

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

Robert Guttman – The Prague Wanderer

Until 23 August, 2020 visitors to the museum's Robert Guttman Gallery can see an exhibition of works by the popular early 20th century Prague naive painter Robert Guttman. The exhibition features Guttman's paintings and drawings from the collection of the Jewish Museum in Prague, as well as period photographs and documents which the museum has managed to collect over the years.

In the inter-war period Guttman was better known in Prague for his distinct appearance than for his pictures – a thin figure with a large head, handlebar moustache and rich mane of dark black hair, wearing a blue velvet jacket and an enormous green cravat. Guttman sketched pictures in bars and cafés and even on the train, selling them without much ado for a few crowns to anyone who was interested. Hardly anyone at the time, however, thought that his work had any genuine artistic value. It attracted attention only for its eccentric and unusual qualities. The pictures provide an insight into a secluded, sensitive soul which was drawn to nature, to the integrity of childhood and to a profound faith. Guttman's eccentricity and defiance may have been a way of protecting his fragile, sensitive world from outside encroachment. As an artist, he refused to be a mere reproducer of reality and defended his right to his own creative self-expression.

The Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 put an end to the genial world Guttman had known. On 16 October 1941 Guttman was put on the first transport from Prague to the Lodz/Litzmannstadt ghetto. Ghetto life must have been incomprehensible to Guttman, a person who had criss-crossed half of Europe on foot. Robert Guttman died of hunger and exhaustion in the ghetto on 14 March 1942.

Robert Guttmann Gallery, U Staré školy 3, Prague 1

Open daily except Saturdays and other Jewish holidays

summer time 9 a.m.- 6 p.m., winter time 9 a.m.- 4.30 p.m.



Robert Guttmann

Dance Cosmopolitan Alice Flachová-Pastorová

From 21 to 29 February 2020, the Department of Education and Culture will present an exhibition called Dance Cosmopolitan Alice Flachová-Pastorová, depicting the life of the dancer and teacher (1928–2006). It maps her life's journey, from first ballet steps, through the tragic period of World War II when she was deported to Terezín and Auschwitz and took part in the march of death, to her return to the theatre scene and latter career in drama and education during the communist regime. Her expertise and knowledge of dance history and theory has significantly influenced subsequent generations and contributed to the systemization of professional dance art. The exhibition, produced by the Bratislava Theatre Institute, will be opened by curator Monika Čertezni on Tuesday 21 January.

Auditorium of the Department of Education and Culture of JMP, Maiselova 15, Prague1

Opening hours: Mon -Thu 12 - 4pm, Fri 10am -12pm, during evening shows and by appointment



Alice Flachová-Pastorová

A SELECTION OF CULTURAL EVENTS AND LECTURES

Discussions Within Democracy Festival

On Sunday 13 October, in cooperation with Forum 2000 and the Herzl Center for Israel Studies, Charles University, a debate on the topic of Israel and the rise of illiberal democracy was held in the Maisel Synagogue. Rachel Azaria, a Member of the Israeli Knesset for the Kulan party, and Gadi Taub, historian at the Hebrew University and political commentator, took part in the debate hosted by the Director of the Herzl Center. Both guests were invited to compare some of the growing attacks on democratic principles in a number of Central European countries with the current situation in Israel. As the Jewish state is not immune to many of these trends, the guests debated the state of Israeli democracy, the differences between similar tendencies in Europe, the USA and Israel. Both guests agreed that Israel still relies on democratic pillars such as independent courts of law and free media. It is, however, possible to observe the dangers, especially in the deepening divide between conservative and liberal voters.

