



**Thursday, September 11 @ 8:30 PM**  
**“Finding God in the Material World”**

**Daniel Matt (Graduate Theological Union – Berkeley)**

*Jewish Scholar Series*



How can God be encountered in our daily life? Dr. Matt will explore this question with us by teaching passages from Kabbalah and Hasidism on the nature of God, the act of Creation, and the challenge of discovering God in the material world.

Daniel Matt is a scholar of Kabbalah and the Zohar. Among his books are: *The Essential Kabbalah* (translated into seven languages), *God and the Big Bang*, and his 9-volume, annotated translation of the Zohar (*The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*), which has been hailed as “a monumental contribution to the history of Jewish thought.” In 2022, Daniel’s biography of Elijah the Prophet was published in Yale’s series *Jewish Lives: Becoming Elijah: Prophet of Transformation*. This book was awarded the inaugural Rabbi Jonathan Sacks Book Prize, established by Yeshiva University. Daniel lives in Berkeley and currently teaches Zohar online ([danielcmatt.com](http://danielcmatt.com)).

**Thursday, September 18 @ 8:30 PM**  
**“Jewish Barbados”**

**Neal Rechtman**

*Virtual Tours of the Jewish World*



The restored Nidhe Israel synagogue in Bridgetown is the oldest in the Western hemisphere. A contingent of 285 Sephardic Jews fleeing the Portuguese Inquisition in Brazil arrived in Barbados in 1654 under the protection of Oliver Cromwell, the Protestant leader of England at the time. Some of the wealthiest people in the world at the time — sugar tycoons — are buried in the adjacent cemeteries, along with Jewish pirates and the most traveled rabbi in history up until the invention of railroads, a Sephardic Ha-Ham named Rafael Hayyim Isaac Carigal. This community thrived for 200 years but then vanished in the 19th century when the sugar cane economy collapsed. In the 1930’s a group of Ashkenazi Jews fleeing the Nazi Inquisition arrived (if it’s not one Inquisition, it’s another), and their descendants are the core of our current community of 50 souls.

Neal Rechtman is an American writer and historian who has lived in Barbados since 2016. He is the author of two novels, numerous essays and short stories, and has written and lectured extensively about Louis Brandeis, the twentieth century US Supreme Court Justice. He holds a degree in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis University, and is a volunteer docent at the historic Nidhe Israel synagogue in Bridgetown. His most recent novel *The Ashwander Rules* (2019) is about a secret Israeli Mossad operation in Washington DC that works to save the Jewish Chief Justice from assassination at the hands of domestic terrorists. His current non-fiction is a short book *Fear of Dying*, which documents his wife's relatively stress-free acceptance of a terminal diagnosis of Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. Neal is an active member of the tiny 50-person Barbados Jewish Community, giving him the distinction of being 2% of the entire Jewish population of the island. He is also an avid bridge player who competes internationally as a member of the Barbados National Bridge team.

**Sunday, October 19 @ 1:00 PM**

**The Jewish Museum, NY**

**“Afterlives: Recovering the Lost Stories of Looted Art”**

*Jewish Museum Tours*

During World War II, untold numbers of artworks and pieces of cultural property were stolen by Nazi forces. After the war, an estimated one million artworks and 2.5 million books were recovered. Many more were destroyed. This exhibition chronicles the layered stories of the objects that survived, exploring the circumstances of their theft, their post-war rescue, and their afterlives in museums and private collections.

Afterlives includes objects looted from Jewish collections during the war, including works by such renowned artists as Pierre Bonnard, Paul Cézanne, Marc Chagall, Gustave Courbet, Paul Klee, Franz Marc, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and Camille Pissarro. The Jewish Museum has also commissioned four contemporary artists to create new works that address the resonance of the exhibition's themes: Maria Eichhorn, Hadar Gad, Dor Guez, and Lisa Oppenheim. Treasured pieces of Judaica, including rare examples of Jewish ceremonial objects from destroyed synagogues, will also be on view, as well as rarely seen archival photographs and documents that connect the objects to history.

75 years after the Second World War, Afterlives explores how surviving artworks and other precious objects were changed by those events, and how they have moved through time, bearing witness to profound historical ruptures while also acting as enduring carriers of individual expression, knowledge, and creativity. The exhibition follows the paths taken by works of art across national borders, through military depots, and in and out of networks of collectors, looters, ideologues, and restitution organizations.

