

FROM THE DIRECTORS

Looking Forward

The past year was exhilarating for American University's Jewish Studies Program and the Center for Israel Studies. When Jewish Studies first emerged at American University in the early 1970s, it refracted Jewish civilization through the prisms of religion, history, and Jewish languages and literatures. Few, if any, could have anticipated the new directions it would take. Responding to new faculty and student interests in Jewish studies, AU helped lead the way into Holocaust studies and Israel studies. This past year AU continued to further these directions through Prof. Richard Breitman's new scholarship on the Holocaust, our conference "IsraelBiz@60," and our groundbreaking exhibit *Personal Landscapes: Contemporary Art from Israel*.

Now we look forward to a new year. Thanks to the generosity of the Jewish Studies Expansion Project, we welcome to our campus Tatjana Lichtenstein, one of the first Schusterman Teaching Fellows in Jewish Studies in the nation. Yoram Peri is a visiting professor again, this time as the Dollye and Wolford Berman Visiting Professor of Israel Studies. Finally, we welcome home literature professors Marcela Sulak, who spent last spring in Israel as visiting poet at Bar-Ilan University's Shaindy Rudoff Creative Writing Program, and Michael Wenthe, who returns from a semester at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies.

Our activities would not be possible without your generosity. We invite you to continue your support for the Jewish Studies Program, the Center for Israel Studies, and the Seymour and Lillian Abensohn Endowment. With your help, we look forward to advancing Jewish studies and Israel studies in new directions for many more years to come. ■



Pamela Nadell,
Director, Jewish
Studies Program



Russell Stone,
Director, Center for
Israel Studies



Adina Kanefield,
Deputy Director,
Center for Israel
Studies

Visiting Professor in Israel Studies

The center is once again hosting an Israeli visiting professor, Yoram Peri, thanks this year to the generosity of the Dollye and Wolford Berman Foundation and the Howard and Geraldine Polinger Family Foundation, and the support of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. Peri is professor of political sociology and communication in the Department of Communication at Tel Aviv University,



Yoram Peri

where he heads both the Rothschild-Caesarea School of Communication and the Chaim Herzog Institute for Media, Politics, and Society. He was political advisor to the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and served as editor in chief of the Israeli daily *Davar*. Peri has published five books and dozens of articles, editorials, commentaries, and op-ed pieces. His most recent book, *Generals in the Cabinet Room: How the Military Shapes Israeli Policy*, was recognized as one of the "best of the best" by the Association of American University

Presses, among others. He is also the author of *Brothers at War: The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the Culture War in Israel*, which received the Prime Minister's Prize. Peri joins the Center for Israel

PERI continued on p. 3

Schusterman Teaching Fellow in Jewish Studies

Thanks to the generosity of the Jewish Studies Expansion Project, the Jewish Studies Program welcomes Tatjana Lichtenstein as a Schusterman Teaching Fellow in Jewish Studies.

The Jewish Studies Expansion Project, a pilot program aimed at enhancing Jewish studies at underserved colleges and universities around the country, is supported by a generous grant from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation through the Foundation for Jewish Culture. AU was one of six universities selected from a national competition to participate in this program that expands Jewish studies course offerings.



Tatjana Lichtenstein

Tatjana Lichtenstein holds degrees from University of Copenhagen and Brandeis University. Her dissertation in history at the University of Toronto, "Making Jews at Home: Jewish Nationalism in the Bohemian Lands, 1918-1938," looks at the Zionist movement in Czechoslovakia between the world wars, focusing on ways in which nationalism served as a vehicle for Jews' integration. She has published articles on interwar Zionism and Jews in Czechoslovakia in *East European Jewish Affairs* and the Simon Dubnow Institute's *Leipziger Beiträge zur jüdischen Geschichte und Kultur*. At AU, she will teach courses on modern Jewish politics, culture, and history. ■

FROM THE DIRECTOR—DEVELOPMENTS IN ISRAEL STUDIES

The first academic association devoted to the study of Israel began in 1985. Not until 1997, as Israel's 50th anniversary approached, did universities begin establishing teaching chairs and centers devoted specifically to modern Israel. This year, as Israel celebrates its 60th year of independence, the landmark series of programs and events described in this newsletter marks the 10th anniversary of AU's Center for Israel Studies.

