

# Calgary’s first virtual Jewish Film Fest brings the ‘reel’ thing to your screen

By Maxine Fischbein

The Israeli Academy of Film & Television recently announced the nominations for this year's Ophir awards, Israel's equivalent to the Academy Awards. The highly anticipated list confirms that Calgary's upcoming Jewish Film Festival has significant star power in store. Local film lovers should double-check their popcorn inventory and get ready to log on for the first-ever virtual Calgary Jewish Film Fest, beginning Saturday, November 7 and running through Sunday November 19.

The feature film *Asia* (pronounced ah-see-ah), starring acclaimed Israeli actress Shira Haas, garnered an astonishing 13 nominations including best picture, director, screenplay, actress and supporting actress which bodes well for a Schitt's Creek-style sweep when the actual awards are announced.

It has been an incredible year for Haas who won a best actress award at the Tribeca Film Festival and scored an Emmy nomination for her breathtaking performance in the acclaimed Netflix series *Unorthodox*.

The closing night selection, *Here we Are* netted 10 Ophir nominations, including best picture, director, screenplay, actor and supporting actor. The film was selected as this year's Dr. Martha Cohen screening thanks to a generous bequest from the estate of the late Martha Cohen z"l who was known as Calgary's first lady of the arts.

*Golda*, a documentary providing fresh insights into the leadership of Israel's first and only woman to lead as Prime Minister, netted an Ophir nomination for best documentary.

None of the foregoing should come as a surprise. Beth Tzedec Congregation Jewish Film Festival founder and director Harvey Cyngiser and his committee have a proven track record for bringing top notch films from Israel and around the globe, including many



Calgary's first ever Virtual Jewish Film Fest will be held from November 7-19, 2020. The festival will feature award nominated and highly acclaimed films including (top row) 'Asia' and 'Aulcie Locker Room' and bottom row 'Thou Shalt Not Hate' and 'Incitement.' For more information see Film Fest Schedule on pages 10 and 11 or visit [calgaryjewishfilmfestival.com](http://calgaryjewishfilmfestival.com) for all the details.

that do not come to movie theatres or streaming platforms like Netflix.

This year's virtual Film Festival will feature 12 movies, split evenly between feature films and documentaries. The all-inclusive season pass, deeply discounted in light of COVID-19, is \$36 per adult, providing access to all 12 films as well as Zoom talks with special guests.

"We want to make the Film Festival accessible to as many people as possible, especially during a time when many people are feeling isolated and in need of entertaining diversions and have experienced job loss or other economic burdens," said Cyngiser.

Households where more than one adult is logging in are asked to consider an additional pass purchase or donation if they are able. Sponsorships – the life blood of the festival – are always welcome and will help to defray costs

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## JFED hires Stacey Leavitt-Wright as new CEO

(AJNews) – Jewish Federation of Edmonton, Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton and Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation are pleased to announce that Stacey Leavitt-Wright has been hired as the new CEO.

"We are excited to announce that after an exhaustive search, the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton and Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation have hired Stacey Leavitt-Wright as our new Chief Executive Officer," stated the Jewish Federation of Edmonton Board of Directors.

"Stacey will be joining the organizations in the autumn, after Simchat Torah, in order to further familiarize herself with day to day operations, before fully taking over from Debby Shoctor, who is retiring, on January 2, 2021.

"We would like to thank Debby for her dedication to our community over the past 6 ½ years as our CEO and for her decades of professional and volunteer work. We wish

Debby the best in her retirement."

Stacey grew up in Montreal, Quebec and has been active in the Jewish community wherever she has lived. In 1994, she earned her Bachelor of Commerce from McGill University, and in 1998 she earned a Master of Arts from Concordia University. Stacey and her husband Erin began their family in London, Ontario where she was an active lay leader. In 2007 they moved to Edmonton with their three daughters Jordyn, Abby and Zoe. Since that time, Stacey has been heavily involved as a volunteer throughout our community and has devoted her time to many different community organizations, including the Talmud Torah Society, Congregation Beth Shalom, the Aviv Israeli Folk Dance Association and the Jewish Federation of Edmonton. In addition to her volunteer work, Stacey has been a college instructor, she has acted as a consultant for leadership development and for the last 10 years has served as the Managing Editor of a medical journal.



Stacey Leavitt-Wright

"Stacey brings with her an infectious enthusiasm to strengthen and grow our community, We look forward to introducing her formally to the community in the coming months."



# Calgary UJA starts strong despite COVID challenge

By Maxine Fischbein

Calgary Jewish Federation leaders are optimistic about this year's United Jewish Appeal (UJA) campaign, welcome news given the backdrop of Alberta's long-standing economic woes and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

UJA 2020 Chair Nelson Halpern told *AJNews* he does not anticipate a drop in donations this year, despite the fact that some individuals and families are struggling due to job losses or diminished income related to COVID.

According to Federation Director of Development Diana Kalef, the UJA direct mail campaign launched in August has been well received with 20 to 25% of this year's campaign already pledged and paid.

A new initiative – the Jewish Together Fund – will be funded using 50% of the increased portion of every UJA donation over and above donors' 2019 gifts. This resiliency fund will directly benefit local Jewish organizations through a grant application process that is open to all organizations whether or not they are UJA partner agencies.

As these words are written, Federation staffers are finalizing the grant application forms. An initial \$50,000 will be divided among organizations whose applications are accepted.

"We are seeing a broad range of needs that didn't exist before COVID," says Kalef adding that grants can be used as emergency top-ups for previously existing programs and services or to defray costs for initiatives created because of COVID.

This year's UJA goal is \$2.5 million, down from the all-time high of \$3 million in 2013. Last year's campaign came in at \$2.65 million thanks, in part, to matching gifts of \$106,000 from some local top donors.

Nelson Halpern attributes attrition in campaign support to the passing, over recent years, of some of the community's most generous philanthropists adding that subsequent generations do not always continue their legacy.

The Federation board of directors has maintained most allocations to its partner agencies over the past three

years. Partner agencies include Calgary Community Kollel, Calgary JCC, Camp BB-Riback, The Calgary Jewish Academy, Halpern Akiva Academy and Jewish Family Service Calgary.

Some North American communities raised emergency dollars this past spring in response to COVID-19 or started their UJA campaigns early, running two-line campaigns. In Toronto, fund-raising by other organizations was curtailed during the spring months as their Federations raised millions of dollars, Kalef said.

In some cases, communities cut funding of some programs in order to provide emergency support elsewhere.

Federation leaders in Calgary chose to continuously assess the situation in consultation with their partner agencies, stick with the fall UJA campaign and maintain allocations at pre-COVID levels, allowing partner agencies to continue serving the community free of fear that relied-upon resources would be curtailed.

"We remain dedicated to calm leadership," says Federation CEO Adam Silver. "Assuming that the necessary funds are raised, we will continue helping our partner agencies to weather the storm."

"The continued strength of our community will depend on our collective commitment to tzedakah," Diana Kalef said.

UJA dollars help to ensure that core community programs and services – including some that aren't on the radar of donors – are sustained. Examples include the "community living room" at the JCC that provides cultural and seniors programming and red-letter community observances like Yom HaShoah, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut.

Even amidst COVID, Federation staff and volunteers ensured a meaningful Yom HaShoah commemoration this past April – the first time the solemn observance was marked virtually.

Nelson Halpern – who is a former Calgary Jewish Community Council President and is chairing the UJA



Calgary Jewish Federation 2020 UJA Chair Nelson Halpern  
Calgary Jewish Federation Director of Development Diana Kalef

advantage of matching dollars from charitable programs like Shaw Birdies for Kids.

Still, says Halpern, "It's the last dollars that are hard to collect."

Halpern sees hope for the future in the growing support of UJA by members of JAC, the Federation-supported program for Jewish Calgarians between the ages of 20 and 40. In recent years, an increasing number have become members of the Ben Gurion Society, a top gifts category (minimum \$1000) for their age cohort.

While UJA raises funds annually, Halpern is proud that Federation also takes the longer view, having joined with the Jewish Community Foundation of Calgary in bringing the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's LIFE & LEGACY program – now in its second year – to Calgary. Federation and JCFC have partnered with 10 major community organizations to raise after-lifetime endowment gifts.

To date, over \$13 million has been raised across participating local organizations. Many donors have named Calgary Jewish Federation as beneficiaries of their LIFE & LEGACY gifts, some of them providing endowments that will guarantee their annual UJA gifts in perpetuity.

Federation staff and volunteers are also working hard to bring new donors into the annual UJA campaign, growing the local culture of philanthropy so as to affirm the UJA 2020 campaign slogan "Together WE CAN."

"We need to broaden the base. We can't rely on the same people year after year," Halpern said adding that 75% of the annual UJA campaign is gifted to the community by just 50 families.

"I'm optimistic that we have positive momentum and we will be successful," Halpern said.

For more information about UJA, or to donate, go to [www.jewishcalgary.org](http://www.jewishcalgary.org) or contact Diana Kalef at [dkalef@jewishcalgary.org](mailto:dkalef@jewishcalgary.org) or 403-444-3154.

*Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.*

## William Benjamin (Billie) Davids z"l Born: March 9, 1925 Died: August 28, 2020



After a long and wonderful life, Billie passed away peacefully in Vancouver at the age of 95.

Billie was born in Lethbridge, Alberta to Chana and Avrum Davids. He has two sisters. One who predeceased him, Lillian, and Helen (Hentze) who still lives in Calgary. While growing up in Lethbridge he met his love Isabelle Goldenberg, who predeceased Billie in 1991. Billie was involved in many businesses with his trusted business partners and best friends Dr. Samuel Veiner and Dr. Coleman Staniloff. A partnership that lasted over 50 years.

He worked tirelessly to provide a wonderful and comfortable life for his family.

Billie helped many people get their start in life whether it was financially or simply lending a helping hand.

He was the Dad that took all the kids snow skiing in the winter and water skiing in the summer. He was always around to give pointers on your golf and tennis swings.

Billie was an honest man, faithful friend, enthusiastic athlete and always fun to be around. He is survived by his second wife Betty-Claire Warhaft, his two children Perry (Miriam), Shelley (Jonathan), his grandchildren Cory (Rich), Ben (Caitlin), Lauren Ila and Steven and three great grandchildren.

Billie was truly loved and cherished by those fortunate enough to know him. May his memory be a blessing. May he stay in our hearts always.

Any donations would be greatly appreciated for L'chiam Seniors Day Care music fund at the JCC Vancouver - a very special place for Billie in his last few years.

*The Sniderman,  
Rabinovitch and  
Elman families*

*appreciate and would like to thank  
all those who reached out  
with their love, support,  
donations and condolences  
in memory of  
our beloved parents and grandparents,  
Syd and Audrey Sniderman ז"ל*

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# Edmonton launches 2020 UJA Campaign

By Jeremy Appel

The United Jewish Appeal has kicked off its annual fundraising campaign for a year like no other.

The campaign kicked off Sept. 13, with a virtual show dubbed “A Celebration of Federation: Canadian Rosh Hashanah,” which was put together by 11 Jewish federations across the nation and hosted by *Just for Laughs* co-founder Andy Nulman.

Beginning with a video on the federations’ response to COVID, the kickoff included kids from across Canada revealing what Rosh Hashanah means to them, including Edmonton’s own Jeremy Toubiana, and Nava and Lexi Shafir. There was an “Advice for Bubbies” segment, in which Edmontonian Paula Weil gave tips on baking an apple challah. And the show wrapped up with a celebration of life from Holocaust survivors, where Edmonton’s Anna Linetsky gave a hopeful message for the New Year.

The virtual show was an upbeat way to start the new year and launch this year’s UJA campaign.

“We start our community UJA Campaign this year in a period of unparalleled moral and economic upheaval and yet, we are hopeful,” said Edmonton UJA 2020 Chair Howie Sniderman. “In the face of the monumental challenges caused by the pandemic, there has been an incredible outpouring of kindness, solidarity and philanthropy in Jewish communities throughout Canada and around the world.

