

## A Message from the Director

As we head into the pleasures of summer, it is appropriate to reflect on the successfully completed academic year and a nine-year program review during a spinning turbulent world. Our UC San Diego's Jewish Studies will face the complexities ahead by continuing our boundless support of students and affiliated faculty, encouraging excellent research, critical thinking, and enduring education within the vast constellation of Jewish history, culture, language, art, literature, and addressing rising antisemitism on and off campus. Looking back over 2023/24, it is heartwarming to recall the many splendid events sponsored by Jewish Studies and the gifted graduate student recipients of Gumpel and Katzin Fellowships. It is vital to acknowledge the generous energies this academic year of our Faculty Advisory Committee: Lisa Lampert-Weissig, Amelia Glaser, Mira Balberg, and Marc Garellek. Further, the program thanks profusely our staff coordinator Jen Schwarzkopf, our events coordinator Maddie Martinez, and our business officer Katherine Levy from the Institute of Arts and Humanities. The program extends thanks to Alana Shuster for ensuring her Hebrew courses are flourishing. We could not do all this fine work without the generous support from our friends and alumni. Your contributions fund student and faculty research opportunities, new course development, our speaker series, and many other vital elements of UCSD's Jewish Studies. All good wishes to you!

Sincerely,

**Allan Havis**

Professor, Theatre and Dance  
Director, Jewish Studies Program

## Graduate Student Fellowship Recipients

**Haïa R'nana Bchiri, Theatre and Dance  
2024 Dita and Erwin Gumpel Jewish Studies  
Endowed Fellowship/Katzin in Perpetuity  
Fellowship**

In conjunction with her dissertation research exploring the theatrical history and potential of the Megillahs, Haïa is developing translations of the Hebrew texts in script format influenced by extant Jewish and otherwise contemporaneous performance traditions; with the help of the Gumpel and Katzin Fellowships, she plans to further that research by workshopping those translation/adaptations this summer. Additionally, she has a short play connected to the creation story and surrounding scholarship, set to be performed as part of the REGENERATE eco-Jewish play festival at the end of June.



**Noah Khaloo, Linguistics**

## **2024 Dita and Erwin Gumpel Jewish Studies Endowed Fellowship**

Noah Khaloo (1st year PhD student in the Linguistics Department) was awarded The Dita and Erwin Gumpel Jewish Studies Endowed Fellowship for the 2024-2025 academic year. With this fellowship, he will be traveling to New York in July in order to meet with a family of Jewish Neo-Aramaic speakers from Urmia, Iran. He plans to record their speech in the Phonetics and Experimental Phonology Lab at NYU, and use these recordings to help uncover the sound patterns of their language *Lishan Didan*, which is also the native tongue of his grandmother.



## **Cuyler Ballenger, Visual Arts 2024 Dita and Erwin Gumpel Jewish Studies Endowed Fellowship**

This academic year, Ballenger began work on a feature-length experimental documentary investigating the specifics of his family history and a broader narrative of the German Jewish diaspora. So far, filming has been conducted in various locations across the western U.S.. This summer, with the support of the Jewish Studies Department, Ballenger will travel to Cambridge to conduct research at the Cairo Ginezah Collection, as well as visit smaller archives in southwest Germany, specifically in Jebenhausen.



## **Reem Tasyakan, Literature 2023 Dita and Erwin Gumpel Jewish Studies Endowed Fellowship**

During academic year 2023-2024, Reem presented her work at two major conferences, the annual meetings for both the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA). Her article titled "The Arab American Polyphonic Novel and Its Indictment of the Post-9/11 Political Agenda" was recently published in *Arab Studies Quarterly*. She is continuing to work on her dissertation and is being considered for the UC President's Dissertation Year Fellowship for AY 2024-2025.



## **Dylan Hallingstad O'Brien, Anthropology 2023 Katzin in Perpetuity Fellowship**

This year, Dylan continued his ethnographic fieldwork with Jewish organizations in Tokyo, and also worked with groups commemorating the Holocaust, as well as a group working against antisemitism in Japan. He published several articles about his research and the history of Jewish activism and life in Japan for general readership, and submitted several academic articles that are currently under review. In May, he will be traveling to Kyoto to give a lecture about his research at Doshisha University, interviewing staff at a Christian church dedicated to Anne Frank, and then visiting both Japan's oldest synagogue



(Ohel Shelomo in Kobe) and the port of Tsuruga, where Jewish refugees arrived during World War II.