There are now 20 centers and 22 chairs of Israel studies at U.S. universities. In addition, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, in association with the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, has been funding visiting professors from Israel at universities across the country. From 8 visitors three years ago, they supported more than 20 visitors each of the past two years. AU is proud to have pioneered this remarkable expansion by hosting a series of visiting professors. We are equally proud of establishing, in 2006, the first undergraduate minor in Israel studies offered in the United States. To ensure success of the minor and to maintain our leading national role in the field of Israel studies, the center is committed to completing our endowment to fund a permanent chair in Israel studies. We call on our supporters to help us meet this crucial goal.

Our university-based center has an extensive outreach program. While our major events are reported in this newsletter, we participate in many other Israel-related programs, from audience discussions at Theater J and at international film festivals, to talks with synagogue and community groups, to sponsoring visiting artists and Israel-related movies in programs open to the community. Last year alone, our visiting professor, Naomi Gale, brought her expertise on Jewish refugee issues to more than 30 audiences in the D.C. area. We happily lead in showing how a dynamic Center for Israel Studies can enhance knowledge of Israel's accomplishments and place in the world. With continued support, we will maintain our service to our students and to the D.C. community and will set an example for the country.

For more information about the Center for Israel Studies, contact the director at rstone@american.edu. ■

—Russell Stone, Professor of Sociology

FROM THE DIRECTOR—NEWS FROM THE JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM

With pride I follow our alumni who were deeply engaged as AU undergraduates in Jewish studies, and who now, as young adults, have taken those interests to wider Jewish contexts. Their accomplishments affirm that our mission of preparing students through intensive immersion in the diversity of the Jewish experience trains them to assume important responsibilities as they stretch beyond our campus.

Jewish studies majors: Nicole Samuel (CAS '00) returned to AU this spring, as a research associate for Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, to convene student focus groups for a study of young adults and their volunteer commitments. Hillary Blank (CAS '08) is in the Jewish Theological Seminary's cantorial program in Jerusalem. Aimee Weiss (CAS '08) has become the Midwest director of USD/Hagshama and the Israel Program Center based in Chicago. **Jewish studies minors:** Renee Howard (SPA '02), is program manager and Young Leadership Outreach coordinator at B'nai B'rith International. After a stint as communications associate at the Hillel International Center, Aviva Perlman (CAS '06) is now studying Jewish education at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Avital Ingber (KCB '03) is the director of Young Leadership at the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and works there on the Moscow Connection Project with Jewish studies major Alexis Bock (CAS '00). David Moak (CAS '08), who, while at AU, was the General Education faculty assistant for our course Ancient and Medieval Jewish Civilization, won one of the American Jewish Committee's Goldman Fellowships. He spent the summer in Warsaw working with the Forum for Dialogue among the Nations in Poland. Ashley Arditi (CAS '08) has joined the staff of Hadassah's Washington Action Office.

Israel studies minor: Micah Winograd ('07), among the first AU students to complete this minor, is the Israel education initiatives associate at the Israel on Campus Coalition.

As always, I look forward to hearing from all our alumni. Please write me at pnadell@american.edu. ■

—Pam Nadell, Inaugural Patrick Clendenon Professor of History

Center Hosts Israel Business Conference

The Center for Israel Studies hosted a major Israel business conference, "IsraelBiz@60: Lessons and Directions in Israel's Business and Economy," in March, 2008, bringing scholars, entrepreneurs, policymakers, economists, students, lawyers, and community leaders together to explore developments in Israel's business and economy. With more than 250 participants and speakers from around the globe, the conference covered the high-tech sector, stock and bond markets, family-controlled businesses, corporate social responsibility, and international trade issues. Highlights included addresses from corporate and government leaders in Israel. Minister of National Infrastructure Binyamin (Fouad) Ben-Eliezer presented Israel's economic challenges, focusing on the diminishing supply of oil and natural gas. Keynote speaker and Knesset member Avishai Braverman delivered a passionate and candid presentation on Israel's economic life. He remarked that the discussions at AU's business conference rivaled Knesset debates on the economy.

A highlight of the conference was a reception hosted by the Capital Israel Business Network and the law firm Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo, P.C. At the reception, Raya Strauss Bendror, cofounder of the billion-dollar food conglomerate Strauss-Elite Group, spoke about the challenges of her family business and her commitment to corporate social responsibility.



"Our Israeli guests thanked us for orchestrating a unique conference that became a forum for critical self-reflection. . . . The result was an intimate and frank discussion. Conference sessions are now available at our Web site. I plan to use them with my students from around the world well into the future to teach them about Israel's unique approach to economic development."

