours or Foreign? Jews in the Czech Twentieth Century*.

The November meeting with Josef Salomonovič, who came all the way from Vienna, drew a large audience.



### Invitation to upcoming Sunday meetings with Holocaust survivors

Sunday 25 January, 5 p.m.

A meeting with Holocaust survivors Eva Keulemansová-Smolková and Helga Hošková.

Sunday 15 February, 5 p.m.

A meeting with Edita Kosinová and Doris Grozdanovičová.

Venue: Jewish Museum in Prague – Department for Education and Culture  
Maiselova 15, Prague 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> floor). Tel. 222 325 172

Free admission.

## International project of the Jewish Museum in Prague

In 2014 the Jewish Museum organized a joint project focusing on the Pinkas Synagogue memorial in association with the USC Shoah Foundation and with support from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The project title is *The Memorial in the Pinkas Synagogue: Towards a Shared Culture of Remembrance*. As part of the project, the Pinkas Synagogue was open to the wide public on 8 March 2014 in connection with the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the annihilation of the Terezín Family Camp at Auschwitz–Birkenau. At present, we are completing ten methodological materials on the so-called Terezín Family Camp, which will be made available to teachers free of charge. Twelve videos on the same topic have been edited for the requirements of Czech schools and can already be seen. We are currently preparing a workshop for journalists to be held in the spring of 2015.



## Crocus Project

The Jewish Museum's Department for Education and Culture regularly contributes to the Crocus Project, which is organized by the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland (HETI). The aim of this project is to involve pupils aged 11 years and over in a symbolic commemoration of the child victims of the Holocaust. HETI provides schools with yellow crocus bulbs, as well as work materials and teaching aids free of charge. Each participating school from a particular European country then works on the project in its own individual way. Under the supervision of their history teacher, pupils plant the crocus bulbs at the start of the school years in autumn, so that they come into bloom around the 27th of January – to coincide with International Holocaust Memorial Day. The yellow flowers symbolically commemorate the yellow Stars of David that Jewish children were forced to wear under Nazi rule. The Jewish Museum in Prague helps Czech schools to become involved in this project. This year almost 80 classes took part in the Czech Republic. Documentation of the project at the schools we are working with can be seen on the gallery of our Facebook site.



## Invitation to an exhibition at the Department for Education and Culture

### TLV24

(21 January – 27 February)

An exhibition of photographs by Pavlína Schultz captures everyday life of the city of Tel Aviv and its inhabitants.

Auditorium of the Jewish Museum's Department for Education and Culture  
Maiselova 15, Prague 1

MON-THU 2 p.m. – 4 p.m., FRI 10 a. m. – 12 p.m., during evening events and by appointment.



## CINEGOGUE 2014: THE CITY WITHOUT JEWS

CINEGOGUE is a series that combines “cinema” with “synagogue” to screen silent films accompanied by live music in a historic space acclaimed for its architecture. Its mission is to uncover little known works of world cinematography to present a different view of Jewish culture and the artists of the post-emancipation period, which saw not only the inception of the international Zionist movement and the large waves of immigration from Central and Eastern Europe to the New World, but the frenetic growth of the avant-garde and cinema as well.

In October 2014, Cinegogue presented the film *The City Without Jews* (*Die Stadt ohne Juden*), made by Austrian director and producer Hans Karl Breslauer (1888–1965); the film is based on a novel of the same name by author, journalist, and bon vivant Maximilian Hugo Bettauer (1872–1925).



Still from the film *The City Without Jews*

For decades the film was assumed to be lost, until an incomplete copy was discovered at the Nederlands Filmmuseum in 1991.

The film premiered in 1924 in two phases, and in neither case did it have much luck. Its first release to movie theatres in July met with technical difficulties, which ended with a falling out between Breslauer and Bettauer, who immediately thereafter distanced himself from the film. A second premiere took place on October 11, 1924, in a movie theatre in the Vienna suburb of Neustadt. This showing was met by a violent protest from the local Hakenkreuzler who attacked attendees and disrupted the event by throwing stink bombs into the theatre. The premiere in Berlin in 1926 provoked protests as well, and the film was also excoriated in the liberal press as tendentious and promoting negative stereotypes. The Berlin fiasco and the prior public protests and scandals eventually led to the film being banned in the United States and the cancellation of its New York premiere planned for 1928.