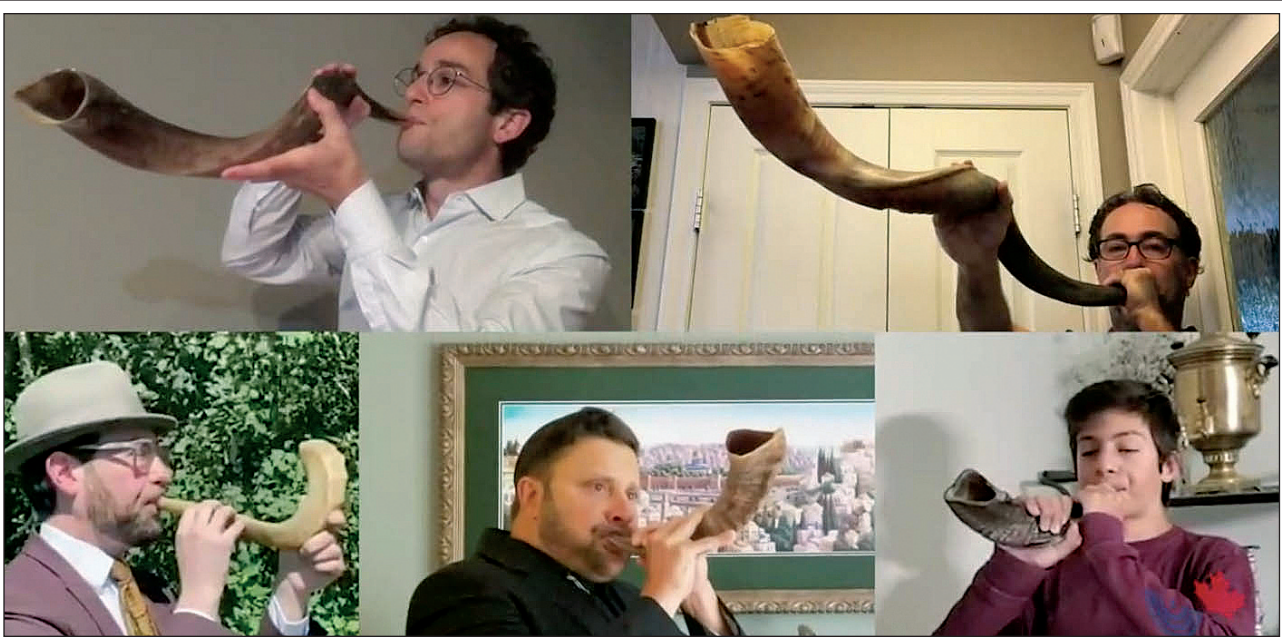
“We believe that our Edmonton Jewish Community will continue in this spirit of generosity, through support of this year’s UJA Campaign. Over the past four decades, we have invested together in UJA, building a vibrant and robust organization that is the backbone of Jewish Edmonton.”

Sniderman says it’s more important than ever for those who have the means to make a contribution, to do so, for those who cannot.

“This particular year is one where many people have suffered extraordinarily, (in terms) of health due to the pandemic,” said Sniderman. “And we’re all facing - every last one of us - ripples throughout the economy, not the least of which is so many people out of work, so many people not having the actual means to support themselves and their families in the way that we normally would expect ourselves to.”

A major fundraising issue this year is that some people who have contributed in past years are no longer able to do so, due to these economic circumstances.

“I’m guessing that over the next month or so, we’ll start seeing the extent to which there has been an impact on our individual donors,” said Sniderman. “That’s why, to the



The Canadian Jewish Federation held its star studded virtual 2020 UJA Campaign Launch with a livestream show entitled "A Celebration of Federation: Canadian Rosh Hashanah." One of the highlights was a shofar blowing exhibition from all across Canada including Calgary's Dr. Darryl Gurevitch (top right) and Edmonton's Seth Glick (bottom left).

extent that people have the means, it’s going to be important for them to step up. It’s always important for people to be counted and be part of the community in that sense, but this year there’s a special reason.”

On Aug. 31, canvasser training occurred over Zoom, rather than the usual BBQ, with special guest Daniel Larson, who was described in *Hakol* newsletter as a “Jewish fundraising maven.” Larson, a former director of development at the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, is the assistant director of annual giving and alumni relations at Brandeis University in Boston.

“This year I came back to my roots, as it were, and was able to give a presentation to the volunteer fundraisers for this campaign, to share with them some fundraising best practices that they could employ as they raise money for the UJA campaign,” said Larson.

“I was speaking to them about the importance of acknowledging the current reality in their fundraising, also emphasizing how, as fundraisers, they also have the opportunity to get a sense of how community members are faring amidst all this.”

It’s especially important to be empathetic to community members’ varying circumstances throughout the pandemic, while also emphasizing the importance of giving at this time for those who are able, he added.

The federations’ work is ultimately beneficial to the entire community, so it’s crucial for members to assist the collective in these trying times.

“Even after the pandemic has passed, these organizations will still be around to serve our community,

so we community members need to be there to support them now so they can continue to support us down the road as well,” said Larson.

As always, funds raised during the campaign will go towards various local initiatives, as well as those elsewhere in the Diaspora and Israel.

“Through UJA, we fund key programs and services that reflect our Jewish values,” noted Sniderman. “We care for the vulnerable, advance Jewish Education and Culture, forge connections to Israel, advocate for Jewish interests and inspire the next generation to embrace Jewish life. Even as the pandemic pulls us towards other needs and concerns, we must continue to invest in this vision of Jewish community and Jewish life that is so important.

“When we take a look at our overseas commitment, they include a number of Israel-based initiatives. One of the most important has been the connections of our young people with their counterparts overseas.”

At this point, of course, these international connections are being made solely through Zoom, but eventually it’s assumed that our youth will be able to travel abroad, he added.

“It will just be, like everything else in the world, a little bit more creative, a little bit more imaginative,” said Sniderman. “We’ll adapt. Investing in UJA will make us more vibrant, more connected and more resilient to the great challenges we face during these times. Please join me by making a gift to our 2020 annual UJA Campaign.”

*Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.*



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The Jerusalem Post

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT US AT [INFO@EDJFED.ORG](mailto:info@edjfed.org)



# Beth Price is the new president of JNF Canada

By Cheryl Gurevitch and Elliott Steinberg



Beth Price

Jewish National Fund (JNF) of Calgary is pleased to announce that our own Beth Price is the incoming president of the National Board of Directors of JNF Canada. Serving on the Calgary Board of Directors, and as Vice President of the National Board for many years, Beth's installation as President is great news for JNF and the Calgary Jewish Community. Historically, very few westerners have taken on this role.

"I am delighted that Beth Price will serve as the National President for JNF Canada," says Lance Davis, CEO of JNF Canada. "She is dedicated and devoted to the Jewish community and Israel and will serve as a role model for the next generation. I have known Beth for many years going back to my term as the Executive Director of Calgary Jewish Federation. I know firsthand the humble yet enthusiastic manner in which she works. I am very proud to work side by side with Beth to enhance and enrich the lives of Israel's citizens. JNF builds the foundations for Israel's future and I know that Beth will advance our core proposition with grace and competence."

While leading a very busy life devoted to family and the development of her professional career, giving back to the community has always been a top priority for Beth. She has worked on the board and executive committees of Jewish Family Service Calgary and the Calgary JCC, which she chaired for two years. Beth's involvement with JNF goes back to her childhood in Edmonton. Her father was a Negev Honouree and supporting JNF was part of her family life. Now Beth and her husband Lorne are past Negev Honourees, so it is clear that the commitment runs deep.

Lorne, their children and grandchildren, couldn't be more pleased. "Beth is the centre of the universe for our family. She has a natural skill as a communicator and leader and we are so proud of her new role. Beth has always been a strong supporter of community and volunteerism," says Lorne.

Beth has taken on a number of roles with Calgary Jewish Federation (formerly Calgary Jewish Community Council), including serving as Vice President and chairing the Informal Jewish Education and Affiliation Committee that launched the ground-breaking PJ Library program in Calgary. Most notably, in 2008 Beth conceived and continues to chair the Integrated Bursary Program, an innovative platform that ensures financial support for Jewish families in need.

"As a longstanding board member of Calgary Jewish Federation, Beth continues to give generously of her time and talent, and embodies the definition of a volunteer community leader," says Adam Silver, CEO of Calgary Jewish Federation. "Beth's focus has always been on building community and removing barriers to participation, and her well-deserved appointment as National President of JNF Canada is a testament to her passion for Israel and her capabilities as a leader," says Silver.

Also dedicated to the advancement of the Calgary community at large, Beth has served as a long-standing board member for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Alberta, NWT, and Nunavut and has volunteered as a patient/family educator for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, the Alberta Cancer Society, and CanSurmount.

A registered social worker, Beth has a long and distinguished professional record in Calgary. Between 1981 and 2014, she served in various capacities including clinical social work in cardiac surgery, ICU, trauma, and critical care. Beth served as Manager, Department of Social Work, at Holy Cross Hospital; Site Coordinator and Manager, Department of Social Work, Foothills Medical Centre, and MS Mental

Health Coordinator at the University of Calgary, Department of Clinical Neurosciences.

In light of Beth's professional experience, it was fitting that Beth and Lorne worked to raise funds to support the creation of the Dr. Lorne & Beth Price Therapeutic Children's Playground, as honorees for the 2015 Calgary JNF Negev Gala. Attached to the children's wing of the Dr. Max and Gianna Glassman PTSD and Health Centre at Jerusalem's Herzog Hospital, the playground is designed to provide an idyllic setting for traumatized Israeli children, reflecting Beth's Master's thesis, which focussed on play therapy.

When asked about her new role as National President, Beth reflected on JNF and its mission: "JNF is an important organization that has always connected Canada and the diaspora to our beloved State of Israel. JNF-KKL contributed to the land even before nationhood; it has always been an icon of environmental stewardship that helped raise Israel from a very fragile state to a technological and environmental beacon."

"As Israel changes, JNF has evolved. It has always been associated with environmental stewardship, but is currently also focussed on building social infrastructure so the people will thrive. As a long-time national board member and vice president, it is now my turn to lead a team of dedicated staff, volunteers and generous donors to build upon the values and traditions of our storied past, the foundation of Israel's future," says Price.

"We are thrilled to have a western voice leading the charge at the national level, says JNF Calgary President, Cheryl Gurevitch. "Beth constantly champions the importance of recognizing the diverse needs and capabilities of each regional community. She has always played a leadership role on the Calgary board, and her experience and ability to really listen will have a big impact on JNF Canada."

*Cheryl Gurevitch is President of the JNF Calgary Board of Directors. Elliott Steinberg is Executive Director of JNF Calgary.*



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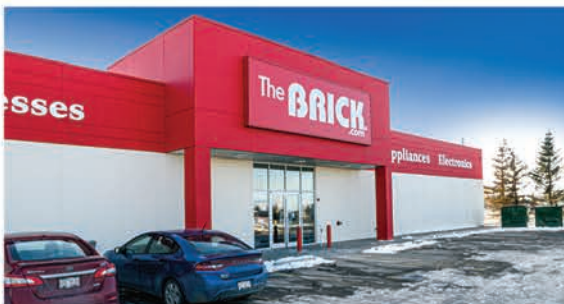
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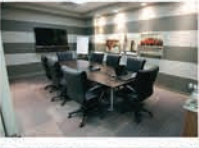

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Jon C. Mook, SIOR 403-616-5239Emily Goodman 403-862-4348

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# Anne Frank: A History for Today on exhibit at Red Deer MAG

While in hiding from the Nazis, in the early 1940's in the Netherlands, Anne Frank wrote in her diary, "I keep my ideals, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

The Jewish teenager's inspirational words resonate loudly in today's climate of systemic racism in our Canadian justice system and the increase of racism on our Canadian streets including right here in Alberta.

One of the most effective ways of reversing the trend is by educating people and young people in particular about what racism looks like, how harmful it is and what can be done about it. A travelling exhibition about the wartime experiences of Anne Frank is a powerful tool to do just that.

*Anne Frank - A History for Today*, a travelling exhibition from the Anne Frank House (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), has been on display around the world and will resume its exhibition at the Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery (MAG) from September 19, 2020 to January 2, 2021. This exhibit aims to bring Anne's life story to the attention of people all over the world to encourage them to reflect on the dangers of anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination and the importance of freedom, equal rights and democracy. As part of this exhibit the MAG will be showing artworks created by Red Deer high school students in response to the Anne Frank story.

In March, before the Red Deer MAG shut down temporarily due to the COVID pandemic, Red Deer Mayor Tara Veer spoke about the importance of social unity and shared her insights from her 2019 visit to Second World War Holocaust sites in Eastern Europe.

Veer's 10-day journey through Berlin, Krakow and Israel last year was part of a delegation of law enforcement, government and education leaders from across Canada.

According to the *Red Deer Advocate*, the mayor, who toured former concentration camp sites and spoke to a Holocaust survivor, said she wanted to be part of the



The powerful exhibit "Anne Frank: A history for today" is on display at the Red Deer MAG until Jan. 2, 2021.

delegation because its purpose aligned with council's safety and inclusive community objectives.

"I am deeply concerned about the safety crisis and social divisiveness that's at times present in our community," explained Veer in a column she wrote for the *Advocate*.

The mayor and other leaders returned from the "intensive" tour empowered to counter hate and to promote tolerance of others.

Veer stated that speaking out is an important way of "raising awareness of the dangers of social divisiveness," and the need to "protect all people from political and social tyranny."

Lorna Johnson, Red Deer MAG's executive director told the *Advocate* that this is especially important in these politically turbulent times. By understanding the Holocaust, Johnson added, "we can all take a stand against discrimination."

This exhibition tells the story of Anne Frank set against the background of the Holocaust. It makes use of images from the Frank family and quotations from the Diary of Anne Frank. Each panel displays information about the most important developments of that time: the rise of National Socialism, the Second World War and the persecution of the Jews.