30th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution

The Jewish Museum Prague participated in 'Museums and 1989, or 30 years since the Velvet Revolution', a campaign launched in 2019 by the Czech Association of Museums and Galleries. The year-long project's aim was to unify activities on this historic topic organized by museums and galleries throughout the Czech Republic. Visitors to the evening's events at the JMP were informed of Jewish samizdat contributions in a lecture by Petra Loučová from the Institute of Czech Literature at the CAS, and able to listen to Jan Fingerland's interview with Kateřina Dejmalová, Daniel Kummermann and Karol E. Sidon about their involvement in Czech dissent. An insight into the Central European Jewish community of the 1980s and 1990s was provided by a photography exhibition and film projection by American musician and ethnographer Yale Strom.

Cooperation with *Gido Returns Home* project

During the autumn of 2019, the JMP's Department of Education and Culture participated in a project called *Gido Returns Home*. The festival commemorated the 100th anniversary of the birth of Czech musician, composer and teacher Gideon Klein (1919–1945), whose promising artistic career was cut violently short by the Holocaust. In September, Lisa Peschel, the leading expert in the Terezín theatre spoke about the possibility of using Terezin's theatre texts for pedagogical purposes. The possibilities of linking the creative activities of young Czech musicians with the work and personality of Gideon Klein were discussed during the *Gido's Voices* symposium, which took place at the JMP's Department of Education and Culture at the beginning of December.

The Brno branch of the JMP's Department of Education and Culture participated in the project in October, presenting an evening of music and literature, during which Klein's work was performed by leading Czech pianist Pavel Zemen.

On the eve of the 100th anniversary of Gido Klein's birth (5 December 2019) an evening composition was hosted to mark the festival's climax. Taking place in the Maisel Synagogue, various stages commemorated the personality and work of this unique composer and pianist. In the first part of the evening works by Klein and other Jewish musicians from the first half of the 20th century were performed, as well as the world premiere of the composition *Thirteen Attributes of Mercy* by Daniel Chudovský, who composed the work especially for the occasion. His piece was played by the eminent Czech quartet group Fama Q with leading soprano Irena Troupová. The second part of the evening was devoted to the introduction of the book *Letter from Gideon* by British musicologist David Fligg. Josef Třeštík, musician and director of the *Prague Spring* Festival, who has close personal ties to the Klein family, introduced the book.



Gala evening for Pavel Fried

On 24 October, Pavel Fried, former president of the Jewish Community of Brno, received in memoriam the Award of the Museum of Roma Culture for his long-standing, tireless work associated with holocaust awareness. The gala evening, which included a recital by two Roma musical virtuosos, Radek Bagár Jr. (piano) and Marek Balog (violin), plus performances by the klezmer band HaChucpa, was attended by the Brno branch of the JMP, with whom Pavel Fried cooperated closely, mainly in discussions with students.



Gideon Klein

On 31 October the Brno branch of the JMP joined the *Gido Returns Home* festival with an evening composition, including a concert by leading Czech pianist Pavel Zemen. The project commemorates the musician, composer and educator Gideon Klein (1919 Přeřov - 1945 Fürstengrube), whose promising artistic career was cut short by the Holocaust. During the evening the monograph *Letter from Gideon* with participation from its author, English musicologist David Fligg, was presented. Excerpts from the book were read by actor Šimon Bilina.



Pianist Pavel Zemen

Restoration of the Torah scrolls from Brno and Přeštice

On 1 November, a unique set of 14 photographs taken during the renovation of two of the 1564 Czech and Moravian Scrolls of the Torah from London's Memorial Scrolls Trust, was presented by their author Sheila Pallay. Ms Pallay kindly donated the exhibition to the Brno branch of the JMP, from where it will be loaned in future to other institutions and made available to the public.



Photo (c) Sheila Pally

OTHER NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

Supporting Apprenticeships

In 2019, the JMP's Department of Education and Culture conducted a series of special programs for students from Prague's vocational colleges. From June to December more than 1,000 students were involved in the project. The students took part in a guided tour of the JMP's buildings and attended a workshop focused on anti-Semitism in contemporary Czech Republic and Europe. The guests learned of the current situation in our country, based on the Annual Report of Antisemitism Manifestations in the Czech Republic 2018, published by the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic. The historical context of underlying stereotypes associated with the Jewish community was explained, in line with a critical evaluation of the manifestations of various forms of hatred taking place today. The project, which aims to prevent socially dangerous phenomena such as xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism, took place with the financial support of Prague City Hall.