**Hande Sever, Visual Arts**  
**2023 Dita and Erwin Gumpel Jewish Studies**  
**Endowed Fellowship**

Hande's research centers on the rarely explored relationship between German Jewish émigrés and Turkish higher education, focusing on their contributions on the restructuring of Istanbul University and the Istanbul Academy of Fine Arts, highlighting an understudied zone of exchange. With the support of the funds provided by the Jewish Studies Program, Hande was able to conduct archival research at several institutions. These include the Walter Benjamin Archive in Berlin, the Rudolf Belling Archive in Munich, The Hans Reinbach Collection in Konstanz, the German Exile Archive 1933-1945 in Frankfurt, the Traugott Fuchs Archive at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, as well as the archives of Istanbul University and the Istanbul Academy of Fine Arts. Hande's findings from these visits significantly contributed to building the foundation for dissertation research.



**Nicole Theresa King, Visual Arts**  
**2023 Dita and Erwin Gumpel Judaic Studies**  
**Endowed Fellowship**

Nicole Theresa King is a landscape architect and historian with a research-based art practice. At UCSD, she is a doctoral candidate in visual arts and anthropogeny (human origins). In her dissertation, she analyses the work of designers of the Southern California landscape, who integrated natural and artificial environments with the help of new technologies. With the generous support of a 2023-24 Dita and Erwin Gumpel Judaic Studies Endowed Fellowship, Nico was able to pursue research on the Austrian-American architect Richard Neutra (1892-1970). To this end, she traveled to Vienna to consult papers from his partial estate in the Austrian National Library in summer 2023. This summer (2024), she will finalize this inquiry at the University of California, Los Angeles, where the remainder of the architect's estate is located. During the 2023-24 academic year, Nico also received a project grant by the Russel Foundation and currently holds an appointment as a Wilbur R. Jacobs Fellow and a Mellon Fellow at The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino.



## Faculty Updates

**Professor Amelia Glaser**  
**Endowed Chair in Judaic Studies**

Amelia Glaser, Professor of Literature and Endowed Chair in Judaic Studies, is at work on a book-length study of contemporary Ukrainian poetry. She traveled to Kyiv, Ukraine, in March to attend the Kyiv Security Forum, and to give talks at the Kyiv School of Higher Economics and the Fulbright Office. Those interested in her recent thoughts on Ukraine and the ongoing war can read [a short Op Ed](#) about this trip that she co-authored for CNN. She was shortlisted this year for the International Griffin Poetry Prize for Halyna Kruk's *A Crash Course in Molotov Cocktails*, a book she co-translated from the Ukrainian, with Yuliya Ilchuk. In collaboration with the composer/performers Heather Klein, Anthony Russell and Uri Schreter, Professor Glaser has created a lecture performance featuring musical settings of Yiddish and English language poems about the Scottsboro trials. This year, the group has presented this work, "Wild Burning Rage and Song," at the Weitzman Museum in Philadelphia, the Center for Jewish History in New York, and most recently, at UCSD's Conrad Prebys Concert Hall.



### **Professor Lisa Lampert-Weissig Katzin Endowed Chair of Jewish Civilization**

Professor Lisa Lampert-Weissig's new book *Instrument of Memory: Encounters with the Wandering Jew* is the first English-language study of the legend in over fifty years. It is also the first to examine the influence of the legend's medieval and early modern sources over the centuries into the present day. Using the lens of memory studies, the work shows how the Christian tradition of the legend centered the memory of the Passion at the heart of the Wandering Jew's curse. *Instrument of Memory* also illuminates how Jewish artists and writers have reimagined the legend through Jewish memory traditions. Through this focus on memory, Jewish adapters of the legend create complex renderings of the Wandering Jew that recognize not only the entanglement of Jewish and Christian memory, but also the impact of that entanglement on Jewish subjects. The book was chosen by the University of Michigan press for its Open Access program and can be read for free online [here](#). This year, articles by Professor Lampert-Weissig also appeared in the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia*, *Gothic Studies* and *Rejoinder*.



### **Professor Mira Balberg David Goodblatt Chair in Ancient Jewish Civilization**

Mira Balberg's book *Fractured Tablets: Forgetfulness and Fallibility in Late Ancient Rabbinic Culture* (University of California Press, 2023) won the 2023 National Jewish Book Award in the scholarship category. She is currently working on a translation of a Medieval compilation of Jewish History titled *The Book of Memories*.



## **Professor Deborah Hertz** **Herman Wouk Chair in Modern Jewish Studies**

Deborah Hertz continues to labor on her manuscript-in-progress, entitled *Visionaries Lovers and Mothers: Radical Jewish Women from Conspiracy to Kibbutz*. In the last two years she has presented sections of the book manuscript at four academic conferences and at three community venues in San Diego. She delivered academic lectures at the *Huizinga Institute* in Amsterdam and at the *Einstein Forum* in Postdam, Germany. She and her family are curating a museum exhibition on their ancestor who migrated from Latvia to South Saint Paul Minnesota, which will be shown at the University of Minnesota and the local museum in Tukums, Latvia. She is excited about two new courses in the Jewish Studies roster, *Diaspora Slavery Ghetto: Jews and African Americans*, and *Two Peoples in Palestine/Israel*.