Richard Linowes, Conference Cochair, Professor of Management

The conference exemplifies the cross-cutting, university-wide collaborative work to which the center is committed. Kogod School of Business professors Erran Carmel and Richard Linowes cochaired the conference, along with center director Russell Stone. The commitment and enthusiasm of Carmel and Linowes, faculty advisors to the center, were critical to the event's success. Supporters and friends of AU, including the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, Bethesda Court Hotels, the law firm of Mintz Levin, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, provided support for this event. ■

1. Conference cochairs Erran Carmel and Richard Linowes delivering opening remarks; 2. "IsraelBiz@60" participants; 3. Binyamin (Fouad) Ben Eliezer, Israeli minister of national infrastructure, giving his keynote address; 4. Technology, Innovation, and Start-Ups Panel, left to right: Orey Gilliam, Amir Orad, Guy Levy-Yurista, and Erran Carmel



LECTURES AND PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY THE CENTER FOR ISRAEL STUDIES

Guest Lectures and Artists

This year our campus hosted the following scholars and guest artists.

- "The Book of Esther in the Sixteenth Century: A Story of Jewish Power and Fantasy," Erica Brown, scholar in residence, Jewish Federation of Greater Washington
- " 'Brutal convert-hunting nimrods' or useful allies?: Transnational Jewish Responses to Evangelicals in the Nineteenth Century," Adam Mendelsohn, Brandeis University
- "Displaced Persons: Holocaust Survivors on the Crossroads," Hagit Lavsky, Samuel L. and Perry Haber Chair in Post-Holocaust Studies, Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University, and fellow, Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies

- "The Forgotten Jewish Refugees from Arab Lands," Naomi Gale, Schusterman Visiting Professor of Israel Studies

■ "The Forgotten Refugees: A Film and Discussion," Naomi Gale, Schusterman Visiting Professor of Israel Studies



Naomi Gale

- "From Eden to Exile: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Bible," Eric Cline, chair, Department of Classical and Semitic Languages and Literatures, George Washington University
- "From Ruth to the Foreign Workers of Israel," Athalya Brenner, professor of Hebrew Bible, University of Amsterdam

- "From Sanctuary to Study Hall: The Emergence of Rabbinic Literature and the Destruction of the Temple," Erica Brown, scholar in residence
- "Germany and Holocaust Memory," Michael Brenner, chair, Jewish History and Culture at the University of Munich, and Ina Levine Invitational Scholar, Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies
- "Making Jews at Home: Zionism in Czechoslovakia between the World Wars," Tatjana Lichtenstein, University of Toronto
- "Pangs of the Messiah: A Post-Play Discussion," Naomi Gale, Schusterman Visiting Professor of Israel Studies with Russell Stone, director of the Center for Israel Studies

AND THE JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM

- "Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present," Michael Oren, senior fellow, Shalem Center
- "Tehilim," pre-screening discussion for the French Embassy's "C'est Chic Film Festival," Aviva Kempner, independent filmmaker
- "That's Why I'm (Still) Here," Robbie Gringras in concert
- "Writing of Hope in Times of Despair: Jerusalem in Woman's Eyes," Michal Govrin, Israeli author, poet, and theatre director



Robbie Gringras and Adam Mader

The Jewish Studies Program cosponsored the following papers at the Department of History's inaugural Patrick Clendenon Conference, " 'With Vision Flying': New Perspectives on Women's and Gender History."

- "Re-Defining Self in Suburbia: Women and Postwar Jewish Identity," Aleisa Fishman, Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies
- "Yoo-Hoo, Mrs. Goldberg: Narrating Women's History through Documentary Film," Aviva Kempner, director, *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg*

PERI continued from p. 1

Studies to teach four courses at AU on Israeli politics, media, history, and society.

The visiting professor program began with funding from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation and continued with the support of the Howard and Geraldine Polinger Foundation. Peri is the third visiting professor from Israel hosted by the center. Most recently, Naomi Gale served as visiting professor, sharing her expertise, forging friendships, and creating coalitions and dialogs throughout the campus. ■

NEWS FROM THE FACULTY

Philip Brenner, School of International Service, gave two television interviews about U.S. policy in the Middle East, focusing on Israel.