*The City Without Jews* got a second life in Amsterdam in 1933 shortly after the advent of sound film. What fortuitous circumstances revived interest in a silent movie? It was not a marketing ploy but the radical transformation of the political situation in Germany that provided the impetus. The Theatre Carré, which staged operettas and cabarets, decided in mid-July 1933 to respond to events in Germany by holding a series of public screenings of the film that included an opening recital by the chief cantor of Warsaw Gershon Sirota. The program was explicitly conceived to rouse the Dutch public from their indifference toward the growing threat of the anti-Semitism that had officially become a part of German politics and state propaganda.

What would happen to Vienna if all the Jews actually took the calls for them to leave seriously? The film satirically answers this, and saves a couple of unnecessary

modifications its plot is largely faithful to the novel, which teases out all the implications of such an exodus down to the last detail. A narcissistic, rather inept politician, the populist chancellor of the fictional Republic of Utopia, is under pressure by mass street protests and the anti-Jewish mood of conservative parliamentarians, who fashion themselves as defenders of Christian morality and traditional values while vehemently promoting the idea of Greater Germany disseminated mostly in louche pubs. In a confidential conversation with the head of the Church, the chancellor mentions that the situation has become intolerable and one way to quickly resolve it would be for the government to heed the vox populi calling for the expulsion of Jews. When he enacts this plan, however, it gradually becomes clear that those who lent the capital city of Utopia, which is easily recognizable as 20th-century Vienna, its unmistakable cosmopolitan élan and bolstered its position as a political, commercial, and cultural centre, were the Jews. And these were not only the wealthiest Jews, but Jews of all social strata. Without them, the city loses more than its allure and diversity, it also suffers economic and intellectual decline and ends up politically isolated. With provincial philistinism now rampant and the theatres putting on the tacky farces written by parochial moralists for a cast of earthy soubrettes and country boys, with the show windows of boutiques that once displayed the latest in Parisian fashion now filled with long johns and shapeless bodices of fustian and loden, and the elegant cafés now dives serving cheap booze and beer, the news reaching the chancellery paints an ever more dire picture. Business and trade were dwindling, inflation was on the rise, and the currency was mired in a downward spiral. The plot thickens and culminates in the madhouse scenes



Still from the film *The City Without Jews*

in which the obstinate anti-Semite and parliamentarian from the Greater German Party begins to deliriously rave that he is a Zionist. Though it has been lost, the film, like the book, has a happy ending (the final sequence has been reconstructed with stills and text). Unfortunately Bettauer's otherwise chillingly prescient vision in reality did not have a happy end.

The new score for *The City Without Jews* was specifically commissioned by BERG Orchestra from composer Petr Wajsar. The orchestra is one of the leading music ensembles, whose innovative concerts have attracted the public's attention with its combination of contemporary music, dance, film, theatre, and video projections.

### **Under preparation**

#### ***Cinegogue 2015: The Poetic Avant-Garde: Between Walt Whitman and Robert Desnos (12 – 13 October)***

*Cinegogue 2015 will present a series of five short films made by Jewish American artists Paul Strand (1890–1976), Ralph Steiner (1899–1986), and Man Ray (1890–1976). All three were established photographers with an interest in cinematic experiment. The*

five films form a multi-genre collage that ranges from the (proto)documentary of Paul Strand to the abstract cinematic montages of Ralph Steiner to the Surrealist games and dreams of Man Ray. What connects the three is a distinct penchant for the poetry of images and words. Indeed, the first and last films incorporate specific works of poetry: in *Manhatta* Strand borrows from Walt Whitman and Ray's fantasy *L'étoile de mer* is based on an automatic text by Robert Desnos, who is one of the protagonists in the film. Restored and digitized versions of the films will be shown and accompanied by new music from young Czech composers produced and performed by BERG Orchestra, conducted by Petr Vrábel, the ensemble's artistic director.

## Gisi

The Jewish Museum in Prague, the Embassy of the State of Israel, and the Jewish Community of Prague jointly organize the Czech premiere of the feature documentary *Gisi* to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The film tells the story of Gisi Fleischmann, a remarkable woman who when confronted with the brutality of banal evil was convinced that if she managed to raise enough funds, she would be able to stop the Holocaust. She headed up a group in Bratislava that worked to get the transports halted to the extermination camp at Auschwitz. She would have remained forgotten if it were not for the dozens of letters she sent out around the world in an effort to raise two million dollars – the exact sum demanded by the Nazi authorities as a ransom for their promise to spare a part of European Jewry.