Series of lectures *Jews – The History of One Nation* in the Nové Strašecí Museum

From September to December 2019, the JMP's Department of Education and Culture, in cooperation with the Nové Strašecí Museum, presented a four-stage lecture series called *Jews – The History of One Nation*. Attendees were

presented with the following topics: Ancient History of Jews, the Origins of the Israeli Nation; The Middle Ages – the Life of Jewish People in the Czech Republic and Europe; 19th Century – Coexistence of Jews in Mainstream Society; 20th Century – a Century of European War, the Culmination of Ideological and Human Intolerance in the Form of Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. The lectures were well attended, with cooperation between the two museums continuing into the spring with a guided tour of the buildings of the Jewish Museum Prague.

IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance)

The annual meeting of delegates from IHRA – experts from 34 states – took place under the chairmanship of Luxembourg, the event host for 2019. During the plenary session, the nomination of Dr. Zuzana Pavlovská as chairperson of the Educational Working Group (EWG) for 2020 was approved. Germany will take over the IHRA chair in 2020.

Seminars for Teachers

During the autumn months, two seminars for teachers were held at the JMP's Brno branch as part of the series *Jews, History and Culture*. A total of 33 teachers attended. Thanks to cooperation from the Brno Region Museum, we were able to present an exhibition on the city's textile industry in the beautifully restored premises of Villa Löw-Beer. Another interesting experience was a seminar given by the Yad Vashem Memorial in Brno. Our foreign guests were also treated to a commentary and walk around the city centre and synagogue, outlining Jewish history in the city from the Middle Ages to the present day. A similar event which took place in October, was held for participants of an international conference organised in Brno by the Society for the History of Jews in the Czech Republic.



Crocus Project

September and October 2019 marked the beginning of the Crocus Project. The Project is an initiative by the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland, which provides Czech schools with yellow crocus bulbs through the JMP's Department for Education and Culture. The bulbs are planted in the autumn and expected to bloom at the end of January or early February, at the time of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January. When planting the bulbs, pupils and students of participating schools commemorate the one and half million Jewish children who died during WW2, informing those who stop to look at the flowering crocuses of their fate. This year around 10,000 crocuses will blossom outside 173 schools and other cultural institutions across the Czech Republic.



Planting crocus bulbs in Odry, photo Tomáš Král

An extraordinary addition to the Visual Art Collection

In September this year, after a lengthy negotiation process starting in 2016, the Jewish Museum Prague succeeded in adding an extraordinary painting to its collection. It is a portrait of the prominent Jewish businessman Israel Hönig von Hönigsberg (1724 - 1808), founder of the Prague tobacco consortium, co-director of the Czech and Austrian tobacco federation and, from 1784, director of the state trust for bank pensions, taxes and tobacco production.

The unsigned and undated portrait, attributed to the painter Gebhard Kneip (1742-1838), who worked in both Vienna and Prague, was probably completed shortly before the portrait engraving by Quirin Mark which was, according to the markings, created in 1788. On the basis of Kneip's draft, the painting can be dated to 1788 or earlier. Whilst the document bestows upon Hönig the title 'Edler von Hönigsberg', this is undoubtedly an overpainting at a later date, as Hönig was not promoted to the nobility until 2nd September 1789.

Israel Hönig was born in Chodová Planá in Western Bohemia (German: Kuttenplanen) into the family of Löbl Hönig, merchant and chief supplier to the Austrian army. He received a traditional Jewish education and at the age of thirteen left home to study yeshiva in Prague. At the age of sixteen, however, he was recalled to assist in the running of the family business. He thus embarked on his own path to success as merchant and businessman.