**Sunday, October 26 @ 1:00 PM**  
**“The Shtetl: A Jewish Universe”**

**Evgenia Kempinski**

*The Shtetl*



This talk helps us create an image of a Shtetl - its life, structure, people, traditions and more. We will try to understand the uniqueness of the Shtetl in our history and its influence on our Jewish identity.

**Sunday, November 2 @ 1:00 PM**  
**“Jewish Istanbul”**

**Nisya Isman Allovi**

*Virtual Tours of the Jewish World*



Istanbul, a city of striking contrasts, intertwines diverse religions and cultures, serving as the junction between two continents. A modern-day embodiment of ancient Constantinople, it presents a breathtaking panorama of towering minarets and domes surrounded by water, bathed in a golden glow from the sun. Within its many neighborhoods lie numerous synagogues, each with its unique narrative, telling tales of the Jews who built them and worshiped within. Join me in an exploration of the Jewish heritage sites of this amazing city. As a proud member of Istanbul's vibrant Jewish community, I invite you to acquaint yourself with the richness of Turkish Jewish culture of Turkish Jewish culture

Nisya Isman Allovi is Director and Curator of The Quincentennial Foundation Museum of Turkish Jews. Born in Istanbul, graduated from the International Relations Faculty of Bilgi University and Cultural Heritage and Tourism, she has attended advanced curatorial seminars at AEJM (Association of European Jewish Museums) and in the Federal Republic of Germany. She was also a Kaplan Fellow @ Yesod Cohort II, and has conducted presentations in various countries about Jews of Turkey. Married with two children, Nisya is an active member of the Istanbul Jewish community. She is the board member of The Association of European Jewish Museums.

**Thursday, November 13 @ 8:30 PM**  
**“Jewish Justification of Diaspora Life**

**David Kraemer (JTS)**

*Jewish Scholar Series*



The majority of Jews have lived in exile from the time of the Babylonian Exile in the early sixth century BCE until the present day, and though exile has often been accompanied by difficulties, it has also provided Jews with peace in homes where they had the opportunity to flourish. By virtue of this reality, Jews have often defended and even lauded their diaspora experiences, in teachings and expressions that in recent generations have been too little recognized. In this session, Prof. Kraemer will introduce you to some of these teachings, asking what they may mean for the future of Jewish identity.

David Kraemer is Joseph J. and Dora Abbell Librarian (=Director of The Library) at The Jewish Theological Seminary, where he has also served as Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics for many years. As Librarian, Prof. Kraemer is at the helm of the most extensive collection of Judaica—rare and contemporary—in the Western hemisphere. On account of the size and importance of the collection, Prof. Kraemer is instrumental in setting policy and establishing vision for projects of international importance.

Prof. Kraemer is a prolific author and commentator. His books include *The Mind of the Talmud* (1990), *Responses to Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature* (1995), *The Meanings of Death in Rabbinic Judaism* (2000), and *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages* (Routledge, 2007, 2009), among others. His most recent book is *A History of the Talmud* (Cambridge U. Press, 2019). His most recent book is *Embracing Exile: The Case for Jewish Diaspora*, (Oxford U. Press, 2025).

**Sunday, November 23 @ 1:00 PM**

**“A Virtual Tour of the Once Jewish Towns of Eastern Europe”**

**Evgenia Kempinski**

*The Shtetl*



We will visit selected shtetls from all ends of Eastern Europe - Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus. We will walk down their old streets, look at the Jewish homes, and see how general shtetl features are reflected in these particular towns. We will discuss the relations between Jews and Christians, as well as the political and social life in these shtetls. We will see how shtetl life changed over the centuries. Combining old and new photographs and people's memoirs we will travel through time to imagine and understand the life of our ancestors.

**Thursday, December 4 @ 8:30 PM**

**“Jewish Panama”**

**David Mizrachi Fidanque**

*Virtual Tours of the Jewish World*



The Isthmus of Panama sits at the crossroads of the Americas and is home to its world-famous Canal is one of the busiest trading routes in the world. Unknown to many, Panama is also home to a thriving Jewish Community dating back over a century. It is perhaps the only country other than Israel to have had two Jewish presidents in the XX Century. Its Jewish Community has existed openly only since the end of Spanish colonial rule in the 1820s. Home to more than 10,000 Jews, it is the largest continuously existing Jewish Community in Central America and the Caribbean. Its members are mostly of Middle Eastern, Ashkenazi and Spanish-Portuguese origins. Most Panamanian Jews can be considered Orthodox. A majority of the children attend Jewish Day Schools. It also has one of the highest concentrations of kosher restaurants in the world. The Panamanian Jewish community has seen consistent demographic growth due to recent arrival of Jews from other Latin-American countries fleeing political and economic instability. My presentation will give a historical, demographic, social, gastronomic, and spiritual visit to this small but outstanding community.