Directed by Natasha Dudinski, Israel - CZ- SK - USA, 2014, in Slovak, English, Czech and Hebrew / Czech, English subtitles, 62 min

20 January at 6:00 p.m. Cinema Světozor, Vodičkova 41, Prague 1

Tickets are available at Světozor, Aero and Bio OKO cinema cash desks and via [www.kinosvetozor.cz](http://www.kinosvetozor.cz).

A question and answer session will be held after the screening with the director, actress Halka Třešňáková and theatre director Viktorie Čermáková.

## AN EVENING OF SEPHARDIC MUSIC IN THE SPANISH SYNAGOGUE

On 8 December 2014 the Jewish Museum in Prague and Instituto Cervantes Praga jointly organised an evening of Ladino music performed by the Spanish singer Mara Aranda and her band. The artists enjoyed a full house and a big applause.



Gisi Fleischmann



Mara Aranda singing Sephardic melodies. Photo by Jan Olša



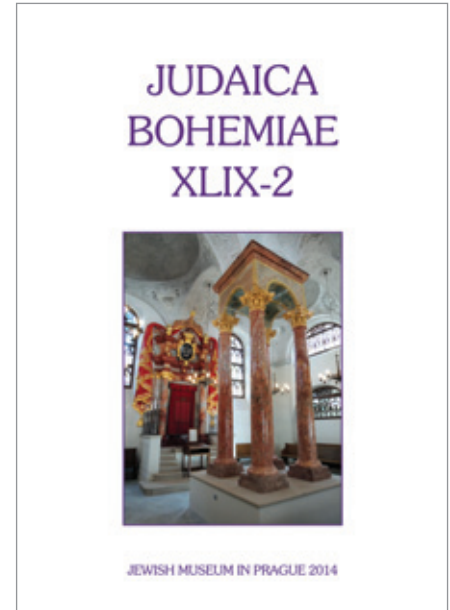
## JUDAICA BOHEMIAE 49 (2014), 2

A new issue of the journal *Judaica Bohemiae* (49/2014, 2) came out in December 2014. This volume includes an analysis by Branislav Šprocha and Pavol Tišliar of the demographic situation of the Jewish population in Slovakia between the two world wars on the basis of a comparison with other Jewish communities in Czechoslovakia. The next paper, by Markéta Lhotová and Vlastimila Hamáčková, explores in detail the way that Jewish organizations were liquidated in the annexed Czech border regions during the Second World War. The third of the main studies, by Miloslav Szabó, focuses on populist antisemitism and examines the tension between antisemitic semantics and practice, which to this day partially influences historical reflection on antisemitic and nationalistic discourses of the day. It provides an interesting contribution to the discourse on the theory and methodology of research into modern antisemitism.

In the Reports section, Arno Pařík provides information on a completed project involving the revitalization of Jewish sites in the Czech Republic, and Pavel Kocman together with Helmut Teufel discuss the oldest known depiction of the Jewish town and synagogue in Mikulov, dating from 1711.

In the final section of the journal, Jiřina Šedinová reviews Rachel L. Greenblatt's book *"To Tell Their Children"*. *Jewish Communal Memory in Early Modern Prague* (2014), and Pavel Kocman reviews Alfred Damm's book *Weitersfeld / Schaffa. Zur Geschichte einer jüdischen Landgemeinde an der mährischen Grenze in der Neuzeit. Eine Spurensuche* (2012).

Published since 1965 by the Jewish Museum in Prague, *Judaica Bohemiae* focuses on Jewish history and culture in Bohemia, Moravia and the wider Central European area (the territory of the former Habsburg Monarchy). The texts are in English and German.



## SURVIVOR RECOLLECTIONS

### Interviews with Czech emigrants in NYC

The Jewish Museum's Shoah History Department continues to collect testimonies from Shoah survivors and witnesses as part of its oral history project, which was launched in 1990. At present, the collection has about 1,300 testimonies, which are widely accessible to researchers and the general public. In November we conducted interviews with four survivors who have been living in the USA since the 1940s.

The first of these is George Sachs, who had been briefly active in the Prague Jewish community before he was interned in the Terezín ghetto during the war. George met his future wife Eva in Prague after the war, later moving to New York after spending a few months in Frankfurt. Helen Satter, who now lives in New Jersey, also spent more than three years in Terezín. She and her sister were the only ones in their large family to survive the war. She later managed to immigrate to the USA as part of a special quota for Czechoslovak political refugees. Marion Feigl and Hanna Slome were both evacuated from Czechoslovakia on the Kindertransport train that was organized by Nicholas Winton in 1939. Marion was reunited in 1945 with her parents in New York, where they had emigrated earlier on a tourist visa. Hanna, who had left England on the same ship, travelled to the USA with an invitation from her uncle.