Early in his career, Israel and his brother Moses visited markets in neighbouring Bavaria, and particularly the large market in Leipzig. It was here he got to know local tobacco manufacturers and became acquainted with the tobacco industry which would so benefit him later in life. At the age of eighteen, he married

Katharina, the daughter of a less affluent merchant, Nathan Wehle of Volyň, adding his father-in-law's business to his own. He would soon go his own way, however, setting up a successful retail operation from his home. Due to his success and increasing standing, it was not long before he became a community leader in Volyň.

In 1752, together with his father and brother Moses, Hönig acquired a ten-year lease for the syndicated tobacco industry in Prague. In recognition for services supplying the army during the Seven Years' War, meanwhile, the Hönig brothers and their male descendants received the privilege of Empress Maria Theresa. This formal acknowledgement allowed family members to settle in the Czech lands wherever Jewish communities were established, to buy or build houses in such communities, and conduct business with the tax exemptions usually granted to those of noble status.

In 1764, again with brother and father alongside, Hönig led a consortium of prominent Jewish merchants in securing a ten-year contract for the lease of a tobacco confederation throughout the Czech lands as well as Upper and Lower Austria, later extended to other countries in the empire as well. The contract was renewed in 1773 for another decade, but Emperor Joseph II was against the renewal, seeking instead to place the monopoly under state control.

The lease was thereby rescinded in 1783, and settlement agreed between the consortium and state. Hönig was duly compensated for economic loss by social ascension. He was appointed director of the joint state trust of bank pensions, taxes and tobacco production, becoming an appointee of the Lower Austrian Government Council. Thus from mercantile origins he ascended to the executive of high state office, determining the operation of the sector to which he himself had contributed significantly.

For his standing as the preeminent Jew in the Habsburg empire, in 1789 Israel Hönig was elevated to the nobility. He received the title "Edler von Hönigsberg" and was given the right to purchase properties listed in the ancient estates records. He spent the rest of his life in Vienna where he died in 1808. Unlike his brother Adam Albert, who converted to Christianity, he retained his ancestral faith and was therefore buried at Währing, the Jewish cemetery in Vienna. He was the father to a daughter and six sons of whom only the eldest, Enoch, buried in 1815 at the Prague Jewish Cemetery in Fibichova Street, did not convert.

Kneip's portrait of Israel Hönig von Hönigsberg is a significant addition to the collection of portraits of prominent Jewish figures from social, spiritual, cultural and economic life in the Czech and Austrian lands during the Enlightenment and Emancipation periods. Along with portraits of the Wolfsheimer-Löwy and

Moscheles family members, it is amongst the oldest artefacts of its kind now found in the Jewish Museum Prague collection.

Gebhard Kneip (Gebhardus Kneipp) (1742-1838), ascribed.

Portrait of Israel Hönig von Hönigsberg (1724-1808)

Prague or Vienna, undated (1788-1789)

Oil on canvas, 93 x 69,5 cm, used second-hand, refurbished historical frame

unsigned, undated

JMP 180.513

Provenance:

2019 — Acquisition of the Jewish Museum in Prague

2016 — **2019** — Dr. Thomas Habeck Kunsthandel, SRN

? — **2016** — Unidentified Private Collection, Richmond, VA, USA

According to Art Loss Register certificate, the painting is not listed in the register of stolen and missing works of art.



Acquisition of an old print for the JMP library

The JMP library successfully acquired by auction a rare Prague print, *Sefer Šulchan arba* by Bachji ben Ašer abn Chalava (1260-1340). The print was published in Prague in 1596, probably by Moses Weisswasser (Kestenbaum & Co., lot no. 85, 11/ 2019). The first three chapters of the text, entitled Table of Four, describe Jewish dining customs and blessings, whilst the last chapter discusses the feast of the Righteous in the future world, following the Resurrection. The first edition of the print was published in Mantua in 1514 and incorrectly attributed to Nachmanides. The author, who studied under Shhisel adret (Rašba), is considered one of Spain's most significant biblical exegetes. In his interpretations, Chalava used cabalistic methods influenced by his predecessors Nachmanides and Maimonides. The first page features the

depiction of a Jerusalem temple. The text is an important enrichment of the collection of Prague prints of rare provenance from the 16th century.