"The Diary of Anne Frank continues to be a moving testament to the optimism of youth in the most trying situations," says Johnson.

The aims of the exhibition are to increase knowledge of youth and public on the historical events of the second world war, the Holocaust and the life of Anne Frank and to foster dialogue between attendees on topics such as the dangers of discrimination and the importance of tolerance and the human rights.

In many countries Anne Frank has become the symbol of the mass murder of Jews during the Second World War. In 1947 the diary of Anne Frank was first published. It is now translated into sixty languages and has become one of the best-known documents about the Holocaust. The building where the Frank family hid is now a museum.

The Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery is Central Alberta's leading establishment for the research, collection and presentation of visual art and material culture that is related to the region. It is a vibrant and inclusive gathering place and its exhibitions and programs promote the enjoyment of art, culture and the he history of Central Alberta. The Museum presents an on-going series of temporary exhibitions and interpretive programs. [www.reddeermuseum.com](http://www.reddeermuseum.com)

For more details regarding Red Deer MAG or the exhibition *Anne Frank: A History for Today* contact Kim Verrier, Exhibitions Coordinator at [kim.verrier@reddeer.ca](mailto:kim.verrier@reddeer.ca), 403-309-8440.

## Anti-Semitic priest barred from Edmonton Archdiocese

By Jeremy Appel

An anti-Semitic Polish priest with an international following has been formally banned from the Archdiocese of Edmonton after lobbying from B'nai Brith and Alberta's former deputy premier Thomas Lukaszuk.

Father Tadeusz Rydzyk runs the far-right radio station Radio Maryja, which has a television affiliate, Trwam, as well as a national newspaper and Catholic college. He has the dubious distinction of being denounced by two popes — John Paul II and Benedict XVI — for anti-Semitism.

In 2016, Rydzyk lambasted on air "synagogue-type behaviour" among some of his followers, and in private conversations leaked to a Polish magazine said that then-president Lech Kaczynski was taking orders from Jews. His radio station has also promoted Holocaust denial, with a guest in 2000 claiming that the gas chambers at Auschwitz didn't exist.

The station has also featured diatribes against "gender

ideology" and the "Islamification of Europe."

"Most anti-Semites are racist in many different ways," B'nai Brith's Alberta Manager of Public Affairs Abe Silverman said, referring to Rydzyk as an "equal opportunity" bigot.

And Rydzyk isn't a fringe figure. Poland's ruling ultranationalist Law and Justice party has reportedly offered subsidies of about \$7.5 million to affiliates of Rydzyk and Radio Maryja, and the Polish post office printed a stamp in honour of Radio Maryja's 25th anniversary in 2016, the Anti-Defamation League reported.

"He has a massive following," said Lukaszuk, who served as deputy premier under former Alberta premier Allison Redford and is a dual Canadian and Polish citizen. "His following isn't so much religious as it is political."

He says there's major overlap between Rydzyk's followers and supporters of the government.

"He controls a lot of votes. That's all there is to it,"

Lukaszuk said. "The current governing party before the election campaign literally goes to him for a blessing and he endorses him through his media, and that carries a lot of sway."

Lukaszuk brought Rydzyk to Silverman's attention when the priest delivered mass at Calgary's Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in 2018, which was approved by the diocese.

In response, Silverman met with Archbishop Richard Smith to express his concerns.

"The effect of this was that virtually all churches and diocese in Alberta will no longer invite Father Rydzyk to preach," he said. "I was very well-received and treated with the highest level of respect."

Since Rydzyk's programs and speeches are in Polish, Lukaszuk says the archdiocese likely wasn't aware of the full extent of his bigotry.

Continued on page 12

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Anne  
Frank  
*A History for Today*  
September 19, 2020 to January 2, 2021

The travelling exhibition "Anne Frank - A History for Today" tells the story of Anne Frank set against the background of the Holocaust.

This is a travelling exhibition from the Anne Frank House (Amsterdam, The Netherlands).

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mag  
+ Art Gallery

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anne frank house

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Photo collection of the Anne Frank Stichting (Amsterdam)

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News





The Beth Tzedec Congregation's 20th annual Calgary Jewish Film Festival is going virtual this year with a stellar lineup of films, from November 7 -19, 2020. Among others, feature films include 'Here We Are,' 'Golda' and 'Shared Legacies; The African-American Jewish Civil Rights Alliance." See pages 10 & 11 for a full schedule and visit [CalgaryJewishFilmFestival.com](http://CalgaryJewishFilmFestival.com) for ticket information.

Virtual Film Fest

Cont. from page 1

associated with mounting the virtual film festival.

Individual movie tickets will be available at \$12 per film.

A new film will be screened each day on a platform that allows a viewing period of at least 24 hours per film, providing more flexibility than would otherwise be possible.

Full details of the film lineup can be found in this issue of *Alberta Jewish News* and on the Film Festival website at [www.CalgaryJewishFilmFestival.com](http://www.CalgaryJewishFilmFestival.com). The website is also the user-friendly one-stop shop where film lovers can access links to purchase passes and find out more information about the movies and Zoom chats.

This year's opening night feature film, *Incitement* – directed by Yaron Zilberman – will take viewers back to the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995 at a peace rally. The psychological thriller – which had its world premiere during the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival – focuses on beliefs, events and influences, including the increasingly incendiary political climate, that led right wing extremist Yigal Amir to pull the trigger.

“This film is additionally relevant right now when one considers the dangerous polarization that is a fact of life in Israel and in North America,” says Cyngiser of the cautionary tale which won the 2019 Ophir Award for best feature film. *Incitement* was Israel's submission in the category of Best International Feature Film at the 2020 Oscars.

On November 9, Calgary Jewish Federation will be sponsoring the Film Festival virtual screening in commemoration of Kristallnacht – the night of broken glass – a series of pogroms throughout Germany and Austria that presaged the Holocaust. *The Essential Link*:

*The Story of Wilfrid Israel*, directed by Yonatan Nir, details the little-known story of the wealthy Jewish businessman, Berlin department store magnate and art collector whose remarkable deeds included a key role in organizing the Kindertransports that saved 10,000 Jewish children during the Holocaust.

Ironically, Wilfrid Israel's success at negotiating with the Nazis contributed to the shocking silence concerning his heroism... in Israel, of all places! As Nir peels the onion of this surprising mystery, the story hits closer and closer to home.

An award-winning filmmaker, Nir is no stranger to the Calgary Jewish Film Festival. His previous documentaries *Dolphin Boy* (2011) *My Hero Brother* (2016) and *A Picture of his Life* (2019) were Calgary Jewish Film Festival Committee favourites that delighted audiences.

Calgary Jewish Federation is also co-sponsoring the screening of *Shared Legacies: The African-American Jewish Civil Rights Alliance* together with the Gurevitch family. The timely film, which explores the alliances forged between Jewish and African American human rights activists during the 1960s is this year's Ralph Gurevitch Tikkun Olam Screening.

Rare is the case that a Calgary's Jewish Film Festival does not reveal connections between some of the films and individuals living here in Stampede City. Season 20 is no different.

*My Name is Sara*, an award-winning debut feature film directed and produced by Steven Oritt, tells the true story of Sara Goralnik, a 13-year-old Polish Jew whose family was murdered by the Nazis. Goralnik, who crosses the border, taking refuge with a Ukrainian family, must closely guard her own secret while ironically discovering theirs.

Long-time Calgarian Fanny Wedro – herself a Holocaust Survivor -- met Goralnik after the Shoah when they lived in the same town; the two survivors became lifelong friends. Wedro brought the award winning film about her late friend to the attention of Cyngiser and his Film

Festival Committee.

The documentary *Ma'abarot*, by Dina Zvi Riklis, delves into the history of the controversial transit camps – a fancy name for the tent cities and shanties where immigrants from many countries were housed during Israel's early years. Interviews with former denizens of the ma'abarot reveal shocking inequities particularly where Jewish immigrants from North Africa and Arab lands were concerned. The resulting dynamic continues to corrode social equality in Israel to this day.

Fortuitously, a specialist in the Mizrahi experience, Angy Cohen, has recently moved to Calgary and will be leading a Zoom chat following the streaming of *Ma'abarot*. Cohen recently took up her new position as Post Doctoral Associate, a position funded by the Dr. Jenny and Hy Belzberg Israeli Scholar Program at the University of Calgary. Over the years, Calgary has also become home to a number of people who were housed in ma'abarot when their families first immigrated to Israel.

COVID-19 precludes the usual gathering of film lovers at Beth Tzedec for the 20th anniversary of Film Festival. While they won't be able to hobnob in the Shul lobby or swap reviews while having a nosh between shows, there are advantages to virtual viewing. No babysitting costs. No shushing those with candy wrappers or commentary. No winter weather or wardrobe worries. Just a warm pair of PJs, a self-catered bowl of popcorn and the “reel” important thing...the best of Jewish cinema in the safety of your own home.

For detailed information about the lineup for the 20th Annual Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival, please refer to the two-page spread in this issue of *Alberta Jewish News*. To purchase passes and tickets, go to [www.CalgaryJewishFilmFestival.com](http://www.CalgaryJewishFilmFestival.com).

Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.

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— Miriam Milavsky —






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BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION 20TH ANNUAL

CALGARY JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL



INCITEMENT

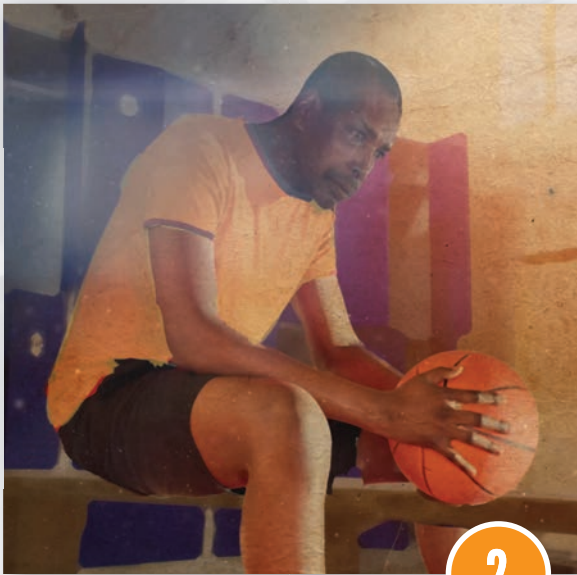
Israel 2019  
Director: Yaron Zilberman  
Hebrew with English subtitles  
123 minutes

Drama/Psychological Thriller

The tragic assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 was a watershed moment in Israeli history. This engrossing drama depicts the lead-up to the assassination through the eyes and worldview of his assassin, Yigal Amir – a promising young law student and religiously observant Jew who opposed the Oslo Accords. How did a relatively normative right-wing activist become a cold-blooded political assassin? What can be learned from his journey which, despite having occurred more than two decades ago, remains more relevant than ever in our own time? Grappling with these questions, acclaimed Israeli writer-director Yaron Zilberman chronicles Amir's radicalization and disturbing descent from a hot-headed political act into an ultranationalist and dangerous extremist consumed by anger and delusions of grandeur. Winner of the 2019 Israeli Academy Award for Best Film and Israel's submission to the 2020 Oscars for Best International Feature Film, Incitement is a gripping and unnerving look through the eyes of a murderer who silenced a powerful voice for peace, and a timely cautionary tale about the threat posed to democratic societies when political leaders employ hate-filled rhetoric, divisiveness and incitement to advance their political and ideological agendas.

Winner – Best Film & Best Casting, Israeli Academy Awards 2019  
Nominated – 10 Israeli Academy Awards 2019

Saturday, November 7th starting at 7:00 PM



AULCIE

Israel 2019  
Director: Dani Menkin  
English & Hebrew with English subtitles  
72 minutes

Documentary

In 1976, Aulcie Perry, a gifted African-American athlete, was playing basketball in Harlem when scouts from Israel's Maccabi Tel Aviv team spotted and recruited him. A year later, he helped lead the team to their first historic European Championship win, and soon after that, converted to Judaism, changed his name to Elisha Ben Abraham, and become an Israeli citizen. His rise to fame was precipitous, and his relationship with supermodel Tami Ben Ami became the subject of relentless media attention, solidifying his status as one of Israel's biggest stars. But behind the scenes, not all was well. A growing drug addiction would lead him on a self-destructive path. When his charmed life came to a dramatic halt, he was forced to confront his own demons and his fall from grace –paying dearly for his mistakes. Executive produced by Nancy Spielberg and directed by award-winning Israeli filmmaker Dani Menkin, this compelling documentary film tells the redemptive and inspiring story of a remarkable athlete, and how he ultimately triumphs, despite the odds.

