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TO THE  
HOLOCAUST

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## **Joshua Nelson, Neshama Carlebach, and the Green Pastures Baptist Choir Perform Concert That Honors Shared Jewish and African-American Heritage**

*at the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust*

New York, NY— On **Wednesday, June 10 at 7 p.m.**, see Jewish “Prince of Gospel Music” **Joshua Nelson** and internationally recognized vocalist **Neshama Carlebach** as they join forces with the **Green Pastures Gospel Choir** for *Freedom Songs* at the **Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust**. This concert is presented in conjunction with the Museum’s new exhibition *Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow: Jewish Refugee Scholars at Black Colleges*, which explores the unlikely coming together of European Jewish academics and their black students at historically black colleges. Each the object of exclusion and hatred, the two groups had a profound impact on one another. This exhibition and examines the ongoing encounter between them as they navigated the challenges of life in the segregated South.

Tickets to this event are \$20 general, \$15 students/seniors, \$10 members and may be purchased online at [www.mjhnyc.org](http://www.mjhnyc.org) or by calling the Museum box office at (646) 437-4202.

Freedom Songs were folksongs, often rooted in southern gospel and spirituals, sung by Civil Rights activists throughout the 1960s. Invoked in moments of oppression—sit-ins, arrests, and beatings—as well as triumphs—marches and rallies—the songs were forms of inspiration as well as a form of non-violent resistance and protest. Many were not new to the Civil Rights movement and had been used at labor union rallies earlier in the century; more still were post-slavery emancipation songs.

The American-Jewish community greatly contributed to the Civil Rights movement. From serving as volunteers and organizers in groups promoting social justice, to Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel marching with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Selma Civil Rights March, this partnership was often accredited to a mutual history of discrimination and oppression. The themes of enslavement to liberation and deliverance to a “promised land” often found in Freedom Songs would have been familiar to both groups: to blacks from pre-and post-emancipation songs sung not 100 years earlier, and to Jews from the story of the Book of Exodus and the Passover Seder. The songs that will be performed at this moving concert draw on the spirit of Freedom Songs and will be sung in both English and Hebrew. They include “Esso Ainai (I Lift My Eyes),” “L'ma'an Achai V'rea'ai (Brothers and Friends),” “Return Again,” and original works.

### **About the Artists**

**Joshua Nelson** is an African-American Jewish singer who has been praised by critics across the world for his unique voice, which bears a strong resemblance to the legendary singer Mahalia Jackson’s passionate vocal stylings. He has performed in concert halls, synagogues, churches, both solo and with such musical luminaries as Wynton Marsalis, Billy Preston, Aretha Franklin, and Stephanie Mills; Gospel greats Albertina Walker, the Barret Sisters, and Hezekiah Walker; and late jazz greats Cab Calloway and Dizzy Gillespie, among others. Joshua also performed for the first time at the Museum of Jewish Heritage with the Klezmatiks in 2004. The concert, titled *Freedom Songs for Passover*, was the beginning of collaborative

works with the two groups which would ultimately lead to a concert tour in Germany and the creation of the live album *Brother Moses Smote the Water*. He was the subject of the 2000 documentary *Keep on Walking*. He has performed in the Museum's Edmond J. Safra Hall every December 25 since 2005 to sold-out crowds.

**Neshama Carlebach** began singing with her father, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, when she was just a teenager. Three weeks after his death in 1994, she embarked on a solo career. She is now an internationally recognized performer who has performed in concert halls, theaters, synagogues, and community centers around the world. She has released six CDs with producer David Morgan: *Soul* (1996); *Ha Nashama shel Shlomo* (1997); *Dancing with My Soul* (2000); *Ani Shelach* (2001); *Journey* (2004); and *One and One* (2008), which features the **Green Pastures Baptist Choir**. *Globe and Mail Toronto* has said of Carlebach "For audiences around the world, Neshama Carlebach is not only a great singer in her own right, but the reincarnation of a legend... Her concerts have the flavor of a spiritualist revival somewhere between Woodstock and the Western Wall." For more information visit [www.neshamacarlebach.com](http://www.neshamacarlebach.com).

### **About *Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow***

*Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow* tells the story of Jewish academics from Germany and Austria who were dismissed from their teaching positions in the 1930s. After fleeing to America, some refugee scholars found positions at historically black colleges and universities in the Jim Crow South. The exhibition explores what it meant to the students to have these new staff as part of their community, how the students were affected by their presence, and what life was like for white, European Jews teaching at black colleges and universities. The exhibit looks at the empathy between two minority groups with a history of persecution, some of whom came together in search of freedom and opportunity, and shared the early years of struggle in the Civil Rights movement.

*Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow* includes artifacts, photographs, and two new films, by Joel Sucher and Steven Fischler of Pacific Street Films, featuring both the professors and the students. It begins with the dismissal of the refugee scholars from German universities and continues through their search for positions in the United States. The exhibition then highlights the backgrounds of the black students and follows the professors and students coming together to teach and learn and to share a community on campus, including their mutual participation in the Civil Rights movement. The exhibition concludes with a look at the impact of the contributions of the professors and the students to American life.

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### **About the Museum**

The Museum's three-floor Core Exhibition educates people of all ages and backgrounds about the rich tapestry of Jewish life over the past century—before, during, and after the Holocaust. Special exhibitions include *Woman of Letters: Irène Némirovsky and Suite Française*, extended through August 30, and *Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow: Jewish Refugee Scholars at Black Colleges*, on view through January 4. The Museum offers visitors a vibrant public program schedule in its Edmond J. Safra Hall. It is also home to Andy Goldsworthy's memorial *Garden of Stones*, as well as James Carpenter's *Reflection Passage*, Gift of The Gruss Lipper Foundation. The Museum receives general operating support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and is a founding member of the *Museums of Lower Manhattan*.