Hanna Slome is originally from the Moravian town of Moravská Ostrava while the other three survivors were born in Prague – George Sachs in Smíchov, Marion Feigl in Letná, and Helen Satter near Wenceslas Square. What were their war-time experiences like and how were their beginnings in their new country? How did they get used to their new environment, and how did their identity change over the following years? These are just a few of the questions they answered.



George Sachs, New York City, 2014



Helen Satter, New Jersey, 2014





Hanna Slome with her brother in the 1920s, private archive of H. Slome



A letter from Oskar Kokoschka to Hugo Feigl, 1955, JMP archives

We would like to thank all the survivors for giving their testimonies and for providing photographs. Particular thanks go to Mrs Feigl for kindly donating documents – letters exchanged by her father Hugo Feigl and the painter Oskar Kokoschka – which constitute a substantial boon to our archival collections.

### A meeting with John Gruschka

In October 2014 we had a rare opportunity to meet with John Gruschka, who came all the way from Australia – where he is a long-term resident – for a brief visit to the Czech Republic. John is the grandson of Salomon Gruschka, who served as cantor in the Vinohrady Synagogue in Sázavská Street, Prague, from 1895 until his death in 1922. While in Prague, John also visited the local school – Gymnázium Sázavská – which currently hosts the touring exhibition *Traces of the Jewish Presence in Prague 2* (after being on display at the New Town Hall).

John was born into a German-speaking Jewish family in the northern Bohemian town of Ústí nad Labem in 1924. Under pressure from the Nazi Henlein movement, the family moved to Prague in 1938. Fearful of Nazism, John's father tried to find a way of leaving Czechoslovakia. John's two-year older sister Ruth was a member of the Zionist movement, with whose help she made it to Palestine. They arranged for their parents to stay with relatives in Manchester, where they went in February 1939.



Ruth Gruschka, sister of John Gruschka



John Gruschka and his son visited an exhibition about Jewish presence in the Vinohrady district at the Sázavská secondary grammar school

The recollections and testimony of John Grushka have been included in our oral history collection and, along with other survivor testimonies, will be of use to researchers for publication and exhibition purposes and for putting together educational materials. While recording interviews with survivors from the former Czechoslovakia in Israel at the beginning of December, we also obtained testimony from John's sister Ruth who now lives in Jerusalem.

## NEW ACQUISITIONS

### New acquisitions from the estate of George Whyte

This summer we received a unique acquisition of books, archival materials and a painting from the estate of the distinguished British author, composer and lifelong anti-racist activist George Whyte. The central theme of the donated materials was the opera *Golem 13*, a Kabbalistic drama in two acts. This opera premiered at the National Theatre of Prague on 29 July 2009 for the 400th anniversary of the death of Rabbi Loew, the Maharal, and was held as part of the Holocaust Era Assets conference. George Whyte collaborated on the opera with the acclaimed Israeli composer and conductor Noam Sheriff. His family's decision to donate part of his estate to the Jewish Museum in Prague fulfils the message not only of the opera, but also of George Whyte's work and endeavours. In this way, his *Golem* has returned once more to Prague.

We received the donation after several weeks of negotiations. These materials significantly enrich our collections.

### Esther scroll

On 13 November 2014 the Jewish Museum in Prague acquired an Esther scroll in its original case from the estate of Magdalena van Emde Boas (née Starkenstein). It was donated to the museum by her sons, the leading Dutch neurologist and neurophysiologist Dr. Walter van Emde Boas and the distinguished computer scientist Prof. Peter van Emde Boas. Also present at the handing over of the scroll were the wives of the two scientists, Ineke van Emde Boas and Ghica van Emde Boas. The scroll probably comes from the west Bohemian town of Pobežovice (in German, Ronsberg), where the donors' grandfather, Dr. Emil Starkenstein (18 December 1884 – 6 November 1942, Mauthausen), a professor at the German University in Prague, was born. Well-known in Prague cultural circles, Emil Starkenstein hosted meetings of artists in his salon and was also an active member of the pre-war Jewish Museum in Prague Association. He managed to leave for the Netherlands before the German occupation of



