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***Eleanor Reissa, the “Yiddish Edith Piaf,” Celebrates Hanukkah with Friends
in Her Only New York City Appearance This Year
at the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust***

New York, NY—On **Sunday, December 12 at 2:30 p.m.**, join Tony nominee and international concert artist Eleanor Reissa and friends for a delightful afternoon of Yiddish and English music and humor. Reissa, one of the world’s most important interpreters of Yiddish song, will perform in her only New York City appearance this year at the **Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust**. Her band of musical luminaries is led by **Frank London** of the Klezmatics and features **Marty Confurius** on the upright bass; **Rex Benincasa** on percussion and drums; slide trombone player **Brian Drye**; and pianist and accordion player **Patrick Farrell**.

The concert features classic Hanukkah songs and musical gems from the Yiddish theater and Molly Picon repertoire including Abe Ellstein’s “Abi Gezint,” and “Oy Mama Am I in Love.” Knowing that most of her audience members do not speak Yiddish, and that many are non-Jewish, Ms. Reissa intersperses Yiddish with English in songs like “Que Sera, Sera,” “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?” and even “Yankee Doodle.” All of Eleanor’s songs are performed with the life and energy of modern melodies and interpreted as though they were written today.

Eleanor, who has been called the “Yiddish Edith Piaf,” said, “This unique concert interprets classic tunes that convey the beauty and richness of the Yiddish language so that any non-Yiddish speaker will feel totally at home and by the end of the concert will feel as if they know more Yiddish than they ever dreamed. The afternoon will be filled with song interpretations that showcase the depth of this material in all its humor and pathos. It is an afternoon about the inclusiveness of the Jewish cultural experience that can be shared by everyone.”

Tickets are \$18 and \$15 for Museum and National Yiddish Book Center Members. Tickets are available online at www.mjhnyc.org or by calling the Museum box office at 646.437.4202.

Co-sponsored by the Stanley R. Epstein Fund at The National Yiddish Book Center.

About the Performers

Actress, singer, and director **Eleanor Reissa** most recently returned from New Orleans where she starred in the new musical *Soul Man*. She is currently working on the development of two new plays including the Swedish artist Lars Noren’s *Autumn and Winter*, and her own play, *Stages of Exit*. Off-Broadway she starred in the title role of Yentl to tremendous critical acclaim. Her one woman show, *Hip Heymish and Hot* sold out audiences at the Houseman Theatre in New York City, the Parker Playhouse in Florida, and all over the country. Eleanor’s first venture as a director led her onto Broadway earned her a Tony

nomination for Best Director of a Musical for the show *Those Were the Days*, which she also starred in and choreographed. Off-Broadway directing work includes *Cowgirls* at the Minetta Lane Theatre and four newly explored classic plays at the Mint Theater, including J.M. Barrie's *Echoes of the War* starring Tony-nominated actors Richard Easton and Frances Sternhagen. In addition to acting, singing, and directing, Eleanor Reissa is a playwright and recording artist. Her latest CD is *Songs in the Key of Yiddish*. www.eleanorreissa.com.

Frank London, a trumpeter and composer, is a member of the Klezmatics, Hasidic New Wave, and has performed with John Zorn, LL Cool J, Mel Torme, Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy, LaMonte Young, They Might Be Giants, David Byrne, Jane Siberry, Ben Folds 5, Mark Ribot, Maurice El Medioni, and Gal Costa, and is featured on over 100 CDs. His own recordings include *Invocations*; Frank London's Klezmer Brass All Stars *Di Shikere Kapelye* and *Brotherhood of Brass*; *Nigunim* and *The Zmiros Project* (with Klezmatics vocalist Lorin Sklamberg); *The Debt*; *The Shekhina Big Band*; the soundtrack to *The Shvitz*; the soundtrack to Pearl Gluck's *The Divan*, and four releases with the Hasidic New Wave.

Double bass, electric bass, guitar, and cello player, **Marty Confurius** became involved with klezmer music during its 1970s revival when he played bass with Andy Statman and Zev Feldman on *Jewish Klezmer Music*, the seminal recording of the klezmer revival. He has performed with the late great klezmer clarinetist Dave Tarras and continued to appear with clarinetist/mandolinist Andy Statman through the 70s and 80s. Recently, he has been performing with Margo Leverett and the Klezmer Mountain Boys and The Yiddish Radio Project Orchestra. He has performed all over the world including such local venues as Carnegie Hall, Avery Fischer Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Village Gate, and Symphony Space.

World music percussionist **Rex Benincasa** has been a freelance drummer in New York for over two decades. Along with hundreds of television/radio soundtracks and commercial recordings, he has performed with The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the New Music Consort, Flamenco Latino, Carlota Santana Spanish Dance, Andrea DelConte Danza Espana, Pilar Rioja, the Grammy Orchestra, Amanecer Flamenco Progressivo, The Pittsburgh Ballet, The Sacramento Ballet, and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Rex has recorded albums and movie soundtracks for Christine Lavin, Foday Musa Suso, Philip Glass, Conversion, *Sesame Street*, NFL Films, The Sons of Sepharad, and The Gerard Edery Ensemble.

Patrick Farrell leads his original brass circus music band, the Stagger Back Brass Band, and is a member of new-music chamber ensemble Ljova and the Kontraband. He is also a member of the Russian and Romanian Roma-music band Romashka, Michael Winograd's Klezmer Trio, and the Serbian-style brass band Veveritse, as well as appearing with numerous other groups and individuals around town. He has studied accordion in Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, and Romania, and has played in clubs, concert halls, streets, and serenades all over the U.S. and Europe as well as in Canada and Mexico.

Trombonist and pianist **Brian Drye** has toured and performed in Japan, Europe, and throughout the U.S. He performs regularly with chamber group The Four Bags and leads the group Bizingas. He has performed with Clark Terry, Frank London's Klezmer Brass All Stars, John Hollenbeck, on the NBC hit series *30 Rock*, with the Brooklyn Qawwali Party, Slavic Soul Party, Metropolitan Klezmer, Banda Sinaloense Des Muertos, Brazilian Forro Brass Band, and Nation Beat. He has also recorded and performed with Yo La Tengo, Arcade Fire, Firewater, The Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, The Four Tops, Dianne Schuur, Paul Anka, and Joan Baez. In 2008, Brian opened Ibeam Music in Brooklyn, a teaching, performance and rehearsal space for professional musicians and students. A graduate of the University of Miami (Florida), Brian is currently on staff as a Carnegie Hall Teaching artist and has served as The Director of Jazz Studies at the JCC in Tenafly NJ and as faculty at the CPSM Jazz Program at Queens College.

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 January 2, 2011; and *Fire in My Heart: The Hannah Senesh Story*, 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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