David M. Mizrachi Fidanque was born in Panama, Republic of Panama into a loving family of longtime Jewish Community and pro-Israel activists, particularly in the fields of education, culture and social services. He graduated from Instituto Alberto Einstein, Panama's oldest Jewish Day School. During high school, he served on the board of the Macabi Youth Movement of Panama and was awarded the B'nai B'rith Best Young Leader Medal at his graduation. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania, a Juris Doctor degree from Tulane University Law School and an Executive Master of Law (ELLM) degree from Columbia University Law School and is a Senior Fellow of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government at the Harvard Kennedy School of Harvard University. David has served as President of Panama's Central Jewish Community Council, of B'nai B'rith Irving Zapp of Panama and of Panama's Anti-Defamation Commission. He was awarded the Community Service Award by the American Jewish Committee, the Lifetime Jewish Leadership Award of B'nai B'rith Panama and the Label Katz Award of B'nai B'rith International. He has been a member of the Board of Governors of B'nai B'rith International and is a Nahum Goldmann Fellow of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. David is also a writer and college educator. He is married to Caroline (née Pitchon). They have three children and a son in law, all of whom have also been involved in Jewish communal life and pro-Israel activism, as well as two lovely grandchildren. They are his pride and joy.

**Sunday, December 14 @ 1:00 PM**

**“Exploring the Lives of Jewish Children in Eastern Europe”**

**Evgenia Kempinski**

*The Shtetl*



Discover the rich tapestry of Jewish childhood in the shtetl, exploring daily life, family traditions, and the community bonds that shaped the futures of young lives in Eastern Europe.

Evgenia Kempinski is a professional Jewish tour guide, born and raised in St. Petersburg, Russia. With over fifteen years of experience guiding Jewish heritage tours in her hometown, she has developed a deep passion for uncovering and sharing the stories of the Jewish Diaspora. With her family she spent six enriching years living in Israel and now resides in Barcelona, continuing her mission to connect people with Jewish history and culture around the world. She is the founder of the Online Jewish Travel Club, a vibrant community that brings together Jews from different countries through a shared love of travel, art, and Jewish heritage.

**Thursday, January 8 @ 8:30 PM**

**“Jewish Indonesia”**

**Rabbi David Kunin**

*Virtual Tours of the Jewish World*



Rabbi Kunin will examine the diverse kehillot that comprise one of the most isolated re-emerging Jewish communities in the world. Descended from many different Jewish diasporas, Indonesia's



Jews span the archipelago from Sumatra to Papua Indonesia. Each of their communities is unique, with its own history and culture, yet together they form a vibrant whole, creating a Judaism which is absolutely authentic, yet at the same time uniquely Indonesian.

Rabbi David Kunin graduated from Brandeis University with a degree in Medieval History and then attended the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he was ordained as a Rabbi and received an MA in Judaic Studies. Rabbi Kunin has served communities as rabbi in Glasgow (Scotland), Elmira, San Diego, Edmonton, and Tokyo (Japan). He now is rabbi of Congregation Beth Davud in Saratoga, CA. Rabbi Kunin has a strong commitment to Jewish learning, and to a strong laity that play a central role in the religious leadership of the congregation. He believes that Jewish learning and growth is a life-long process. He also believes that spiritual growth, as we build our relationship with the community and God should be a continuous part of Jewish life. Rabbi Kunin is a strong believer in the importance of good and harmonious relations between people from diverse religious communities. Interfaith relations have therefore been a continuous mark of his rabbinate. He served as the Chair of the Southern Tier Interfaith Coalition (Elmira, NY), where he created the Walking Together program, and was long time board member and president of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action. He received the Alberta Centennial Medal in recognition of his community work. Rabbi Kunin has been working with the emerging Jewish Community of Indonesia for ten years and has spent more than 3 months in the archipelago.

**Thursday, January 15 @ 8:30 PM**

**“Jews for Choice: How Jews Have Been Active in the Fight for Reproductive Justice” Michal Raucher (Rutgers)**

*Jewish Scholar Series*



The dominant narrative in the United States often portrays religion as inherently opposed to abortion, largely due to the influence of certain Christian groups. However, the reality is more complex: the majority of religious individuals in the United States actually support legal access to abortion. For decades, Jewish communities have played a key role in challenging this narrative and advancing reproductive rights. In this session, we will explore how Jews have been at the forefront of this advocacy—through efforts in women’s health, legal action, religious engagement, and the power of personal storytelling around abortion.

