



A LIVING
MEMORIAL
TO THE
HOLOCAUST

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The Jewish Experience in Hungarian Cinema Film Series
Enriches Exhibition *Fire in My Heart: The Story of Hannah Senesh*
at the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust

New York, NY—*Fire in My Heart: The Story of Hannah Senesh*, the compelling exhibition at the **Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust**, examines the life and legacy of the Budapest-born World War II hero and poet. To complement the first-ever major exhibition about Hannah Senesh, the Museum will host *The Jewish Experience in Hungarian Cinema*. The series of award winning films will begin on **Sunday, January 30**, beginning at **1 p.m.** with a screening of *Confidence (Bizalom)* followed by *Mephisto* at **3:30 p.m.** *Sunshine* will be shown on **Sunday, February 6** at **1 p.m.** and the series will conclude on **Sunday, February 13** with *The Revolt of Job* at **1 p.m.** followed by *Fateless* at **3:30 p.m.**

The Jewish Experience in Hungarian Cinema examines how the Nazi occupation of Hungary influenced Hungarian cinema long after the war had ended, and how filmmakers such as István Szabó, Imre Gyongyossy, Barna Kabay, and Lajos Koltai took on the task of exploring complex topics about this period of history. The films represent the best of Hungarian cinema from the 1980s to present day.

Film professor Jerry Carlson, who will be discussing several of the films, said, “*Schindler’s List* opened a door for many movie goers to explore the terrible history of the Holocaust and more generally anti-Semitism. Hungarian filmmakers, before and after Spielberg’s film, have been leaders in portraying central European Jewish experiences. Their films look inside the rooms of Hungarian history. From rustic farms to elegant Budapest homes to the horrors of transport and the camps, their stories bear witness through powerful artistic expression.”

Tickets are \$10 adults, \$7 students/seniors, and \$5 members; separate admission required for each film. Tickets are available online at www.mjhnyc.org or by calling the Museum box office at 646.437.4202.

This film series is made possible by the Hungarian Cultural Institute in New York. Tours of *Fire in My Heart: The Story of Hannah Senesh* will be offered at 12 p.m. each Sunday that the film series is taking place. Space is limited. Pre-registration for the tour is required. Call 646.437.4202.

About the Films

Sunday, January 30

1 P.M. *Confidence (Bizalom)*

(1980, BETA, SP, 107 min. Hungarian with English subtitles)

1980 Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Film

Directed by István Szabó

Post-screening discussion with film critic Leonard Quart

After Kata’s husband goes into hiding during World War II, she poses as the wife of a man she has never met in order to conceal her Jewish identity. Their volatile arrangement, which if exposed would mean imprisonment or

death, eases when they become lovers. This film explores the lack of trust that threatens to consume their relationship.

Leonard Quart is professor emeritus of Cinema Studies at the College of Staten Island, CUNY. His essays and articles have appeared in *Film Quarterly*, *Dissent*, *The Forward*, and *London Magazine*, among others. For over 20 years, he has been an editor and contributing editor of *Cineaste*. He is the co-author of books including *The Films of Mike Leigh* and *How the War was Remembered*.

3:30 P.M.

Mephisto

(1981, BETA AP, 144 min., German with English subtitles)

Directed by István Szabó

1981 Academy Award winner for Best Foreign Language Film

Post-screening discussion with film critic Leonard Quart

A Faustian tale set in the early 1930s, apolitical, ambitious actor Hendrik Hofgen sells his soul to the Nazis for the opportunity to perform propaganda plays for the Reich. Portrayed by the charismatic Klaus Mari Brandauer, he soon becomes Germany's most popular actor. Adapted from a 1936 novel by Klaus Mann based on the real actor Gustav Grundgens, the *New York Times* has called *Mephisto* an "extremely handsome film, often quite stylish and very well played."

Sunday, February 6, 1 P.M.

Sunshine

(1999, DVD, 181 min.)

Directed by István Szabó

Starring Ralph Fiennes, Rosemary Harris, Rachel Weisz, and Jennifer Ehle

Post-screening discussion with Prof. Jerry Carlson, film studies, The City College & Graduate Center, CUNY

This epic drama, spanning from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, follows the Sonnenschein family through five generations of social and political upheaval and personal conflicts in Hungary. *Sunshine*, a panoramic film written by István Szabó and playwright Israel Horowitz, notably features Ralph Fiennes in three different roles.

Professor Jerry Carlson is a specialist in narrative theory, global independent film, and the cinemas of the Americas. He is coordinator of Critical Studies in the Film & Video Program at The City College and a member of the doctoral faculty in the Ph.D. Program in French and Film Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. In addition, he is an active producer, director, and writer.

Sunday, February 13

1 P.M.

The Revolt of Job

(1983, VHS, 105 min., Hungarian with English subtitles)

Directed by Imre Gyongyossy and Barna Kabay

1984 Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Film

Post-screening discussion with Prof. Jerry Carlson

In this tender film, an elderly Jewish couple, whose own children have died, attempt to adopt a Christian child in 1943 and teach him about their spiritual heritage.

3:30 P.M. *Fateless*

(2005, DVD, 140 min., Hungarian with English subtitles)

Directed by Lajos Koltai

Post-screening discussion with Prof. Jerry Carlson

Based on the Nobel Prize-winning book, this film is a semi-autobiographical tale of Gyuri, a 14-year-old Jewish boy from Budapest, who is sent to Buchenwald. An optimist, he returns home only to feel alienated from his Christian neighbors and from his Jewish friends who both want to put the past behind them. *The New York Times* called this film “among the best non-documentary cinematic treatments of the Holocaust yet produced.”

About the exhibition

Fire in My Heart: The Story of Hannah Senesh

On view in the Irving Schneider and Family Gallery through August 7, 2011

www.mjhnyc.org/hannah

Among Israel’s most important heroes is Hannah Senesh, who died by firing squad in 1944 at age 23. This first-ever major exhibition tells how this Budapest-born poet, diarist, and author of the hymn *Eli, Eli* discovered her love for the Land of Israel, how she volunteered for a mission to rescue downed Allied fliers and Jews from Nazi-occupied Hungary, and how she became an enduring symbol of courage and determination.

This exhibition is made possible by leadership gifts in loving memory of Anne Ratner from her children and grandchildren, and from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. Additional support provided by the David Berg Foundation and The Laszlo N. Tauber Family Foundation, Inc.

We are grateful to the Senesh Family for making the exhibition possible by providing material from their collection. Travel generously sponsored by EL AL Airlines. Jewish Week is the media partner.

About the Museum of Jewish Heritage

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 *The Morgenthau: A Legacy of Service*, on view through September 5, 2011; *Project Mah Jongg*, on view through February 27, 2011; and *Fire in My Heart: The Story of Hannah Senesh*, on view through August 7, 2011. It is also home to the award-winning *Keeping History Center*, an interactive visitor experience, and Andy Goldsworthy’s memorial *Garden of Stones*. The Museum offers visitors a vibrant public program schedule in its Edmond J. Safra Hall and receives general operating support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

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