Sunday, November 8th starting at 7:00 PM



THE ESSENTIAL LINK:  
THE STORY OF WILFRID ISRAEL

Israel 2017  
Director: Yonatan Nir  
English, Hebrew & German with English subtitles  
71 minutes

Documentary

This intriguing documentary brings to light the little-known story of Wilfrid Israel, a remarkable individual who has been largely forgotten by history despite his having been instrumental in saving the lives of thousands of Jews in Nazi Germany, and playing a key role in initiating and organizing the Kindertransport rescue operation that transported thousands of Jewish children to safety in Britain. A wealthy Jewish businessman and avid art collector, Israel was a member of one of Germany's most prominent Jewish families and was acquainted with some of the most influential figures of the 20th century. Yet, curiously, little is known about his personal life and heroic endeavors. Why did his story remain untold? What was there to hide? Unraveling the elusive mystery behind this unsung hero becomes personal for award-winning filmmaker Yonatan Nir (Dolphin Boy, My Hero Brother, Picture of his Life), as he takes us on an adventure in search of this extraordinary man, and the real reasons for his disappearance from history.

Monday, November 9th starting at 7:00 PM

Screening of the film THE ESSENTIAL LINK is open to the entire community at NO CHARGE as part of our community-wide KRISTALLNACHT COMMEMORATION



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ONCE UPON A BOY

Israel 2019  
Director: Uri Levi  
Hebrew with English subtitles  
65 minutes

Documentary

The Hessing family copes with the day-to-day challenges of life while raising three children, among them Ron, who has cerebral palsy. Ron is intelligent, charming and full of life, but every day, his movements are becoming increasingly limited. This, while he watches his twin brother run and play soccer with their younger sibling. The film follows this remarkable family's struggles as the parents do everything in their power to raise three children who are happy with their lot, despite the unfathomable gap between them. A daring trip to the US to undergo a complex surgical procedure to halt the progress of the disease reveals different approaches to life. With sensitivity and remarkable honesty, this life-affirming documentary skillfully captures the dynamics of a family faced with the complexities of raising children with different abilities, and offers us a rare and intimate look at the incredible power of a loving family to overcome any obstacle together, and to embrace and live with one's fate.

Winner – Special Jury Award, DocAviv Int'l FF 2019  
Winner – Audience Award, DocAviv Int'l FF 2019

Tuesday, November 10th starting at 7:00 PM



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SHARED LEGACIES:  
THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN JEWISH  
CIVIL RIGHTS ALLIANCE

USA 2020  
Director: Shari Rogers  
English  
95 minutes

Documentary

This timely documentary tells the story of the alliance and friendship between the Jewish and African-American communities during the long history of the civil rights struggle in America, revisiting pivotal moments and key figures dating back to the founding of the NAACP in 1909. With both groups having endured racism and bigotry, common cause was found during the turbulent '60s Civil Rights era, as Jewish leaders backed Martin Luther King's efforts at achieving racial equality. Although that relationship has frayed in recent years, as a once mighty bond of support and respect has seemingly faded and been forgotten, the stories of cooperation, empathy and brotherhood from that era remain a source of inspiration today. The lessons learned from that proud chapter in modern American history, when two communities of different backgrounds collaborated to transform the moral conscience of a nation, remain as relevant as ever today amidst the divisive seeds of hate taking root anew in the American landscape and the Black Lives Matter movement's outcry against racial injustice that has swept across cities in North America and around the world in recent months.

Wednesday, November 11th starting at 7:00 PM



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THE GUREVITCH FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND



THOU SHALT NOT HATE:

Italy/Poland 2020  
Director: Mauro Mancini  
Italian with English subtitles  
95 minutes

Drama

A visually stunning debut feature film by Director Mauro Mancini, Thou Shalt Not Hate begins when a doctor who is the son of a Holocaust survivor attempts to rescue a car-crash victim. Noticing a tattooed swastika on the chest of the seriously injured man, the physician chooses to withhold life-saving care. Guilt arising from this fatal choice eventually leads him to the children of the man he's abandoned – and a demand for retribution. Recently premiered during Critics' Week at the prestigious Venice Biennale International Film Festival, this Italian-Polish co-production is more notable for silence than dialogue as it explores what Mancini described in cineuropa interview as "human contradictions," adding "I wanted what the characters don't say to one another to be more important than what they do say. I wanted the fundamental grammar of this film to be represented by silences, looks, pauses between one line and the next, the protagonists' secret thoughts . . . a total stripping back, to lend strength to the unsaid and the smaller details." This art house film will thrill those with a taste for the Felliniesque.

Thursday, November 12th starting at 7:00 PM

Single tickets are \$12 per film or purchase a Festival Pass and watch all 12 films for just \$36.

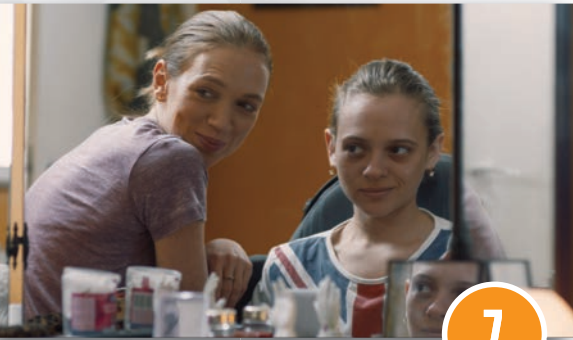


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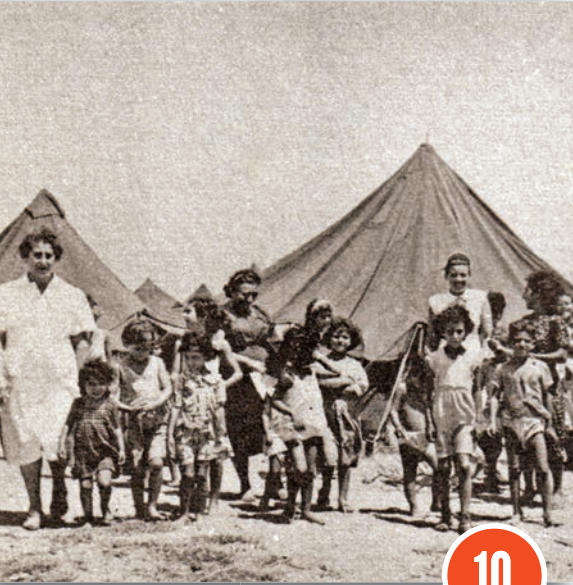
**ASIA**  
Israel 2020  
Director: Ruthy Pribar  
Hebrew & Russian with English subtitles  
88 minutes

**Drama**  
Shira Haas, Emmy Award-nominated star of the acclaimed Netflix mini-series "Unorthodox", delivers a powerful and nuanced performance in her role as rebellious teenager Vika in this poignant and intimate drama exploring the relationship between a mother and daughter. Asia, her 35-year-old single mother, has been raising Vika on her own since immigrating to Israel from Russia when Vika was just a small child. But for Asia, motherhood has always been an ongoing struggle rather than an obvious instinct, and her relationship with her now adolescent daughter has become strained and distant. They barely interact with one another, as Asia concentrates on her job as a nurse working long hours at the hospital, while Vika hangs out at the skate-park with her friends. Their routine is shaken when Vika's health takes a sudden turn for the worse. Coming to terms with the realities of Vika's rapidly progressing degenerative disorder will uncover the deep bonds of mutual love and trust that had remained unexpressed for so long. And as she struggles to better understand her daughter's fears, longings and emotional needs, Asia will have to finally find her voice as a mother.

Winner – Best Actress (Shira Haas), Tribeca Int'l FF 2020  
Winner – Nora Ephron Prize (Ruthy Pribar, Director), Tribeca Int'l FF 2020  
Winner – Best Cinematography, Tribeca Int'l FF 2020  
Nominated – 13 Israeli Academy Awards 2020 including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actress

Content Advisory: Mature themes

Saturday, November 14th starting at 7:00 PM



**MA'ABAROT**  
Israel 2019  
Director: Dina Zvi Riklis  
Hebrew with English subtitles  
84 minutes

**Documentary**  
Known as ma'abarot, the Israeli transit camps of 1948–1952 were a temporary housing solution to accommodate the massive surge of new immigrants arriving in the young nation from different parts of the world. A controversial enterprise, the transit camps housed over 300,000 immigrants in tents and tin huts, transitioning them into becoming part of the Israeli cultural tapestry, but also contributing to the divide between Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews in Israel. This informative documentary takes a close look at life inside the camps through interviews with former residents, research, and archival footage, revealing the impact of the camps on the lives of those immigrants, and offering stark insights into the racial divides that still permeate Israeli society today.

Tuesday, November 17th starting at 7:00 PM



**MY NAME IS SARA**  
USA/Poland 2019  
Director: Steven Orit  
English  
111 minutes

**Drama**  
This powerful tale of courage, tenacity and survival is based on the true-life story of Sara Goralnik, a 13-year-old Polish Jewish girl whose entire family was killed by Nazis in September 1942. After a grueling escape to the Ukrainian countryside, Sara steals her Christian best friend's identity and finds refuge in a small village, where she is taken in by a farmer and his young wife. She soon discovers the dark secrets of her employers' marriage, complicating her relationship with the already deeply suspicious pair and threatening her own secret that must be protected at all costs: her true identity.

Content Advisory: Mature subject matter

Sunday, November 15th starting at 7:00 PM



**MRS. G**  
Israel 2019  
Director: Dalit Kimor  
Hebrew, English & Hungarian with English subtitles  
55 minutes

**Documentary**  
This colorful documentary tells the story of how one woman created the world's most famous swimsuit company. Gottex, the iconic Israeli swimwear empire whose swimsuits were treasured by the likes of Princess Di, Brooke Shields and other celebrities around the world, was founded by legendary designer and larger-than-life character Lea Gottlieb. A Holocaust survivor who arrived penniless in Israel from post-WWII Hungary, Gottlieb – known as "Mrs. G" – started Gottex in her tiny Tel Aviv apartment, and through her endless creativity, unbridled passion, dominant personality and unyielding professional vision, was able to climb to the pinnacle of the glamorous international fashion world. But for those closest to her, this phenomenal success came at a high personal price. This fascinating documentary traces the life of Leah Gottlieb, her meteoric rise, and her complicated relationships with her two daughters.

Wednesday, November 18th starting at 7:00 PM



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Jay Joffe Memorial Program



**GOLDA**  
Israel/Germany 2019  
Directors: Sagi Borenstein & Udi Nir  
Hebrew with English subtitles  
88 minutes

**Documentary**  
Despite Golda Meir's iconic international stature and image as "queen of the Jewish people", in Israel itself, her legacy is far more complicated and is still clouded in controversy. Shortly before her passing, Golda Meir was interviewed for Israeli television. After shooting ended, the cameras kept rolling, recording an intimate talk with the first and only woman to ever rule Israel. Combining excerpts from this candid, never-before-seen off-air interview, along with testimonies of former allies and opponents alike, and rare archival footage, this acclaimed new documentary offers a fascinating and nuanced look at Golda Meir and the complexities of her dramatic premiership - five turbulent years that secured her place in history, albeit at a high personal cost.

Monday, November 16th starting at 7:00 PM



**HERE WE ARE**  
Israel/Italy 2020  
Director: Nir Bergman  
Hebrew with English subtitles  
94 minutes

**Drama**  
Since separating from his wife, Aharon - now in his mid-fifties - has put his own life on hold and devoted himself entirely to raising his autistic son Uri. They live together in a gentle routine, far away from the real world. But Uri is now a young adult, and both the authorities and his mother believe that the time has come for him to move to a specialized home where he can start living more independently. En-route to the new institution, however, Aharon is overcome by doubt and decides to run away with his son, knowing deep inside that his son is not yet ready for this giant step. Or is it, in fact, Aharon himself who is not ready? Mixing gentle humour with quiet moments of tenderness, this beautifully rendered film from acclaimed Israeli director Nir Bergman is a bittersweet and life-affirming story about fatherly love and the difficulty of letting go.

Official Selection – Cannes Film Festival 2020  
Nominated – 10 Israeli Academy Awards 2020 including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor

Content Advisory: Brief nudity

Thursday, November 19th starting at 7:00 PM

Proudly sponsored by  
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Beth Tzedec Congregation



# Jewish Calgary welcomes new co-presidents

By Maxine Fischbein

Calgary Jewish Federation’s newly minted co-presidents Jordan Balaban and Jared Shore have their work cut out for them as they begin their new mandate. Fortunately, they bring a combination of youthful enthusiasm, decades of significant volunteer experience, energy and creativity to the task.

“Our community has been drastically impacted by [COVID-19],” said Shore who is, nonetheless, looking at the bright side.

“We saw unity in our community from the get-go. Differences were put aside for sharing of ideas and lending of support. We acted as a cohesive community,” Shore said.

“In our vision for the community we need cohesion, engagement. We need everyone on board . . . we really do!”

For Shore and Balaban that means active participation in community life, a priority that builds resiliency for individuals, families and the community as a whole.

“It is important that UJA dollars are there, but we need kids at the schools, people at the JCC,” Shore says.

“We have some donors who support our community disproportionately,” says Shore, “but we need to be engaged top to bottom.”

“We can’t simply say we need community members to engage,” adds Shore. “We recognize the altruism and goodwill that goes into community building... but we can’t deny the fact that people are also consumers. We have to make sure that what we provide is relevant, engaging, stimulating, meaningful and valuable.”