Michal Raucher is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, where she teaches courses on religion and reproduction, women and gender in religion, and Israel/Palestine. Her research focuses on women in contemporary Judaism, reproductive ethics, and religious authority. Raucher is the author of “Conceiving Agency: Reproductive Authority among Haredi Women” (Indiana, 2020), an ethnography of Israeli ultra-Orthodox Jewish women’s reproductive ethics. She recently completed her second book, *The New Rabbis*, an ethnography of women rabbis in American Orthodoxy. Dr. Raucher is a PI on two studies exploring the intersection of religious identity and abortion. She has interviewed over 100 Jews who have had abortions in America since 1973. Dr. Raucher is the co-editor of the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. She earned her PhD in Religious Studies from Northwestern University. She also has

degrees from the University of Pennsylvania, The Jewish Theological Seminary, and Columbia University.

**Sunday, January 25 @ 1:00 PM**  
**“Purim in the Works of European Artists”**  
**Evgenia Kempinski**  
*Jewish Art Series*



Welcome to the gallery of different images of Queen Esther, Mordechai, Achashverosh and Haman. This time we see how Purim events are reflected in Italian, French, and of course Dutch art.

**Thursday, February 5 @ 8:30 PM**  
**National Museum of American Jewish Military History**  
**“American Jewish Soldiers and the Liberation of the**  
**Concentration Camps”**  
**Michael Rugel**  
*Jewish Museum Tours*



Jewish American Soldiers played an important role in liberating Nazi concentration camps during World War II. Beginning in the spring of 1945, the U.S. Army began uncovering these camps, revealing the horrific realities of the Holocaust. Jewish soldiers, many of whom were fluent in Yiddish, were not only witnesses to the atrocities but also the first to offer solace and a sense of community to the survivors. The presentation will highlight their unique position as liberators that were simultaneously U.S. Army soldiers and members of the Jewish community, emphasizing their ability to communicate with survivors and provide immediate support and understanding amidst the chaos and devastation.

Michael Rugel is the Director of Programs and Content at the National Museum of American Jewish Military History. Prior to that he served on the museum's collections management staff. Rugel has frequently written about Jews in the American military. He regularly speaks about the history of Jews in the American Military at museum programs as well as to local schools, synagogues, community centers and veterans groups. He has given Jews in the military and Holocaust Remembrance talks to groups and organizations including at the Pentagon, Walter Reed Army Medical Research Center and Naval Medical Research Center. Rugel has produced a series of videos featuring American Jewish liberators of concentration camps describing their World War II experiences.

Upcoming publications include “The American Serviceman Finding and (Re)creating Jewish Community during World War II” in *Michael: On the History of the Jews in the Diaspora* published by The Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center at Tel Aviv University. His writing regularly appears in the *Jewish Veteran* magazine, *Jews in Green* website, and National Museum of American Jewish Military History website.

Rugel has appeared in multiple documentary films including *GI Jews: Jewish Americans in World War II* on PBS and *Stabbed in the Back*: the story of the 500,000 Jewish soldiers who served in the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary) armies during The Great War.

He was raised in Reston, Virginia. He received a Bachelor's degree in history from the College of William and Mary and a Master's Degree in Museum Studies from George Washington University. He lives in Dunn Loring, Virginia with his wife Judy and daughter Hadley.

**Thursday, February 12 @ 8:30 PM**  
**“Talmudic Stories: From History to Literature”**  
**Jeffrey Rubenstein, (NYU)**



*Jewish Scholar Series*

How should Talmudic stories about the sages be studied? From the middle ages until recent times, interpreters adopted an historical approach that understood “sage-stories” as relating “what actually happened,” namely the lives and deeds of the sages. Much of the histories of the rabbis and of the Jewish people in the periods of the Mishnah and Talmud were written on the basis of these stories. More recently scholars have shifted to a literary approach that rejects the historicity of the stories and understands them as didactic literature, teaching morals and lessons to the audience. This talk will explore why scholars abandoned the biographical-historical approach and shifted to an understanding of rabbinic stories as didactic fictions. It will also delineate the revolutionary impact of this “paradigm shift” in our knowledge of the history of the Talmudic period.