Restitution of an old print from the pre-war library

In November 2019 an old Prague print, *Sefer Poel Cedek*, 613 Mitzvot (Prague, 1722), originally from the pre-war library of the Jewish Community in Prague (carrying inventory number 2,780), was discovered at the Kedem Auction House in Jerusalem.

In the text based on Maimonides' work the author, Shabbatai ben Meir HaKohen (1621–1662), known as Shakh, a Lithuanian rabbi and Talmud scholar, divides

613 religious commandments amongst the 7 days of the week. Shakh studied in Krakow, Lublin and briefly in Prague. After enforced expulsion from Lithuania due to the persecution of Jews, he worked as a rabbi in Strážnice and then in Holešov, where he died.

The item was part of the Jewish Community in Prague's library which dates back to 1857, when it was established by donations from leading city figures, such as Chief Rabbi Solomon Judah Löb HaKohen Rapoport, the printer Moses Israel Landau, secretary of the Funeral Society Koppelman Lieben, and others. The print was listed in the JMP's library collection, but subsequently recorded as lost. On its reemergence, the Kedem Auction House fulfilled a request to withdraw the print from auction and agreed to its return to the JMP. The print was returned to the collections in November 2019 and for their cooperation we would like to warmly thank the Kedem Auction House.



***Judaica Bohemiae* 54/2019, 2**

A new issue of the journal *Judaica Bohemiae* (Vol. 54/2019, 2) came out at the end of December 2019. This issue starts with a study by Andrea Jelínková (“Ohncensurirte viel übles in sich enthaltende Bücher”: On the Registration and Censorship of Hebrew Books in Moravia in the Mid-18th Century), which focuses on the Hebrew printing press of Franz Joseph Neumann in Brno and on the course and consequences of his dispute with the Jesuit censors in Olomouc and Prague. The Documents section contains two valuable studies that explore, in a

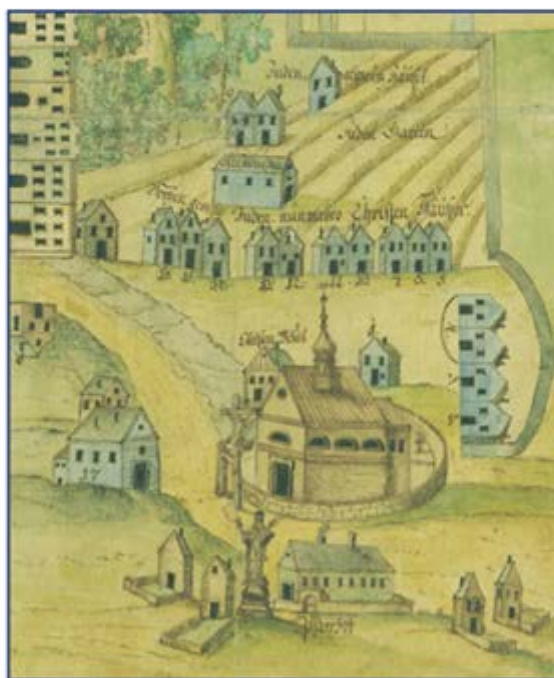
broad context, two important documents relating to the history of Bohemian Jews in the 14th and 18th centuries. Firstly, Milan Žonca presents a commented edition and English translation of a famous begging letter written by the Prague scholar Avigdor Kara (d. 1432) shortly after the Prague Pogrom of 1389. Secondly, Olga Sixtová and Kajetán Holeček present an edition and translation of a previously unpublished source – the statutes of the Jewish Community of Rychnov nad Kněžnou (Reichenau an der Knieschna), which were confirmed by the local manorial authorities in 1657 and are the earliest known community statutes from Bohemia. The edition and analysis of this document provide a significant contribution to the study of Jewish self-government in the European context.