Erran Carmel, Kogod School of Business, cochaired the conference “IsraelBiz@60” and presented on its panel “Technology, Innovation, and Start-Ups.”

Kenneth L. Cohen, rabbi and Hillel director, reports that AU Hillel was accredited by Hillel International.

Max Paul Friedman, Department of History (CAS), published “Misperceptions of Empire: How Berlin and Washington Misread the ‘Ordinary Germans’ of Latin America in World War II,” in *Decentering America*. He was interviewed on U.S. foreign policy and the Middle East for the Spanish BBC, Deutschlandradio, and *Gulan Political Weekly* (Kurdish newsmagazine).

Gershon Greenberg, Department of Philosophy and Religion (CAS), was a finalist for a National Jewish Book Award for his book *Wrestling with God: Jewish Theological Responses during and after the Holocaust*. This past year he was a visiting professor at Hebrew University.

Alan M. Kraut, Department of History (CAS), was named Distinguished Lecturer

by the Organization of American Historians. He coedited *From Arrival to Incorporation: Migrants to the U.S. in a Global Era*.

Alan Levine, School of Public Affairs, continues as a board member of AU Hillel and a consultant for the U.S. State Department. He is currently researching the idea of America in European political thought, 1492–9/11.

Richard Linowes, Kogod School of Business, cochaired the conference “IsraelBiz@60.”

Eric Lohr, Department of History (CAS), presented “Russian Imperial Emigration and Population Policy toward Jews” at the conference “Points of Passage: Jewish Transmigrants,” in Hamburg. His study of Tsarist policy towards Jewish emigration, “Population Policy and Emigration Policy in Imperial Russia,” will appear in *Going Home*.

Gail Humphries Mardirosian, Department of Performing Arts (CAS), is a Fulbright Scholar at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, where she will direct dramas and cabarets originally performed at the Theresienstadt concentration camp.

Pamela S. Nadell, Department of History and Jewish Studies Program (CAS), as AU

Scholar/Teacher of the Year for 2007–08, addressed the faculty at the annual Ann Ferren Teaching Conference. As the inaugural Patrick Clendenen Professor of History, she chaired the AU conference “‘With Vision Flying’: New Perspectives on Women’s and Gender History.”

Naima Prevots, professor emerita, Department of Performing Arts (CAS), has been working with Nurit Ron, of Israel’s Ministry of Education, to develop the concept of dance literacy for evaluating dance in grades K–12.

Myra Sklarew, professor emerita, Department of Literature (CAS), has worked on the forthcoming performance of a musical setting for “Instructions for Elijah” at Northern Michigan University. Her poem *Lithuania* will be included in *The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization*, a ten-volume anthology to be published by Yale University Press. Recent publications include “What is a Jewish Poem?” “From the Backyard of the Diaspora,” “Spinoza,” “Holocaust,” and “Poetry” in *Shirim*.

Jeffrey K. Sosland, Washington Semester Program and the Kogod School of Business, published in paperback *Cooperating Rivals: The Riparian Politics of the Jordan River Basin*. He presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Association for Israel Studies.

Russell A. Stone, Department of Sociology (CAS), completed his second year as director of the AU Center for Israel Studies and 10 years’ service as administrative officer of the Association for Israel Studies. He was visiting faculty at the Summer Institute for Israel Studies, Schusterman Center, Brandeis University. He is advising editor of the Israeli studies series published by the State University of New York Press.

Howard Wachtel, professor emeritus, Department of Economics (CAS), is a member of the Board of Directors for the Association for Israel Studies and chairs their Task Force on Endowed Chairs and Centers for Israel Studies. He is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Israel Scholar Development Fund, American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. ■

Advancing Holocaust Studies

American University’s distinguished historian Richard Breitman, author of, among other works, *The Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final Solution*, has just published the first of the three volumes of the diaries of James G. McDonald, League of Nations high commissioner for refugees and first U.S. ambassador to the State of Israel.

McDonald’s private diaries offer a hitherto unknown source on the Nazi regime’s early history and the Roosevelt administration’s reactions to Nazi persecution of German Jews. The original diaries were donated to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum by Barbara McDonald Stewart, one of McDonald’s daughters. Prof. Richard Breitman is the lead editor for volumes one and two of this publication project sponsored by the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies. He is working with Barbara McDonald Stewart and the museum’s former staff historian Severin Hochberg.