## **Professor Eli Berman**

Eli Berman (Economics, GPS) leads a multi-year project on the history of the Israel-Gaza conflict during the first decade of Hamas control of Gaza, applying game theoretic and econometric tools to unique, high-frequency data on attacks. The team presented preliminary results at multiple seminars in North America and Israel.

Berman hosted a closed meeting of faculty in the Fall to discuss implications of the October 7th attacks, including Palestinian and Israeli experts. He also moderated a panel in an open meeting in DC including former Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and Ambassador Daniel Kurtzer, as part of an Empirical Studies of Conflict conference (which he formerly led).



## **Professor Allan Havis** **Jewish Studies Director**

Professor Havis completed his 35<sup>th</sup> year on the Theatre faculty at UC San Diego this June and his first year as Jewish Studies faculty director. His novel on “QAnon” fascination and antisemitism, *Maddie Q*, was published last September by Willow Creek Press and there will be a July 7<sup>th</sup> *Maddie Q* book event at [Warwicks in La Jolla](#). Willow Creek will publish in October, *Architects of the Taj Mahal*, his fictional triptych of India’s Taj Mahal architect, Trump’s Taj Mahal Casino architect, and the accused Gilgo Beach serial killer architect. Bodhi Tree Concerts has commissioned Professor Havis to be the librettist for the opera adaptation of *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote*— a highly celebrated children’s book in collaboration with Pulitzer winning composer Anthony Davis from UCSD’s Dept of Music. [San Diego Union Tribune](#) recently published his Op/Ed essay on the theatre of protest in the time of Gaza. Lastly, Professor Havis was the faculty host this spring quarter for visiting Israeli professor and filmmaker Dr. Dan Geva who taught three UCSD film classes and was the Jewish Studies program’s [Katzin Series Lecturer](#) in May.



# 2023-24 Jewish Studies Events

## Wild Burning Rage and Song Replies to Scottsboro

The Scottsboro Trials stand as one of the most renowned miscarriages of justice in the history of American jurisprudence. Beginning in 1931 with a false accusation of rape against nine Black teenagers, the case went on to invigorate a nascent Civil Rights movement, earn the international support of the Communist Party, and establish itself as a watchword among various strands of the American Left. It inspired reaction from the contemporary world of arts and letters as well, most famously by poets Langston Hughes and Richard Wright and novelist Harper Lee. The Yiddish intelligentsia of the thirties was no less galvanized, producing a body of creative response that passionately took up the themes of the trial, juxtaposing its American injustices with a diversity of images, tropes and language imbued with their own distinct histories of oppression.

[Listen to Recording Here](#) (available until **August 25**)



## Queer Messianic Bodies in Modernist Hebrew Theater with Dr. Yair Lipshitz

During the 1920s, several Hebrew-speaking theater productions by the groundbreaking "Habimah" troupe in Moscow staged messianic characters that also undermined established norms of bodies and gender. The presentation will examine these queer-messianic figures and explore how their theatrical embodiment touched upon modern questions regarding redemption, physicality, and the Jewish understanding of time.

Dr. Yair Lipshitz is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Theater Arts and the Head of the Cymbalista Jewish Heritage Center at Tel Aviv University. His research explores the various intersections between theater, performance, and Jewish religious traditions.

[Watch Recording Here](#)



## The Annual Katzin Lecture: 10+1 Lessons on the Troubled Jewish Lineage of the Documentary: A Tribute

The concept of "Documentary" as a product of modernity cannot inherently be ascribed to Judaism. Yet, upon closer examination of the pioneers of documentary filmmaking—the architects who laid the foundation for the language of documentary filmmaking and thought—a compelling Jewish lineage emerges, quietly shaping the



evolving landscape of the burgeoning documentary project. This lecture will delve into the ideas and practices of ten profoundly influential Jewish documentarians whose contributions have left an enduring imprint on our collective philosophical and historical narrative. Professor Geva will sign off with an excerpt from his 2004 personal film tribute to Dziga Vertov's 1929 tour de force *A Man with a Movie Camera* — a Jewish filmmaker and grand master of the documentary form.