Dr. Jeffrey L. Rubenstein is the Skirball Professor of Talmud and Rabbinic Literature at New York University. He was born in Johannesburg, South Africa and grew up in Chicago, Illinois. He received his B.A. in Religion from Oberlin College, his M.A. in Talmud from the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he also received rabbinic ordination, and his Ph.D. from the Department of Religion of Columbia University. He has taught at Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania and the Jewish Theological Seminary in addition to New York University. His books include, *The History of Sukkot in the Second Temple and Rabbinic Periods* (1995); *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition and Culture* (1999), *Rabbinic Stories* (Classics of Western Spirituality Series, 2002), *The Culture of the Babylonian Talmud* (2003), *Stories of the Babylonian Talmud* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), and *The Land of Truth: Talmud Tales, Timeless Teachings* (Jewish Publication Society, 2018). Dr. Rubenstein has written numerous articles on the festival of Sukkot, Talmudic stories, the development of Jewish law, and topics in Jewish liturgy and ethics.



**Sunday, February 22 @ 1:00 PM**  
**“Jewish Artists Who Shook the World”**  
**Evgenia Kempinski**

*Jewish Art Series*



This is a journey into the lives of Jewish artists from Eastern Europe who arrived in Paris with big dreams and little else, overcame immense challenges, and created groundbreaking masterpieces that forever changed the face of modern art.

**Sunday, March 8 @ 1:00 PM**  
**“Jews in the Life and Art of Pablo Picasso”**  
**Evgenia Kempinski**

*Jewish Art Series*



The stories and portraits of Jews who surrounded Picasso - his friends, his art dealers. We discuss the role Jews played in Picasso's artistic life and see the greatest masterpieces of a genius.

Evgenia Kempinski is a professional Jewish tour guide, born and raised in St. Petersburg, Russia. With over fifteen years of experience guiding Jewish heritage tours in her hometown, she has developed a deep passion for uncovering and sharing the stories of the Jewish Diaspora. With her family she spent six enriching years living in Israel and now resides in Barcelona, continuing her mission to connect people with Jewish history and culture around the world. She is the founder of the Online Jewish Travel Club, a vibrant community that brings together Jews from different countries through a shared love of travel, art, and Jewish heritage.

**Thursday, March 19 @ 8:30 PM**  
**“Abraham Cahan and the Rise of the American Yiddish Press”**  
**Ayelet Brinn (Hartford)**

*Jewish Scholar Series*



By the 1890s, the United States had seen two decades of Yiddish newspaper publishing that had proceeded in fits and starts. As there was no strong precedent in Europe or America for a thriving Yiddish newspaper market, the first American publications in Yiddish failed to secure reliable streams of funding or a devoted readership. It was only beginning in the 1890s that the Yiddish press really found its footing, transforming over the course of the next two decades into a flourishing, competitive market of options. Using the early career of long-term *Jewish Daily Forward* editor Abraham Cahan as a case study, this talk will explore how the American Yiddish press grew from unpromising origins into the diverse, successful publication market that it eventually became. On the one hand, Cahan was an early leader in the Jewish labor movement, and as such, deeply dedicated to creating politically-potent publications that would awaken the class consciousness of his immigrant readership. On the other hand, his approach to Yiddish newspaper publishing was filtered through his experiences as an avid reader of and writer for the

sensational, human interest-driven American popular press in English. The contradictions between these divergent motivations and influences made Cahan a prime target for criticism from his rivals, but also transformed him and the newspaper he edited into crucial, vital lifelines for generations of American Jewish immigrants. Cahan's early career highlights the complex, often conflicting financial and ideological motivations that stood at the heart of the American Yiddish press, as well as the often-porous boundaries between American publishing markets in various languages at the turn of the twentieth century.

Ayelet Brinn is an Assistant Professor of Judaic Studies and History at the University of Hartford, where she holds the Philip D. Feltman Assistant Professorship in Modern Jewish History and a 2025-2026 fellow at the University of Michigan's Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies. Her first book, *A REVOLUTION IN TYPE: GENDER AND THE MAKING OF THE AMERICAN YIDDISH PRESS*, was released in the fall of 2023 with New York University Press. She is currently working on a project about the Espionage Act and the censorship of the American Yiddish press during World War I.