“It’s also going to be important for us to engage with and continue to build partnerships with our agencies,” said Jordan Balaban adding that Federation is working on a strategic plan to guide the community over the next decade.



Calgary Jewish Federation CEO Adam Silver during the National Federation Virtual UJA launch.

## Priest barred *Cont. from page 8*

At the time of Rydzyk’s visit, Archdiocese of Calgary Bishop William McGratton said that he had changed his ways, pointing to a museum Rydzyk founded in Poland dedicated to the stories of Poles who rescued Jews during the Holocaust and a 2016 meeting he had with an Israeli ambassador.

But Lukaszuk says the museum offers a sanitized view of Polish history, downplaying the role many Poles played in carrying out Nazi atrocities. And according to Silverman, the Israeli ambassador reprimanded Rydzyk when they met.

The goal, says Balaban, is a sustainable community model for the future.

Balaban also has his eye on the here-and-now and its implications for Jewish Calgary.

“We are asking everyone to be as generous as they can during this challenging time,” Balaban said. “We are asking those who are able, to help pick up community members who are struggling... This is a time when those who really can give need to step up.”

Every bit as important is Shore’s message to those in our community who are struggling.

“We are a community. When you feel nobody is there, the Jewish community is always there,” says Shore. “We’ve got you.”

Some community agencies and organizations are struggling more than others, says Shore, noting that the JCC and Camp BB Riback lost tremendous revenues over the past summer. The Calgary Jewish Academy and Halpern Akiva Academy are faced with unanticipated costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic including the need for PPE, enhanced cleaning and substitute teachers, among other things.

“It’s been a challenge for many of our agencies that we lost six months of fundraising,” Shore adds.

Balaban and Shore are ready to tackle both near and long-term issues with “Together WE CAN” spirit.

“I have faith that our community will step up,” said Balaban. “We’ve always been a strong, generous community... we’ll get through this.”

Shore points to the life changing effects of UJA-funded initiatives like the Integrated Bursary Program.

“Every child and family in this community should have the opportunity to access Jewish life. This is ground zero for that,” says Shore of the one-stop bursary process dedicated to ensuring that lack of means does not prevent participation in Jewish life.

Balaban and Shore want all kids to benefit from the privileges they enjoyed growing up in Jewish Calgary, including Jewish day school educations and the joy of summer camp.

Having jointly ascended to the community’s top lay leadership position at the relatively tender ages



Jared Shore



Jordan Balaban

of 35 and 45 respectively, Federation’s new co-presidents know what young individuals and families need and are devoted to finding ways that Jewish organizations can address them.

Balaban and Shore’s individual and combined track records of leadership and rootedness in families dedicated to philanthropy and leadership bodes well for the community they now lead as do their complementary skillsets and interests.

Shore, who is a speech pathologist and former performing musician, has devoted a combined total of 17 years to serving on Federation’s Jewish Community Relations Committee which he first joined in 2003 and chaired beginning in 2017. While living in Nashville between 2004 and 2006, he served on that community’s CRC. Last year he was VP on the Calgary Jewish Federation board under the leadership of then-president Yannai Segal.

Balaban, who is co-founder, CFO and Director of Greengate Power Corporation, has served in a variety of volunteer positions for charitable organizations within and beyond Jewish Calgary, most notably as Federation treasurer for six years. He was the founder and producer of Pink Ribbon Pin-Ups, a calendar that raised \$150,000 for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation between 2011 and 2013.

“Jared and Jordan value the foundation established by all the matriarchs and patriarchs of our community and are laser-focused on continuing the legacy of community building,” said Federation CEO Adam Silver.

“I’m thrilled to be working with them, a talented executive and board, and a dedicated staff that are tuned in to the needs of a new generation. Things are evolving as we look for new ways to connect people to one another within our community, provide meaningful intersections between communal and secular interests and support the people of Israel.”

*Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.*

When Rydzyk tours around the world, he doesn’t just deliver mass but also sells tickets to lectures to raise funds for his various projects.

“If we can somehow cut off his funding by having churches agree not to invite him and give him money, then that’s a win for us,” said Silverman. “If we can successfully start cutting off his funding, and this has to be done on an international level, including the funding he receives from the Polish government, we can maybe put a stop to this guy.”

In a statement, the Archdiocese of Edmonton says they had no plans to bring Rydzyk back to Alberta.

“If a request was made, it would be denied given Father Rydzyk’s history of making controversial comments that at


times have caused distress and division,” it reads.

Silverman says the ultimate goal is to prevent Rydzyk from visiting Canada again.

“We will go to other jurisdictions that have Catholic leadership and we will have the same conversations with them, and little by little we hope to have Father Rydzyk banned from Canada period. There may be a time when we go to the federal government and make a case, and hopefully they won’t issue him a visa.”

“If this guy is offensive in Calgary, he’s offensive in Toronto too,” said Lukaszuk.

*Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.*



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ALBERTA Jewish News

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# Commemorating Kristallnacht and the legacy of Anne Frank

By John Stobbe and Debby Shoctor

As we are experiencing isolation from our friends and family, we can perhaps draw solace from thinking about the wartime teenage diarist and Holocaust victim Anne Frank.

How Anne Frank coped with her two-year isolation whilst in hiding from the Nazis, facing the possibility of arrest and certain death every minute of the day. How Nelson Mandela and Audrey Hepburn’s lives were greatly influenced by Anne Frank’s diary. The astonishing effect that learning about Anne Frank has had on people in some of the world’s most turbulent and violent regions, breaking down long-held prejudicial views. The dramatic impact on British prisoners who have gained a greater perspective on their grievances against society thanks to Anne’s story.

The significant change Anne’s diary has made to millions of teenagers who have faced adolescent social problems and has succeeded in raising their ambition and aspirations thanks to learning her story.

This year, in commemoration of Kristallnacht, the Edmonton Jewish community will be honoured to have as our guest via Zoom, internationally renowned speaker and author Gillian Parry, MBE, all the way from London, England. She will host two sessions, one for adults and one for teens on Sunday, November 8 at 1 and 3 pm respectively. Visit [jewishedmonton.org](http://jewishedmonton.org) for registration and for more information.

Gillian will be giving one of her most popular and richly illustrated talks, on ‘The Life and Surprising Legacy of Anne Frank’, via a Zoom live streamed event. The talk will be around 50 minutes with time for a short Q & A session. Gillian is a hugely popular speaker and has had many

years’ speaking, lecturing and broadcasting experience, in locations such as 10 Downing Street, the United Nations in New York, and most recently, the Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock. As the Co-founder and long-time Executive Director of the Anne Frank Trust UK, Gillian has been privileged to meet many people who knew Anne Frank and shared their personal recollections of her.

In 2010 Gillian was awarded an MBE for services to education and in 2018, she published her first book ‘The Legacy of Anne Frank,’ available via Amazon and other outlets.

This event is generously co-sponsored by the Dutch Canadian Club (DCC) and the Jewish Federation of Edmonton. The legacy of Anne Frank is dear to both communities.

As part of the celebrations to honour the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands, the Dutch Canadian Club Edmonton is donating a statue of Anne Frank to the City of Edmonton. The DCC is currently fundraising for the statue, to which JFE and other community members have contributed. The original 1960 version of this Anne Frank Statue is in the Dutch city of Utrecht. The same mold and form has been used to

But this tradition is based on more than word play: Gourds’ thick skins symbolize protection and their golden flesh symbolizes abundance for the upcoming year.

Also, just like pomegranates, late summer and fall are the seasons for squash and gourds, which strengthens their association with Rosh Hashanah.

Exactly how gourds are eaten varies. Moroccan Jews feast on pumpkin soup with toasted pumpkin seed “croutons.” Syrian Jews eat candied gourd flavored with rosewater. Turkish and Greek Jews make a candied, pureed pumpkin confection called dulce de calabasa. But the sweetest of all is Tunisian pumpkin jam.


make the powerful Edmonton bronze statue. The bronze statue has currently been erected at the Edmonton Main Library in the children’s section. She will be placed in a spot of prominence in Light Horse Park in Edmonton’s Old Strathcona.

The unveiling ceremony will hopefully take place next spring.

*Debby Shoctor is the CEO of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton. John Stobbe is a representative of the Dutch Canadian Club and organizer of the Anne Frank Memorial project.*

### The Surprising Global Legacy of Anne Frank

with Gillian Walnes Perry



**Author Gillian Walnes Perry will be the guest speaker at a special Kristallnacht Commemoration zoom event on November 8, 2020.**

## Delicious Tunisian Pumpkin Jam

By Rachel Myerson

(Noshers via JTA) — For many Jews, predominantly Sephardim, Rosh Hashanah foods extend way beyond apples and honey. Among the numerous simanim (foods that have symbolic or linguistic significance for the upcoming year) are squashes and gourds.

The Aramaic word for gourds and squashes is kara, which sounds similar to the Hebrew word kra, which means “to tear up.” Therefore, eating them at Rosh Hashanah conveys the hope that any harsh decrees should be torn up, and that any merits over the past year should be judged favorably by G-d.


### THE LIFE AND SURPRISING LEGACY OF ANNE FRANK

AN UPLIFTING AND INSPIRING TALK BY  
GILLIAN WALNES PERRY, MBE

CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ANNE FRANK TRUST UK


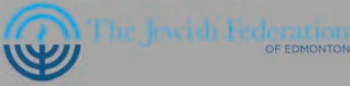

#### IN COMMEMORATION OF KRISTALLNACHT

As we are experiencing isolation from our friends and family, we can perhaps draw solace from thinking about the war time teenage diarist and Holocaust victim Anne Frank. How Anne Frank coped with her two-year isolation whilst in hiding from the Nazis, facing the possibility of arrest and certain death every minute of the day. The astonishing effect that learning about Anne Frank has had on people in some of the world’s most turbulent and violent regions, breaking down long-held prejudicial views.




**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH 2020, VIA ZOOM**

**1:00 PM ADULTS | 3:00 PM YOUNG ADULTS MST**



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT US AT [INFO@EDJFED.ORG](mailto:info@edjfed.org)



### The Jewish Federation® OF EDMONTON

#### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the  
Jewish Federation of Edmonton,  
The Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton, and  
The Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation

Will be held on Wednesday, December 9, 2020  
Commencing at 7:00 pm, at

Beth Shalom Synagogue  
Upper Auditorium  
11916 Jasper Ave., Edmonton, Alberta

**Required AHS measures will be observed.**  
**Pre-registration of attendance with a signed COVID waiver is required.**  
**If the Government of Alberta permits us to proceed electronically at any time prior to December 9, 2020, we will move to an online meeting.**

For the purpose of:

1. Reviewing the financial results for the fiscal year just ended.
2. Receiving an update on past activity.
3. Elections of slates of Directors for the organizations.
4. Amending the Bylaws/Articles of the various organizations.

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, the Nominating Committee is giving notice that at the upcoming Annual General Meeting, there will be up to 10 vacancies to the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, of which 6 are for a 3-year term, 2 are for a 2-year term, and 2 are for a 1-year term.

Any Member of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton (any individual 18 years of age or older who made a contribution between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020 in the sum of at least \$18.00, or any one individual 18 years of age or older who made a joint contribution with another person between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020 in the sum of at least \$36.00) who would like to submit their name for consideration by the Nominating Committee to stand for election to the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton may do so in writing to [ceo@edjfed.org](mailto:ceo@edjfed.org) on or before October 24, 2020. Additional nominations must be made by three nominating Members and include the signature of the proposed nominee, who must also be a Member. Additional nominations may be made in writing and delivered to the Chief Executive Officer (in person) up to and including November 25, 2020, and must be made by three nominating Members and include the signature of the proposed nominee, who must also be a member. Please note that the bylaws do not allow for nominations from the floor. All nominations are as set out above.

Any Member who would like to add any additional business to be conducted at the Annual General Meeting may do so in writing to the Chief Executive Officer up to and including November 25, 2020. Any request must be endorsed by signature of 20 Members.

**Please pre-register for this meeting by emailing: [ceo@edjfed.org](mailto:ceo@edjfed.org)**



community calendar

Want to know what's going on in Jewish Calgary?  
Check out the Community Calendar at [jewishcalgary.org](http://jewishcalgary.org)

Have an event?  
Click on "Suggest an Event" to add it to the calendar



A MESSAGE FROM ADAM SILVER

As I write this message, we are approaching one of my favourite *chagim* (holidays) – *Sukkot*. For me, *Sukkot* is about the fall, the change of the seasons, the smells of the *etrog* and the act of shaking the *lulav* and, of course, the yearly reprisal of the ever-temporary *sukkah*. This year, despite the anticipated comfort of each year's permanent impermanence, things will be different for many of us.

Two central themes of *Sukkot* are the temporary but protective nature of the *sukkah* structure, and the combining of the four species into the *lulav* and *etrog*, an example where independent items come together to make something more special than apart. In a number of ways, these themes continue to play out in our community, especially during these very challenging last several months. Please indulge me while I connect both to the challenges and opportunities we continue to face.