## The Golem of La Jolla: a video concert with composer Michael Roth & librettist Allan Havis

An exclusive concert preview video of a new music theatre piece depicting the vivid dystopian crisis in America. A prominent La Jolla synagogue is persuaded to accept a supernatural and unorthodox solution to ward off a violent White Nationalist march to their door. Composer Michael Roth with librettist Allan Havis (UCSD's Jewish Studies Program director) will speak about the making of THE GOLEM OF LA JOLLA, which premiered at La Jolla Playhouse's 2019 2019 WoW Festival. Hear excerpts from the exciting, innovative opera's score and soundscape.

**THE GOLEM OF LA JOLLA:**  
a video concert with composer **Michael Roth & librettist Allan Havis**

Monday, October 9, 2023 | 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Hillel of San Diego at UCSD | 9009 La Jolla Scenic Dr N

25 minute video with discussion, light reception after

Come to this exclusive concert preview video of a new music theatre piece depicting the vivid dystopian crisis in America. A prominent La Jolla synagogue is persuaded to accept a supernatural and unorthodox solution to ward off a violent White Nationalist march to their door. Composer Michael Roth with librettist Allan Havis (UCSD's Jewish Studies Program director) will speak about the making of THE GOLEM OF LA JOLLA, which premiered at La Jolla Playhouse's 2019 2019 WoW Festival. Hear excerpts from the exciting, innovative opera's score and soundscape.

**Guest Speaker: Michael Roth**

He is a composer, sound designer, music director and pianist whose work includes chamber music, film scores, experimental opera, and music and sound for over 250 productions, including Broadway, off-Broadway, Carnegie's Great Performances, and over 10 productions at La Jolla Playhouse as one of its first artists-in-residence; collaborations with Randy Newman (musical direction for *Shoney's Process* and the Frog instructions for *Faust* - La Jolla Playhouse, Encinitas, opening in LA), Tom Stoppard, Stacy Keech, Dan Sullivan, Peter Sellars, Culture Clash, and his award-winning web series, *The Web Opera*, streaming at [thewebopera.com](http://thewebopera.com)

**Jewish Studies Director: Allan Havis**

He is UCSD professor Allan Havis has had his plays produced widely in the U.S. and in Europe. Nineteen plays have been published in his novel, *Clear Blue Skies*, was published by Harv Publishing in 2022 and *Between the Lines* Publishers just published his second novel *Martin D. Aka* is slated to be completed late chamber opera with 2020 Pulitzer composer Anthony Davis.

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## Is Betty Friedan Still Relevant? Revisiting *The Feminine Mystique*

Lecture by Professor Rachel Shteir, De Paul University with Introduction by Professor Emerita Lillian Faderman, Fresno State University. *Betty Friedan: Magnificent Disrupter* (Yale University Press/Yale Jewish Lives) was recently named one of The Best Books of 2023 by The New Yorker magazine.

**Is Betty Friedan Still Relevant?**  
**Revisiting *The Feminine Mystique***

Thursday, February 29, 2024  
Seuss Library, Faculty Club | 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Lecture by  
Professor Rachel Shteir,  
De Paul University

Introduction by  
Professor Emerita Lillian Faderman,  
Fresno State University

**Betty Friedan**  
Headshot credited to Rachel Shteir

Rachel Shteir is the award-winning author of four books: *Disrupters: The Unholy History of The Girls Show* (Duke University Press), *Gypsy: The Art of the Tease* (Yale Icons of America/Yale University Press), *The Steel: A Cultural History of Shopping* (The Penguin Press), and new *Betty Friedan: Magnificent Disrupter* (Yale University Press/Yale Jewish Lives). Betty was recently named one of The Best Books of 2023 by The New Yorker magazine.

She has written for many magazines and newspapers including The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. Additionally, she is head and founder of The Dramaturgy Program at The Theater School at DePaul University.

Headshot credited to  
Doug McGoldrick

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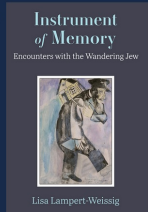
## Book Celebration: Professor Lisa Lampert-Weissig's *Instrument of Memory: Encounters with the Wandering Jew*

Professor Lisa Lampert-Weissig discusses her new book *Instrument of Memory: Encounters with the Wandering Jew* with Professor Mira Balberg. This work is the first English-language study of the legend in over fifty years and the first to examine the influence of the legend's medieval and early modern sources over the centuries into the present day. The book was chosen by the University of Michigan press for its Open Access program

and can be read for free online [here](#).

Join Jewish Studies in celebrating Professor Lisa Lampert-Weissig's new book *Instrument of Memory: Encounters with the Wandering Jew*

Professor Lisa Lampert-Weissig will discuss her new book with Professor Mira Balberg



Thursday, May 9, 2024 | 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
Seuss Library, Faculty Club  
Light Bites and Beverages  
[Register Here](#)

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