The drawing which inspired the cover of the "Golem 13" theatre brochure



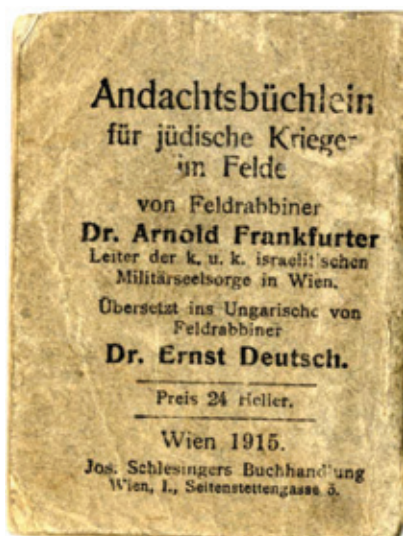
Czechoslovakia but was arrested in autumn 1941 and subsequently incarcerated in the Small Fortress at the Terezín ghetto. In October 1942 he was deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where he died soon after. His wife and daughter survived the war in the Netherlands, but the fate of his son Walter is unclear. This year marks the 130th anniversary of the birth of Emil Starkenstein, an eminent figure in the history of European pharmacology and toxicology. A science colloquium was held in Prague on 14 November on this occasion.

Previously, in 2005, Magdalena van Emde Boas kindly donated to the Jewish Museum in Prague a Torah curtain (inv. no. JMP 178.760), which her father had rescued from the synagogue in Poběžovice before the German occupation of the Sudetenland. The Esther scroll is a valuable relic of an otherwise little documented area of the Sudetenland and of its former Jewish community.



### LIBRARY WEEK AT THE JEWISH MUSEUM

The 18th annual Library Week took place between the 6th and 12th of October. This nationwide event is held by the Association of Library and Information Professionals (SKIP) and the focus this year was on Czech museum libraries, the main topic being the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. The Czech Association of Museums and Galleries (AMG) prepared a campaign for this anniversary, titled *Museums and the*



Frankfurter Arnold: *Andachtsbüchlein für jüdische Krieger im Felde*, Wien 1915. (The Hebrew original is provided with a German and Hungarian translation.)



*Twentieth Century – Museums and the Great War, or 100 Years since the Outbreak of the First World War.* Library Week this year involved 60 museums and galleries, which prepared a host of events and workshops on the specified topic. The Jewish Museum's contribution was a lecture by Michal Bušek at its Department for Education and Culture in Prague and Brno, which highlighted the work and services of the museum's library. Drawing on archival materials, this lecture charted the fate of the museum's Historical Collection (the pre-war Library of the Prague Jewish Religious Community) in 1914–1918. Most attention, however, was paid to the fate of Jewish soldiers and to the work of field rabbis on both sides of the conflict. The lecturer also presented major Jewish periodicals that carried news from the Front and about the fate of the fallen and the decoration of Jewish soldiers, as well as showing the most important prayer books that were provided to Jewish soldiers. Much of this material is part of the Jewish Museum's book collections and is available for study purposes in its library.

### JEWISH MUSEUM COLLEAGUES AT A CONFERENCE IN POLIN

The annual conference of the European Association of Jewish Museums (AEJM) – of which the Jewish Museum in Prague is a member – was held at the newly opened Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw on 15–18 November. The title of this year's conference was *Approaches to Authenticity: the Virtual vs. the Material vs. the Recreated* and its main theme was transformations and patterns of relations between three-dimensional collection objects and their reflection in the world of virtual reality. The new Warsaw-based museum – whose exhibitions make use of multimedia, audio-visual and activation components – was an extremely apt venue for the conference. Among the most stimulating aspects of the conference was the discussion on the circumstances surrounding the creation and implementation of the new permanent exhibitions at the host museum, notably with the curatorial team led by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. Also of great interest were the various workshops and excursions that took place. In the section focusing on the work of AEJM member institutions, Dana and Magda Veselská presented the results of a pilot project – *Identifying Donors of Objects in the Collections of the Jewish Museum in Prague* – that was successfully carried out by the Jewish Museum in Prague with support from the Rothschild Foundation Europe in 2012–2014.



POLIN – the newly opened Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw



## RECONSTRUCTION OF THE MAISEL SYNAGOGUE

Two stone commemorative plaques hang on the wall in the entrance area of the Maisel Synagogue. The inscriptions are as follows:

*“In eternal memory of the generous head of the Prague Jewish Community, Mordecai Maisel, who funded the construction of this temple in the years 5350–5353 (1590-1592).”*

*“The rebuilding of this temple was begun with the devotion of its members in the year 5653 (1893) and completed in the year 5666 (1905).”*



Aware of our predecessors’ immense endeavours and determination to build and maintain this magnificent house of prayer as a religious and social centre for the community, we have great respect and admiration for their work. The implementation team is tackling the reconstruction of this important cultural monument with great humility and with the aim of restoring its distinctive Neo-Gothic look from the early 20th century. Hundreds of specialists from a wide range of professions are involved in the reconstruction project, which will require hundreds of thousands of working hours and close collaboration on original procedures and solutions.