The first volume, *Advocate for the Doomed* (Indiana University Press, 2007), covers the years 1932–1935. Considered for the post of American ambassador to Germany at the start of the Roosevelt administration, McDonald traveled to Germany



Richard Breitman

Welcome Home

Two faculty members of the Jewish Studies Program and the Center for Israel Studies spent the spring semester 2008 abroad. They share their experiences with our YediAUt readers.

This past spring I was the visiting poet at Bar-Ilan’s Shaindy Rudoff Creative Writing Program in Ramat Gan, Israel. This two-year English-language MA program draws a wide array of international and Israeli poets and writers who are interested in exploring Jewish material or Israeli themes. My students were tremendously talented writers and insightful readers of one another’s work. We finished the



Marcela Sulak and Amalia

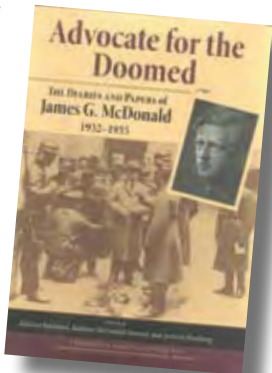
semester with a final class in Hadassah Hospital, so that a classmate, a mother of six who had, during the semester, suffered heart failure and had received an artificial heart, could be with us.

While there, a Mellon grant from the College of Arts and Sciences allowed me to begin developing a course I hope to teach next year called A Literary Mapping of Israel. So far I have created eight maps of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv based on the narratives of novels, memoirs, graphic novels, murder mysteries, and poetry by Israeli writers. These literary maps are currently being videotaped for my class to create graphic records of the disparate populations of Israel’s two most populous cities. ■

—**Marcela Sulak, Assistant Professor of Literature**

to meet Hitler and key subordinates shortly after they came to power. Sensing Nazi intentions to remove or destroy German Jews, he soon became League of Nations high commissioner for refugees. He sought to resettle German Jews and others persecuted in Nazi Germany, cajoling various governments, religious organizations, and private philanthropists to help. In late 1935 he resigned to protest the lack of support for his work. His diary demonstrates obstacles to humanitarian action, including anti-Semitism, and offers new details about the activities of politicians and Jewish elites in many Western countries.

The second volume, soon to appear, will cover the period from 1935 to the end of World War II. It will offer new details about Franklin D. Roosevelt’s attitudes toward refugees from Nazi Germany. A third volume will cover McDonald’s service as the first U.S. ambassador to Israel (1948–1951). ■



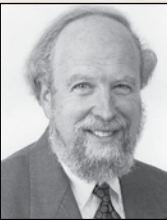
Michael Wenthe (right) at Oxford

From February to June, I was a Visiting Fellow at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. While there, I conducted research in the extensive early Yiddish manuscript and book holdings of Oxford’s Bodleian Library as part of my project on Arthurian literature by Jews in the medieval and early modern periods. I also presented some early findings in a lecture followed by discussion as a speaker in the David Patterson Seminars, a series of talks on all aspects of Jewish studies with guest lecturers from universities throughout the Americas, Europe, and Israel. ■

—**Michael Wenthe, Assistant Professor of Literature**

Calvin Goldscheider Returns

Prof. Calvin Goldscheider was Polinger Scholar in Residence at the Center for Israel Studies (CIS) and in the Jewish Studies Program this past year, advising the center, mentoring students, and teaching Comparative Ethnicity: Israel, Europe, and Third World Countries. “Calvin brings warmth to



Calvin Goldscheider

his classroom while demanding the highest quality work from his students. His ability to bring to life comparative issues in Israel is outstanding,” said Russell Stone, CIS director. Among his many publications is *Immigration, Gender, and Family Transitions to Adulthood in Sweden*. This year, Goldscheider will again serve as scholar in residence at CIS. ■

New Faculty

Boaz Atzili, who will teach Arab-Israeli Relations, joins AU’s School of International Service as assistant professor. He has a PhD in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, earned a BA in international relations from the Hebrew University, and was most recently a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. His dissertation, “Border Fixity: When Good Fences Make Bad Neighbors,” won the Kenneth N. Waltz Prize for the best 2007 dissertation in international security.