**Thursday, March 26 @ 7:30 PM**

**Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience**

**“Stories from the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience”**

**Lizzi Meister**

*Jewish Museum Tours*



Join us as we explore the stories held in the galleries of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience (MSJE). Spanning thirteen states and three hundred years, the MSJE's core exhibition explores the diverse relationships, experiences, and environments encountered by Jewish communities in the American South. We'll discuss artifacts and stories from early Jewish immigrants as they navigated southern spaces to find and build communities. Learn how southern Jews maintained their identity and became part of the fabric of southern society. The MSJE team will walk us through the galleries and have a conversation about this unique yet universal story.

Lizzi Meister, the Public Programs Manager at the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, will be our tour guide. She's originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin where she went to Jewish summer camp in the north woods and developed a love for engaging programming. Her love for the South came during her time as a Community Engagement Fellow in Jackson, Mississippi. Before moving to New Orleans to work at the Museum, Lizzi lived in Seattle, getting her Masters in Museology and working with a Jewish co-op! She enjoys continuing to weave her love of museums, programming, and Jewish stories at the MSJE.

**Thursday, April 23 @ 8:30 PM**

**“Jewish Kurdistan”**

**Levi Meir Clancy**

*Virtual Tours of the Jewish World*



This session will explore the history of Jews in the Kurdistan Region through the lens of lived experience, personal stories, and cultural preservation. From ancient communities to modern erasure, we will trace how Jewish life in Kurdistan both shaped and was shaped by its surrounding cultures. The program blends historical context with firsthand insight, offering a grounded and human-centered view of a little-known chapter of global Jewish life.

Levi Meir Clancy is a writer, photographer, and educator based in the Bay Area, where he works in social services for a Jewish organization. He spent over seven years in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, working in demographic research, photojournalism, and interfaith engagement. His educational content and unique storytelling have been featured by TEDx, Aish.com, Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Qesher, Yad Mizrah, *The Forward*, and *The J*.

**Thursday, April 30 @ 8:30 PM**

**“A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: Jewish Name Changing in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”**

**Kirsten Fermaglich (Michigan State)**

*Jewish Scholar Series*



Our images of name changing are frequently clichés: movie stars who adopted new names or Ellis Island officials who changed immigrants’ names. Kirsten Fermaglich upends these clichés by examining previously unexplored name change petitions. In twentieth-century New York City, thousands of ordinary Jews legally changed their names to respond to institutionalized antisemitism. While name changing allowed Jewish families to achieve middle-class status, the practice also became a source of family pain and community stigma.

Kirsten Fermaglich is Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Michigan State University. Her most recent book, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: A History of Jewish Name Changing in America* (NYU, 2018), was awarded the Saul Viener prize for the best book in American Jewish history in 2019. She is also the author of *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares* (Brandeis University Press, 2006) and the co-editor of the Norton Critical Edition of Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (2013), with Lisa Fine. She was a National Archives Distinguished Fellow in 2022-2023. From 2016 through 2021, she was co-editor of the journal, *American Jewish History*, along with Daniel Soyer and Adam Mendelsohn.

**Thursday, May 7 @ 8:30 PM**  
**“Jewish Uruguay”**

**Shai Abend**

*Virtual Tours of the Jewish World*



Join us for a captivating virtual journey as we travel back in time to uncover the roots of Jewish immigration to Uruguay. Imagine yourself stepping into the lives of these early settlers and experiencing the unique reality they encountered. We'll explore the fascinating process that led to the formation of Uruguay's organized Jewish community. Discover how Uruguay, once celebrated as the 'Switzerland of America'—a pioneering welfare state, Latin America's most secular nation, and a global leader in progressive thought—profoundly shaped a vibrant, diverse, and ideologically active Jewish community. We'll share the compelling life stories of prominent figures who lived here and reveal intriguing connections between Jewish and Uruguayan cultures. Finally, we'll open a dialogue about the current state of Jewish life in Uruguay, reflecting on its key issues and future challenges

Driven by a passion for connecting individuals with their Jewish heritage in Uruguay, Shai Abend Abudara (43, Israeli-Uruguayan) is a community entrepreneur, educator, and experienced tour guide. Holding a B.A. in Political Science and Humanities from the Hebrew University and an M.A. in Business Intelligence from the University of Barcelona, Shai brings a unique blend of academic rigor and practical experience to his work. He is the visionary founder and director of "BERESHIT: The Jewish Experience," a non-profit community initiative that fosters connection through engaging educational, cultural, and tourism projects. Within BERESHIT, Shai also spearheads the "Jewish Museum Initiative." He previously led the Jewish Studies department at the Catholic University in Uruguay, and he is deeply committed to Holocaust education, volunteering with Holocaust survivors and leading educational trips in Poland