The *sukkah* is a temporary (but sturdy) structure in which we eat our meals during *Sukkot*, with some families even sleeping in it overnight. The structure is built and torn down each year, yet the memories of our experiences with family and friends last and build on one another to create


a collective memory of *Sukkot*. We remember the years it was warm or, more likely, the years it was snowing – and we recall the huddling up we did over a warm bowl of soup in the *sukkah*. Perhaps we save the decorations our children made when they were three years old, and love the fact the very same decorations continue to be displayed when they are 18. We might share stories about the time our *sukkah* blew down in a chinook, and share details about how we reinforced it the following year, but still kept it *kosher*. A collective memory built over years of experiences, all creating a cumulative picture of what this time of year, what this holiday means to us. In our Jewish community, many of us have had seasonal or other episodic but formative experiences which have combined to make us who we are, and have shaped our dedication to Jewish Calgary. Like the *sukkah*, the experiences have likely been different each year but, even in their differences, there have been things to look forward to in regularity.

Following the other theme I'd like to explore, the four species: the date palm (*lulav*), myrtle bough (*hadass*), willow branch (*aravah*), and citron (*etrog*) combine to make one of Judaism's most recognizable symbols. Each, on its own, is

certainly valuable and interesting, but when bound together, the four items create something iconic. So, too, is Jewish Calgary built through combining families and individuals from different backgrounds, with varied religious and cultural observances, resulting in our amazing and resilient community. The *lulav* and *etrog* are not complete if even one of the species is missing, and Jewish Calgary is only complete through its breadth of inclusion.

At this time of the year, as we are in the thick of our community's UJA campaign to support important social and identity-building services and programs, we proudly proclaim "Together WE CAN..." and work each and every day to live by those words as a community. Together WE CAN support one another. Together WE CAN get through these challenging days. Together WE CAN be more. Together WE CAN accomplish anything!

Chag Sameach,

  
Adam Silver, CEO, Calgary Jewish Federation

Building an inclusive community is a priority. Contact us and we will make every effort to meet your needs.

COME TOGETHER

GENERALASSEMBLY.ORG

On October 25-27, we invite you to participate in JFNA's **Virtual General Assembly 2020**, an event like the Jewish world has never experienced. This gathering is a pivotal moment for each and every member of our community to connect, reflect, and celebrate being together. Check out the trailer at [jewishcalgary.org](http://jewishcalgary.org) and join us for the gathering of the decade! #GA2020

PJ LIBRARY® AND THE JCC GOLDEN AGE PROGRAM INVITE YOU TO BAKE

Everything you need to bake Nessie's challah is in your **FREE Challah at Home Kit!**

Register at [jewishcalgary.org](http://jewishcalgary.org) for:  
Pick-up on **Wednesday, November 4** and  
Zoom with Nessie on **Thursday, November 5 at 5:30PM**

Pick-up and Zoom details will be provided at registration.

Contact Nessie 403-537-8599 or Kathie 403-537-8592 with any questions.

**Challah at Home Kits** are generously sponsored by **Len and Faigel Shapiro**.  
**Donations to the JCC Golden Age Challah Baking Program gratefully accepted.**

TODAH RABAH

At our September Board of Directors meeting, we acknowledged **Yannai Segal** as he moved to the position of past-president. We are so thankful for his tireless work over the last three years. Yannai has given generously of his talent and time for the betterment of our community. He has stewarded us through some challenging times, not the least of which was the onset of the current pandemic. You will have likely seen Yannai at many community events over the years, and certainly have read some of his insightful messages. We thank the entire Segal family for enabling Yannai to give so much of himself, and we are certain he will continue to contribute in meaningful ways to Jewish Calgary. We will find an appropriate time and way to recognize Yannai at a future event. In the meantime, we all say *Todah Rabah* and *Yasher Koach!*

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT

Calgary Jewish Federation is pleased to welcome **Lori Wolf** to our staff team. A native Calgarian, Lori has work experience in both her family's retail business and the not-for-profit sector with JFSC. She volunteers for Na'amat Canada Calgary as their treasurer, and has extensive experience in book keeping and donor relations. Lori is excited about her new role as our database administrator.

Kristallnacht

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9 • 7PM • VIRTUAL

Join Calgary Jewish Federation and the Beth Tzedec Calgary Jewish Film Festival in commemorating the **82nd Anniversary of Kristallnacht, The Night of Broken Glass.**

**FREE** Featured film: **THE ESSENTIAL LINK: THE STORY OF WILFRID ISRAEL.**  
A commemoration video will precede the movie and a Zoom meet and greet with director, Yonatan Nir, will follow the film.

This intriguing documentary brings to light the little-known story of Wilfrid Israel, a remarkable individual who has been largely forgotten by history despite his having been instrumental in saving the lives of thousands of Jews in Nazi Germany. Playing a key role, Israel initiated and organized the Kindertransport rescue operation that transported thousands of Jewish children to safety in Britain.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION COMING SOON

All activities on this page are made possible by your gifts to Federation's annual UJA Campaign.



JEWISH CALGARY'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Together  
UJA 2020 WE CAN



BRING  
HOPE

Your gift brings hope, dignity, and joy to people's lives every day.



REMOVE  
BARRIERS

Your gift ensures everyone can participate in Jewish life regardless of financial barriers.



REMAIN  
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You ensure that Jewish social services and community organizations remain strong here at home, in Israel, and around the world.

TOGETHER WE SUPPORT:

- American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)
- Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI)
- Jews in Need Around the World
- Shalom Bayit
- Social Services in Israel

- Basic Needs
- Integrated Bursary Program (IBP)
- Financial Relief
- Supporting the Vulnerable

- Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)
- Jewish Federations of Canada - United Israel Appeal (JFC - UIA)
- Leadership Development
- Partnership2Gether

HOW TO DONATE: ONLINE jewishcalgary.org PHONE 403-444-3157 EMAIL lwolf@jewishcalgary.org



WHAT WILL YOUR JEWISH LEGACY BE?

IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, YOUR LIFE IS ROOTED IN EXPERIENCES CONNECTING YOU TO JEWISH COMMUNITY. CHANCES ARE YOU ALREADY SUPPORT LOCAL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BUT HAVE YOU INCLUDED THEM IN YOUR WILL OR ESTATE PLAN? BY LEAVING A LEGACY GIFT, YOUR CHERISHED JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY FOR GENERATIONS. NOW IS THE TIME TO SIGN YOUR LETTER OF INTENT TO ENSURE THE FUTURE OF JEWISH CALGARY.

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CJA  
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LIFE &  
LEGACY

CALGARY  
JEWISH FEDERATION

JEWISH COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION OF CALGARY

For more information contact Diana Kalef:  
403-444-3154 • dkalef@jewishcalgary.org



# A conversation with author Mira Sucharov

By Jeremy Appel

Carleton University political scientist and specialist in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict Mira Sucharov has released a new book, *Borders and Belonging: A Memoir*. *AJNews* spoke to Sucharov about the intersection of her personal and political journey from her childhood in Winnipeg to Jewish summer camp and a three-year sojourn in Israel. This interview has been condensed for length and clarity.

JA: How did you decide the time was right to write your memoir?

MS: Several years ago, I developed a course at Carleton on graphic novels and graphic memoirs to teach political science. I love the form and intimacy it creates between author and reader.

My first idea was actually to write a graphic memoir, but for that I needed an artist and it proved to be quite challenging to secure one. I decided eventually to switch to the genre I can do best, which is prose writing without the drawing, because I'm not a visual artist. I read many, many memoirs and trained with a couple of memoir experts - Shulem Deen, who's written an amazing memoir about his journey away from ultra-Orthodoxy, and Canadian Alison Pick, who's written an excellent memoir on her journey through embracing her Jewish heritage. And I went for it.

JA: The book details your journey from a liberal Zionist perspective to one that's more critical. Would you characterize yourself as post-Zionist?

MS: That could be an accurate way of defining it, if we can all agree on what Zionism means. In my case, it's really about concern over equality and justice in Israel and Palestine and to what extent a Jewish state can grant all its inhabitants the rights that they deserve under current international law and norms.

What I'm doing in this book - politically speaking - is figuring out how to square a sense of deep attachment to the country with a political vision that has room for more justice and equality than conventional Zionism has, in my view.

We know that Israel exists, we know that Hebrew has been revived and that Israeli culture is extremely vibrant. How can we take those Zionist achievements and add rights and equality to a greater extent than they exist right now?

But the book is not a political treatise. It's my particular political journey, and from that readers can reflect on their own politics. That's the gift of the memoir genre - it enables readers to relate even if they don't agree.

JA: Was there a particular moment when you realized when your worldview had changed?

MS: Probably around 2015, in the aftermath of those

particular Israeli elections - there have been so many in the past few years. There was a sense that the two-state solution isn't working and that Palestinian rights need to be taken more seriously than they have been. In the book, I trace experiences, situations and reflections that are leading me there. But, as with many things, it's not a sudden shift.

I bring up past experiences and conversations I'd had many years ago, or past notions I'd had, such as when I was living on a kibbutz in my 20s and I noticed that they called the fields where they work by their Arabic name, Fallujah. I absorbed that fact, but I didn't pry. Years later, I end up delving into that. Sometimes these moments that seem critical then enable you to reflect more deeply on past events and see them in a new light.

JA: One of those anecdotes that stand out to me was when the vice president of Carleton reached out to you to solicit your insight on a controversial Israel Apartheid Week poster in 2008, an image you told him you thought was unfair in its depiction of the Israeli military. How would you have handled that exchange differently today?

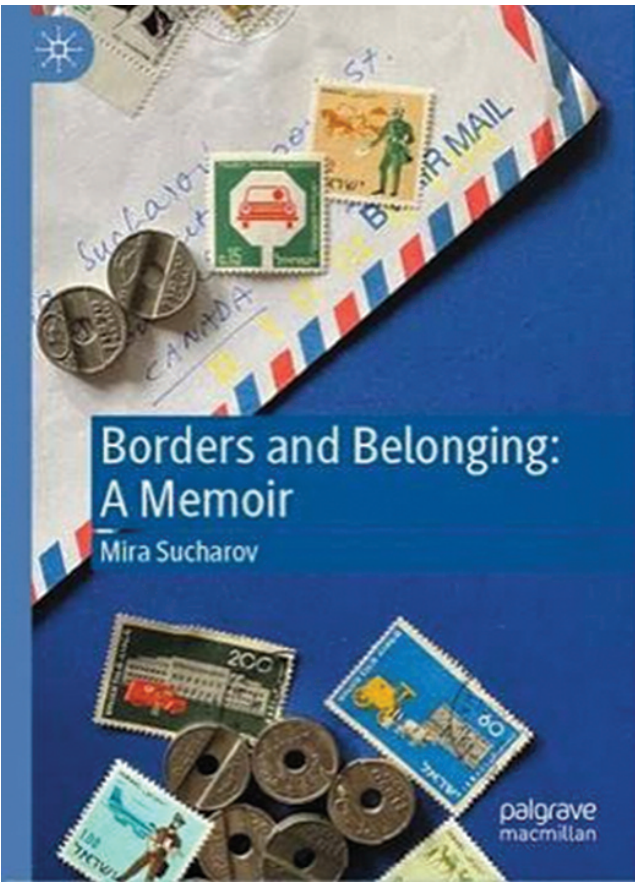
MS: I was taking the poster perhaps more literally than I would now. The poster, that Carleton ultimately forced the removal of, was a cartoon that showed an Israeli Apache helicopter aiming a missile directly at a young Palestinian boy. I said I thought it was unfair that the poster showed Israeli forces deliberately targeting children.

If I were asked about this now, I would say that the poster is capturing an important idea of the pain and suffering of living under occupation, and an important fact of the asymmetrical casualties in the Gaza War. There's an important political value in that kind of poster. I still have some ambivalence, but now I would probably not want to stand in the way of protest like that.

JA: In the book, you talk about coming to terms with trauma from your parents' divorce. In what ways did this trauma impact your worldview?

MS: There was a sense of needing to pull the pieces together and find harmony. I think I had a real sense as a child of the family rupture and in a sense being pulled in multiple directions. Not that my parents deliberately did that. They never - thank goodness - spoke ill of each other in front of me. But there was an unconscious, implicit sense that I was being pulled in multiple directions.

I think that led me to be drawn towards conflict resolution as a field and then to adopt a certain liberal Zionist view of Israel-Palestine for many years, until such time as the events I describe in the book start chipping away at the more pragmatic view and push me more towards endorsing rights, justice and equality in a way



that I hadn't before to the same degree.

My personal circumstances perhaps give rise to a political outlook. Coming to terms and challenging myself on that outlook and shifting it a little bit then enables me perhaps to go back to my earliest personal trauma and no longer feel like I'm that child in a state of constantly being pulled.

JA: What would you like readers to take away from the book?