The external appearance of the synagogue is now clearly visible after the removal of the scaffolding. The previously white facade is sculpted, painted in several colours and features decorative elements that have been carefully restored.

At present, intensive restoration work is being done inside the synagogue with the use of interior scaffolding. The interior colour scheme will differ from the previous one, which was white. On the basis of restoration surveys, the synagogue interior will be brought back to the way it looked after its reconstruction some 110 years ago.

Due to the influence of historical events, the synagogue has not served as a house of prayer for many years. Having been adapted for museum purposes, however, it has

introduced hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world each year to the diversity and richness of Jewish architecture, history and art. Intensive work is now under way in preparation for the new exhibition, which will be installed in the reconstructed synagogue in the second quarter of 2015.

### CLOSURE OF PART OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM'S VISUAL ARTS DEPOSITORY

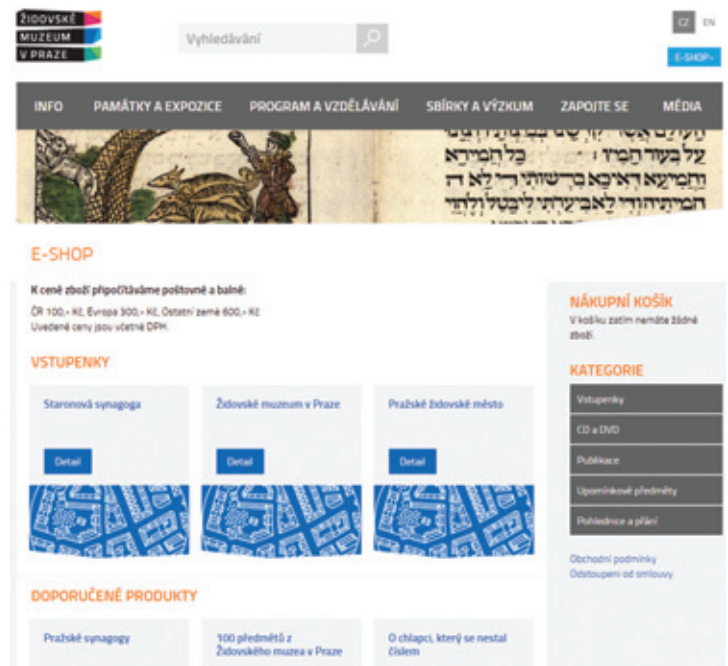
Due to reconstruction work, the museum's visual arts depository is closed to the public until further notice. During this time, there will be no access to the paintings, drawings, prints and sculptures in the visual arts collection for study or lending purposes. The depository is likely to re-open at the end of March 2015. We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your understanding.

### CLOSURE OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM'S ARCHIVE

Due to reconstruction work on our archive depository (installation of self-extinguishing equipment), our archives continue to be closed to the public until early 2015. The precise date of reopening will depend on the progress of the construction. We are currently unable to deal with requests from researchers. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

### NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED BY THE JEWISH MUSEUM

At the end of last year the museum launched its new website, which meets all the current technical and user requirements and reflects the museum's new corporate and visual identity. We trust that visitors to our website (www.jewishmuseum.cz) will appreciate the new layout, the full-text search options, the ability to browse events by category (exhibition, concert, lecture etc.) and the new e-shop.



## PROMINENT VISITS

### October

- Dr. Dalit Atrakchi (Secretary General of the Israeli Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Education, Israel) and Prof. Michael Turner (Bezalel Academy, Jerusalem, representative of WHC UNESCO) visited the museum on 1 October.
- Ambassador to the Czech Republic of Bulgaria Mr Latchezar Petkov visited the



museum on 3 October.

- A group of historians from Israel, U.S.A., Poland, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania and the Czech Republic paid a visit to the museum on 30 October during an international conference on Czech-Jewish and Polish-Jewish Studies.



### November

- Ms Tamar Newberger, wife of Ambassador to the Czech Republic of the U.S.A., visited the museum on 10 November.

### December

- American dancer, choreographer and writer Judith Brin Ingber visited the museum on 1 December in connection with her lecture for the museum's Department for Education and Culture.

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