The Reports section contains a paper by Filip Paulus and Šárka Steinová on the famous Resettlement Maps of Jewish Dwellings in the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, 1727–1728, with an outline of an extensive research project on these documents at the National Archives of the Czech Republic. In the next report, Vlastimila Hamáčková provides an overview of the annual ‘Jews in Bohemia’ seminar, which has been organized by the Jewish Museum in Prague since 2006. This is followed by a report by Christian Porzelt on the international conference *Seelenheil und Spektakel. Jüdische Konversionen im zentraleuropäischen Raum bis 1848* [Salvation and Spectacle: Jewish Conversions in the Central European Space until 1848], which was held in Brno in October 2019.

The final section of the journal contains reviews of the following books: Lukas Clemens and Christoph Cluse’s (eds.) *The Jews of Europe around 1400. Disruption, Crisis, and Resilience* (2018, reviewed by Martin Musílek), Joshua Teplitsky’s *Prince of the Press: How One Collector Built History’s Most Enduring and Remarkable Jewish Library* (2019, reviewed by Andrea Jelínková), and Olga Sixtová’s *Kniha představených kolínské synagogy 1730–1783: překlad a regesta s úvodní analýzou pramene* [Ledger of the Synagogue Treasurers of the Kolín Synagogue, 1730–1783: Translation and Abstracts with an Introductory Analysis of the Source] (2018, reviewed by Lenka Uličná).

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 published in English and German.

JUDAICA BOHEMIAE LIV-2



JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE 2019

International Scientific Conference

On 6 October 2019 Dr. Alexandr Putík, researcher at the Jewish History Department of the Jewish Museum Prague, who specializes in the period 1600–1750, spoke at the Brno international conference *Salvation of the Soul and Spectacular Performance*. Dr. Putík discussed Jewish Conversion in Central Europe Before 1848 (*Seelenheil und Spektakel. Jüdische Konversionen im zentraleuropäischen Raum bis 1848*), with a lecture on *Messianic Movements and the Conversion of Jews to Catholicism. The Archdiocese of Prague 1648–1721*.



Raising money for War Veterans Day

In 2019, the Jewish Museum Prague participated in a public collection for War Veterans Day, organized by the non-profit organization Memory of the Nation/ Post Bellum from 1 to 14 November 2019. Collection boxes with poppies were placed at the Information and Reservation Centre ticket office of the Museum in Maiselova 15 Street, at the reception of the Robert Guttmann Gallery in U Staré školy 3 Street, and in the Department for Education and Culture in Maiselova 15 Street. On Monday 11 November 2019, Post Bellum volunteers sold poppies in the courtyard in front of the Maisel Synagogue, and at the exit of the Old Jewish Cemetery during exhibition opening hours. For more information about the project, please visit the [Post Bellum](#) website.



Photo Barbora Žentelová/Memory of the Nation

IMPORTANT VISITS

On Friday 13 December 2019, Ivana Dubová, longtime supporter of the JMP visited the Museum. Accompanied by Tomáš Bělohlávek, head of the JMP's Archives Department and Tomáš Krákora, archivist and curator of archive groups relating to early modern period, Mrs Dubová visited the museum's Archive Department.



Jewish Museum in Prague, U Staré školy 1, 110 01 Prague 1

www.jewishmuseum.cz

Id. No.: 60459263

Bank Account Information: Commerzbank, AG, Jugoslávská 1, 120 21 Prague 2

For payment in CZK: 10426398/6200

For payment in EUR: 1042639, IBAN: CZ60 6200 0000 0000 1042 6398

For payment in USD: 1042639, IBAN: CZ22 6200 0001 0700 1042 6398 SWIFT CODE: COBACZPXXXX

Editor: Kateřina Honskusová

Photographs: JMP unless otherwise stated