MS: My goal in this book is to move readers, and give them an emotional and intellectual experience. I want them to relate even if they don't agree. I want it to provoke discussion about the role of people's personal lives and political lives, and how the two are intertwined. And I would like it to promote more discussion about the Jewish relationship to Israel-Palestine, how we do engage and how we can engage.

*Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.*

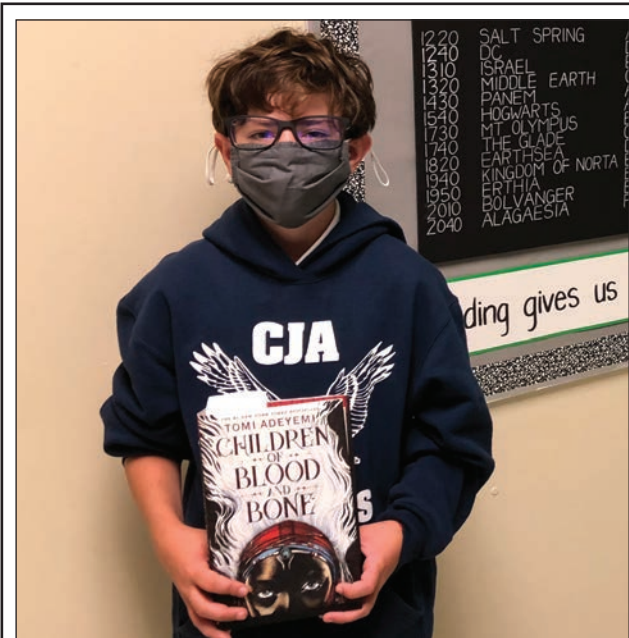
# CJA: Around the world while standing still - a 2020 conundrum

By Lesley Machon

While the global community and school is disinfecting hands and surfaces, our learning at the Calgary Jewish Academy will not be sanitized. We are committed to engaging lesson plans and travelling in our minds despite postponed school trips, transporting our imaginations beyond the faint scent of cleaning products and plexiglass desk pods.

In English Language Arts, students are travelling to the far reaches of a dystopian Africa in the fantasy novel *Children of Blood and Bone*, which is a beautiful and brutal tale exploring ancestry, revolution, and love. The text lends well to learning all literary devices, and invites us to engage with themes of race, class, and authority. Students will be listening to the novel as narrated by Bahni Turpin, which means exposure to a Black protagonist, a Black narrator and the creative genius of a Black author. Broadening our minds and perspectives by ensuring diverse voices line our shelves, is an important part of developing empathy and connection with people who are both similar and different than we are.

In social studies, students will be travelling to medieval Japan to study the historical importance of the reigning samurai and the nation-defining attacks by invading Mongols. The invasions are the earliest events for which the word kamikaze ("divine wind") is widely used, which references the typhoons faced by Mongol fleets. The students will be learning unique angles on this piece of world history, and learning to write Japanese characters



Celebrating the holidays and keeping our students engaged at Calgary Jewish Academy.

relevant to these times. They will also be going outside to learn the art of samurai swordplay, and creating life-sized replicas of these members of the military caste in feudal Japan. From there, we will head to the East Coast of Canada with the first Indigenous groups. We will be playing the game of lacrosse like the First Peoples did, using the game to settle disputes and prepare for war. Students will also be creating and beading their own wampum belts.

In Judaic Studies we will head to Washington DC to debate the funeral arrangements for Ruth Bader Ginsburg (a woman of state, but also a Jewish woman). After that we will transport ourselves back in time to explore medical experiments done on victims during WWII, to debate whether the knowledge gained from these experiments should be used in present day. We will be basing our knowledge off rabbis in the Talmud, and using

compassionate inquiry and discernment to engage with difficult ethical issues. We will also take walks outside the school surrounded by the changing leaves, to discuss questions such as i) *What do/can humans mean by the word, 'G-d?'* and ii) *What does it mean for something to be 'holy' or 'sacred?'*

On the whole, our mission for this year is to keep students engaged in a world beyond pandemics and travel bans. Our plan is to activate their imaginations, encourage them to move their bodies and breathe fresh air, introduce them to diverse figures both real and fictional, and time travel to distant lands together. Thank you for journeying with us!

*Ms. Lesley Machon teaches Junior High Humanities, Language Arts & Social Studies at the CJA.*



# Calgary-based Zoominars unlock world of Judaica

By Maxine Fischbein

For many of us, three silver linings of the COVID-19 pandemic have been the gift of time, a nudge toward new and often creative pastimes and the chance to nurture new relationships, albeit from a safe distance and, often, in cyberspace.

Three Calgary women have brought together these strands, weaving them into an endeavour aptly named Art and Scroll Studio, an online initiative that celebrates artists and makers who devote themselves to Judaica.

On October 7, Art and Scroll will be rolling out their first Zoominar, featuring a chat with Sonoma, California-based artist Nina Bonos, whose art was featured on the cover of last month's Alberta Jewish News Calgary edition. A lineup of real-time virtual discussions with other creators and producers of Judaica from North America and around the world will follow. And there is more good news – the virtual journey is free of charge.

Art and Scroll is the heart and soul initiative of Calgary newcomer Shelley Werner – formerly of Winnipeg – and Caron Glickman and Michele Doctoroff, both of whom Werner met after moving to Calgary five months ago.

Doctoroff was among the first to extend a welcoming hand to Werner at the suggestion of Temple B'nai Tikvah Rabbi Mark Glickman. Meanwhile his wife, Caron Glickman, independently encountered Werner. Discovering their shared passion for beautiful Judaica, they began to explore various websites, learning about the creators and makers that produce it. The circle expanded to include Doctoroff and the three women quickly discovered that they were enjoying their Judaica journeys and each other's virtual company.

"Maybe others would like to visit these artists too," suggested Caron Glickman who was, in Werner's words, "not prepared to think small."

The Art Gallery Girls, as they call themselves, share what Werner describes as a strong desire "to say hello,

reach through the screen and meet the makers."

Art and Scroll Studio has established a presence on both Facebook and Instagram. As these words are written, the Art Gallery Girls are preparing for the October 7 discussion with award-winning watercolour and mixed-media collage artist Nina Bonos. Among her many commissions were spectacular Torah mantles for Beth Israel Synagogue when the Vancouver congregation dedicated its new building in 2014. Werner will be exploring, in depth, the sources of Bonos' inspiration – including the Sonoma landscape where she lives and works and how her surroundings influence her work.

This formula will be applied to future virtual live presentations as Art and Scroll Studio explores each guest artist's inspiration, process and artwork.

In addition to appreciating well-wrought Judaica, Doctoroff, Glickman and Werner are seeking to elevate the profile of artists whose work is seldom displayed in galleries despite its beauty and the time-honoured Jewish tradition of *hiddur mitzvah* – the beautification of ritual objects so as to elevate the mitzvahs performed in homes and Synagogues.

This theme will be front and centre in an October 26th Zoominar featuring the work of Columbus Ohio-based scribal artist Pamela Feldman-Hill, who special-izes in art relating to Jewish lifecycle events, including Ketubot (Jewish marriage contracts), and designs encompassing biblical imagery.

Calgary metal artist Milt Fischbein, one of a handful of



Art & Scroll Studio's "Art Gallery Girls" Shelley Werner, Caron Glickman and Michele Doctoroff will be hosting zoominars starting this month.

North American goldsmiths specializing in the ancient tradition of filigree making, will be the subject of a November 10 Zoominar in which he will chat about his Judaic designs, his artistic journey and insights into the Sephardic history of filigree.

Art and Scroll Studio is supported by Temple B'nai Tikvah's Adult Education Committee, though Werner, Glickman and Doctoroff act independently as curators.

While their selected guests must be makers of Judaica, their work must answer Caron Glickman's question, "Does it stir something in us?"

"We choose our greatest hits," says Shelley Werner who adds that the artists she has already approached have been fascinated by the initiative, quickly becoming willing and enthusiastic participants.

"There are many more artists and sites in our sights," Werner promises.

The enthusiasm and complementary personalities and roles of the Art Gallery Girls bode well for the success of Art and Scroll Studio, a virtual salon that transcends borders, allowing for worldwide journeys during this time of contagion.

Doctoroff loves her travels through cyberspace seeking gems of Jewish art and culture and "opening windows of thought to people for whom art may not be a primary focus."

Glickman, who built a successful dental practice in Seattle before moving to Calgary four years ago, has taken the lead in looking after the business end of the project. Werner, who created her own design company in Winnipeg, has designed sacred spaces and installations and can speak to artists in their own language. She will conduct the online artist interviews, speaking with makers about their work as samples are screen shared.

"This has been a flower that has blossomed out of the pandemic," says Werner who, together with Doctoroff and Glickman, is turning the art adventure into what she calls a "fundemic."

Who can resist that?

You can follow Art and Scroll Studio on Facebook or Instagram. To book complimentary tickets for upcoming Art and Scroll Studio virtual live events, go to Eventbrite.ca and search for Art and Scroll.

For more information, contact the Art Gallery Girls at [artandscrollstudio@gmail.com](mailto:artandscrollstudio@gmail.com).

Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.



Art by Pamela Feldman-Hill: 'Dilorio Ketuba' and 'Lech Licha' will be featured on October 26.



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from the

Sources

Abraham's Daughter

by Eliezer Segal

The Talmud tells of a group of rabbis who gathered for a festive meal in the sukkah of the exilarch, the administrative head of the Babylonian Jewish community.

Their meal was interrupted by an angry woman who accused the exilarch's servants of stealing her wood to make his sukkah. She insisted on the immediate return of her lumber, submitting her protest before Rav Nahman.

Rav Nahman (who was the exilarch's son-in-law and served as the presiding judge in his law court) initially paid no attention to her plea. Thereupon she exclaimed indignantly, "A woman whose father had three hundred and eighteen servants has cried out before you, and yet you ignore her!" That is to say, she was descended from Abraham who "armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house" in a foray to rescue his nephew Lot who had been taken captive. As a Jewish woman she was surely entitled to justice if she was wronged by community dignitaries.

Rav Nahman remained unimpressed and disparaged her as a "pa'ita," a whiner or squawker. He ruled that according to Jewish law she was not entitled to the return of her boards, but only to monetary compensation. This was in keeping with a rabbinic enactment declaring that if a robber stole beams and built them into a house, he would not be compelled to dismantle the structure to remove the beams. That enactment had been introduced in order to facilitate the robbers' potential repentance.

Rav Nahman's insensitive treatment of the wronged lady might reflect his problematic experiences with the women in his life. His wife was the exilarch's hot-tempered daughter Yalta who once responded to a slight by going on a rampage and smashing four hundred barrels of wine. His daughters were inclined towards lewdness and witchcraft. He was the author of some notoriously misogynistic quotes. It would therefore not be out of character for him to be insensitive to a woman suffering injustice.

The traditional commentators, however, were loath to attribute moral apathy to a revered talmudic sage, and they attempted in various ways to justify Rav Nahman's

curt response. Some explained that he was merely offering the lady helpful legal advice, pointing out that for various technical reasons she was weakening her case by submitting it too soon, on the first day of the festival.

Several authors focused on the woman's reason for invoking Abraham and his 318 servants. As the hasidic master Rabbi evi Elimelech Shapira of Dynov put it, the Talmud would not have recorded her words unless they thought she was being especially insightful.

Rabbi Shapira remarked that she was not appealing to the merits of all three Hebrew patriarchs, but specifically to the first of them. She was alluding thereby to how divine mercy extended even to persons who were not descended from Isaac or Jacob. Thus, when Abraham's outcast child Ishmael was dying of thirst in the desert, God heard his cries and provided water for him.

Furthermore, in kabbalistic symbolism Abraham is associated with the first day of Sukkot and with the moral quality of generosity [*hesed*]. Viewed in that context, the woman was stressing the sharp contrast between the patriarch's ethical standards and those of the exilarch's entourage: unlike them, after Abraham defeated Lot's captors he assured the king, "I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and I will not take anything that is yours."

In Rabbi Jacob Ettlinger's reconstruction of the story, Rav Nahman initially wanted to recuse himself from the case because according to Jewish law it is forbidden to adjudicate civil cases on festivals. The woman, however, misconstrued his silence and thought that he was exonerating the exilarch because the crime had been committed not by him but by his servants. It was in this context that she introduced the reference to Abraham and his servants. According to the sages, Abraham made a special point of paying his forces generously so as to forestall any larcenous temptations. Why, then, did the exilarch not follow Abraham's example? It was only because of the woman's vocal protests, which threatened to bring the rabbis into disrepute, that Rav Nahman felt

compelled to break his silence and explain his reasoning.

Rabbi Zadok ha-Kohen of Lublin transformed the lady's case into a poignant lesson about the fundamentals of Judaism. His starting point was a conception of a faith that springs from the depths of despair, an outlook that harkens back to the aged Abraham and Sarah giving birth to an heir long after they had exhausted any rational grounds for hope.

This was also evident when Abraham waged a hopeless-looking war against four mighty kings to rescue Lot. According to Jewish law, ownership is forfeited when one abandons hope of its recovery, and it was under that assumption that the king of Sodom sought to transfer Lot's possessions to Abraham. The lady who challenged the exilarch's authority was asserting proudly that like her ancestor Abraham she never gave up hope of obtaining justice.

For good measure, Rabbi Zadok supported his thesis with some ingenious word-play. The Talmud identified 318 as the numerological sum for the name of Abraham's servant Eliezer, a name that derived (as Moses explained when bestowing it on his own son) from the words "the God of my father was my help." Rabbi Zadok further noted that the numerological value of "despair" [Hebrew: *ye'ush*] is 317—symbolizing the one crucial step that separates hopelessness from faith in divine deliverance. "For this is the totality of the Israelite personality, never to despair at all, for the Lord is always able to come to our aid."

This tale of a lone woman's frustrating struggle against the Establishment thereby suggests to us a potential consolation in challenging times: It is precisely when circumstances appear utterly hopeless that we may have reason to hope for the advent of the redemption.

*'From the Sources' by Eliezer Segal is sponsored by the Zeisler Families of Edmonton, Calgary and New York City*

# 'Tehran' - an Israeli spy show about immigrant identity

By Lior Zaltzman

(JTA) — It all started in 2014, with an e-mail that arrived in Dana Eden's inbox with the subject line: "Tehran."

"I said to myself, 'Oh my God, that's an amazing title,'" said Eden. "That's a show I would really want to see, I hope that what's written inside will be as good as the title is."

What was inside were three possible opening scenes to "Tehran," a thriller about a young Israeli Mossad agent in Iran. Eden would go on to create the show for Israel's KAN11 broadcaster along with Maor Cohen and Moshe Zonder, a head writer for the Israeli hit "Fauda." The show debuted on KAN earlier this year and the first three episodes are available to global audiences starting Friday on Apple TV+.

"Tehran" revolves around protagonist Tamar Rabinyan, a Mossad agent played by Niv Sultan. Rabinyan is in Iran for her first mission — to hack into an Iranian nuclear reactor and help facilitate an Israeli Air Force attack on the site. When her mission fails, Tamar is stuck in Iran with intelligence officers on her tail.

But while the spy story of "Tehran" is suspenseful and captivating, it's the human aspect of the show, the way it explores the identity of Iranian immigrants to Israel and how they struggle to feel a sense of belonging, that is most compelling. Tamar immigrated with her family to Israel as a child and her Mossad operator is of Persian background as well.

Eden says "Tehran" tries to answer painful questions about Iranian Jews' lived experience.

"What do you do when you immigrate from a country and your homeland becomes your enemy country?" Eden said. "Where is your home? Where is your loyalty? Where do you put yourself?"

Sultan learned Farsi for the show. She thought that as the daughter of an Arabic-speaking Moroccan immigrant, she could easily master the Iranian tongue. But Farsi took her by surprise.

"The pronunciation of Farsi is so different than Hebrew, or Arabic, I had really to change things in my mouth in

CJA participates in the Terry Fox Run



**This year was the 40th anniversary of the Terry Fox Run. Due to the pandemic, CJA students participated in the 40 for Terry, in which they performed a variety of exercises for 40 seconds at a time. Students helped CJA raise \$3,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation and all donations, up to \$2,000, were matched by the Elan Suissa Legacy Fund, bringing our joint contributions to a total of \$5000 towards the new PROFYLE Research program, sponsored by the Terry Fox Foundation.**

order to say those words," Sultan said.

The show is unparalleled in its production values for an Israeli series. The crew remodeled entire streets and houses in Athens to look like the Iranian capital. Iranian refugees flew in from all over Europe to take part as extras.

"We also had an Iranian immigrant into Israel, he was in charge of authenticity on set, that it will look Iranian and authentic," said Eden, who like most Israelis has never been to Iran. "And also he was in charge of the language, [ensuring] that [the cast] speak Farsi in an authentic way."

The cast features Navid Negahban, who has appeared in "Homeland," "Legion," and "Aladdin," and Shaun Toub, who has been in "Homeland," "Snowpiercer," and "Iron Man." Toub plays Faraz, a top Iranian intelligence agent who is the cat to Tamar's mouse.

Toub is an Iranian Jew, but he said he didn't draw on his personal experience for the role. "As an actor, I am blessed to say that I really approach a character in a way that I really take Shaun Toub, myself, out of it," Toub said.

Still, he says Faraz was an incredible role to play. And he has been surprised by how many Iranians have enjoyed the show.

"I have been at the business for 33 years, and I've been waiting and hoping that that one day, there will be characters, as Persians and Iranians, that show [our]

complexity as humans, you know, as doctors, as engineers, and not just terrorists," he said.

Sultan, a 28-year-old rising Israeli star, says she was also drawn to Tamar's complex, flawed character.

"She's not, you know, the cliché of another Mossad Israeli superhero saving the world," Sultan said. "She's a real person. She carries so many colors. And she's so strong, physically and emotionally, but she's also afraid and insecure and makes mistakes."

Zonder said the story is only superficially about the war between the Mossad and the Iranian nuclear program. Its core is a tale of identity, immigration and family roots.

"The most moving reactions were from the people that families came from Iran," Zonder said. "All of their lives, they were ashamed of their parents, and grandmother and grandfather, ashamed of their heritage. And after seeing the show, they become proud of it."

He added: "And they're ashamed of themselves — of being ashamed for all those years."

At the end, Eden says, her message for Jewish audiences is "to be proud."

"We're all immigrants. And wherever your homeland is, be proud of it and feel connected to it. And don't lose your roots. Always feel Jewish. And don't ignore your past. Embrace it," she said.



This month's update from Edmonton Talmud Torah School



It has been a very busy month at Talmud Torah School for teachers, students and their families. Everyone is happy to be back in school and learning with their friends. The students had a great time preparing for Sukkot with crafts and activities such as building miniature sukkahs. The Talmud Torah Society delivered "thinking of you" care packages to families whose children are engaging in online learning with TT. Included were donuts, challahs and bagels from Bliss Baked Goods, along with their very own water bottles. All the students from Kg. to Grade 6 will be receiving personal water bottles soon, in time for the opening of the school's new contactless water stations. These stations, along with classroom sites purifiers, are the result of a very generous grant from the Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation.

*Best wishes  
to the Jewish Community*

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# Annamie Paul is the first Black-Jewish Leader of a Canadian Party

By Ilana Belfer

TORONTO (JTA) — Annamie Paul has been elected the new leader of the Green Party of Canada. She is the first Black Jewish person to lead a federal or provincial party in the country.

That fact isn't lost on her — it's a big part of her motivation.

"We have a profound lack of diversity at the highest levels in our political leadership and it has always been the case," said Paul, 47, who was born and raised in Toronto. "We have to do something about it — not only for reasons of equity, but also because there's decades of research that confirms you get better public policy results when you have diversity at the table."

For Paul, studies on the benefits of diversity in the public sector are more than figures and statistics — they're her experience. She's a lawyer who has dedicated her career to public affairs, working for Canada's mission to the European Union, advising the International Criminal Court and serving as executive director of the Barcelona International Policy Action Plan, which aims to cultivate NGOs and other public policy centers.

While getting a master's degree in public affairs at Princeton University, Paul converted to Judaism in 2000. Supervised by the director of the Hillel on campus, a Conservative rabbi, she learned to read Hebrew and was questioned by a beit din, or rabbinic court, prior to dipping in the mikvah, the ritual bath one submerges in as part of the conversion process.

"It was full on. I was very committed," she said. "It's a faith that has really spoken to me: the universality, the humanistic values ... I'm very much guided by the idea that if you save one person, you save the world."

Paul has been married to Mark Freeman, a Jewish international human rights lawyer, for nearly 25 years. But she stressed that the only reason anyone should consider conversion is "because they're internally compelled to do so." She said questions around whether she converted for her husband can make her feel othered by the Jewish community.

"It seems inconceivable to them that I might have been born Jewish, despite the fact that there are many Black Jews. I would not be asked these questions if I was white," Paul said. "We need to avoid making distinctions between Jews, and questions like these suggest that some people are more Jewish than others or that Judaism is intrinsically white."

Paul said raising a Jewish household has been one of "the great joys" of her life. Her two sons — Malachai, 19, and Jonas, 16 — spent much of their childhoods attending Jewish day schools in Belgium and Spain, depending

where the family was living. They had bar mitzvahs in Toronto and Barcelona.

Like picking a religion, Paul looked to shared values to determine which political party she would join when her work no longer prohibited her from doing so. She said she was aligned with the liberal Green Party's commitment to the climate emergency and to participatory democracy.

She ran as its Toronto Centre candidate in the 2019 federal election and, though she failed to win the seat, the small Green Party — led by Elizabeth May — celebrated a record result, earning three seats in the Parliament.

Paul recently spent nine months as the party's shadow international affairs chief. But she also hasn't shied away from criticizing the Greens, which ran the least diverse slate in the last election.

"The Green Party has the most progressive platform and policies related to issues of social and racial justice... [but] we're not reflecting that within our party," Paul said. "We can't preach these things externally if we're not doing them internally."

It's not just a Green Party problem, though.

Currently, 12 of Canada's 13 provincial and territorial leaders are men. Only a handful of the 338 members of Parliament are Black. And until this year, it had been nearly 50 years since a Black woman ran for leadership of a national party.

Despite having one of the world's largest Jewish populations, Canada has only really had one Jewish federal party leader — David Lewis, who was elected the New Democratic Party's national leader in 1971.

"And this is 2020," said Paul, adding that she believes this is one reason why "Canada is so far behind on issues related to systemic racism."

"The frustration I have at the moment in terms of Canada is that we think we're doing better. We think Black and Indigenous people are safer and ... the statistics just say different," she said.

In response to recent claims by the premiers of Quebec and Ontario denying or minimizing the existence of systemic racism in Canada, Paul was quick to cite a 2017 U.N. report, which found that "anti-Black racism" is "entrenched in [Canada's] institutions, policies and practices."

On her website, where she is collecting signatures to gather momentum for a national database on police use-of-force victims, Paul points out that Black residents of Toronto are 20 times more likely to be shot by police than whites, according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and that over 35 percent of people killed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police from 2007 to 2017 were Indigenous, despite being just 5 percent of the population, according to the Globe and Mail.

Paul said she is aware that her identities as a Black and Jewish woman in politics give her a unique platform during times like these. As she put it, "people are very curious about my perspective."

"I'm trying to be as clear as I can about what things I consider to be important... on behalf of those who don't usually get asked what they think about things," she said.

This entails raising up the voices of Young Black Greens on social media, where Paul has posted a video series featuring people like Kiara Nazon, who founded the Young



Annamie Paul is the first Black and Jewish leader of a major Canadian political party. (Annamie Paul/Facebook)

Greens at Carleton University.

"What does it feel like to be Black right now? To be entirely honest it feels just about the same as it always has and that's because these issues aren't new," Nazon said in a video posted to Twitter. "We need leaders who aren't going to be taken by surprise by issues like police brutality toward Black, Indigenous People of Color. We need leaders who have lived these realities."

Paul said she felt more at risk on a daily basis while living as a Black person while living in the United States, and that she "trembles" for some family she has there. She also said her husband didn't want their son going to school in the U.S., fearing for his physical safety.

But, she added, "I certainly feel those dangers here as well."

Demonstrations in Toronto have been relatively peaceful, as thousands have taken to the streets calling for justice for George Floyd and Regis Korchinski-Paquet. Korchinski-Paquet fell from a balcony to her death in the presence of police officers. Her family has raised concerns over the role played by the police, which Ontario's police watchdog is now investigating.

"I'm hoping that we move from what I consider to be the empty gestures of our prime minister and some of our other politicians to actual action," Paul said. "I don't want him to kneel. I want him to stand up and say that he's going to make the changes that have been recommended by the U.N. on behalf of Black Canadians."

While running an unprecedented campaign almost entirely online due to COVID-19, Paul said she spent most of her days in the digital world, where they ran three to four events a week, including "The New Normal Tour," a series of virtual town hall meetings discussing critical issues within the context of a Green recovery.

They also discussed long-term care centers, which constitute 82 percent of Canada's COVID-19 deaths. Sadly, Paul's father was among them.

"It was avoidable," she said. "These things were problems but they weren't laid so bare. They've been exposed in a way they have never been before."

In addition to advocating for long-term care centers to be publicly insured under the Canada Health Act, Paul said she hopes large government investments triggered by the coronavirus are used to fill holes in the social safety net — without forgetting climate change.

"I want to see us moving towards the green transition ... the climate emergency has not taken a pause," said Paul, noting the European Commission's green recovery package as an example of recent global action.

Paul faced off against nine other candidates in the race to lead the Green Party, which held its election in October. But Paul has the longest list of endorsements.

"We need to move towards a truly just and equitable society by ... making sure that every Canadian - whether they're living in long-term care or they're working part-time or they're students or they're black or they're Indigenous - whatever their circumstances, can live in dignity and security," she said.

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