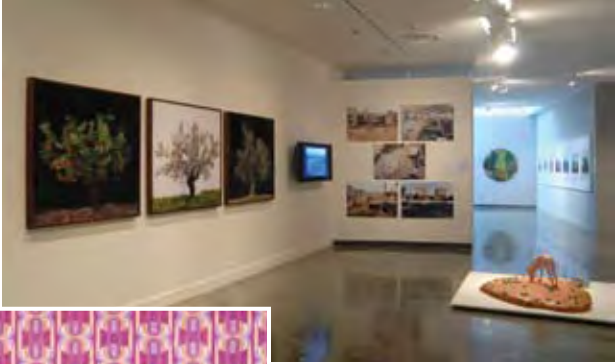
Yael Warshel joins AU as assistant professor in international communication in the School of International Service. She holds a PhD from the University of California–San Diego and will be teaching peace communication and cross-cultural communication. Her research has focused on children’s perceptions of peace messages in the Israeli and Palestinian versions of *Sesame Street*. ■

Contemporary Israeli Art Exhibition at AU Museum

The highlight of the Center for Israel Studies programming in 2008, celebrating its 10th anniversary and Israel’s 60th, was a major contemporary Israeli art exhibition initiated in collaboration with the Naomi and Nehemiah Cohen Foundation and the American University Museum. Personal Landscapes: Contemporary Art from Israel showcased 15 emerging Israeli artists and more than 50 works. The goal, as with all center projects, was to explore and celebrate the creative and intellectual achievements of Israel. With this exhibition, the center brought to Washington an aspect of Israel not often shared with the campus or the broader community.

Plans for the exhibition expanded in scope as Jack Rasmussen, director and curator of the AU Museum, toured Israel’s art scene with Russell Stone and Dalia Levin, the director of the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art in Israel. Enamored of the art he discovered, Rasmussen wanted the exhibition to show Israel through the eyes of contemporary artists. As the *Washington Post* noted, the “curators set out to represent modern Israel the way its artists would. And that has its rewards.” The art represented a variety of media—from sculpture to video—and included images ranging from bats and monster trucks to orange groves and olive trees. It displayed the creativity and complexity of contemporary Israeli society. Artist lectures, gallery talks, private tours, and a special Kids @ the Katzen program provided added opportunities to learn about and explore the Israeli artwork.

More than 3,500 people viewed the exhibition, including Israeli ambassador Sallai Meridor and his wife, No’a, as well as many local artists and art critics. ■



Israeli art exhibit, AU Museum



Hadassah Lieberman and curator Jack Rasmussen



Tal Shochat, Untitled, 2005. Courtesy of Rosenfeld Gallery.



Diane Brown, Kate Rothko, Ambassador Sallai Meridor, No’a Meridor, and Stuart Brown, *left to right*



Israeli artist Shai Azoulay, *center*, with Adina Kanefield and Russell Stone



Russell Stone, Jack Rasmussen, and Anita Reiner, *left to right*



Israeli artist Roi Kuper discussing his artwork with museum visitors

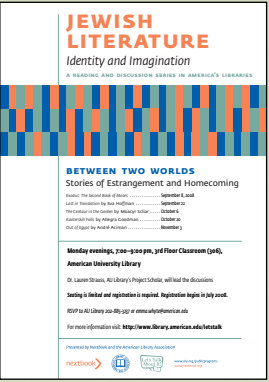
Photos by Anne Doyle

MORE NEWS FROM JEWISH STUDIES

Let’s Talk About It: Jewish Literature— Identity and Imagination

This fall AU’s Jewish Studies Program, in conjunction with the Jewish cultural organization Nextbook, the American Library Association (ALA), and the AU library, cosponsored a free five-part reading and discussion series in Jewish literature. Thanks to the lead of Diana Vogelsong, associate university librarian, AU successfully competed for the renewal of our 2007 grant from Nextbook and the ALA to host this series led by Dr. Lauren B. Strauss.

In spring 2009, Strauss will present “Demons, Golems, and Dybbuks: Monsters of the Jewish Imagination,” a series of readings that include Isaac Bashevis Singer’s *Satan in Goray*, S. Ansky’s *Dybbuk*, Franz Kafka’s *Metamorphosis*, Cynthia Ozick’s *Puttermesser Papers*, and Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America*. From the shtetls of Eastern Europe to the Gotham of New York, these tales are not so much horror stories as responses to the horrors of the real world. Space is limited. To register, contact the AU library at 202-885-3237. For more information, visit <http://www.library.american.edu/letstalk/>. ■



MORE NEWS FROM THE CENTER FOR ISRAEL STUDIES

Student Scholarship Attracts Israelis to AU

According to AU’s Evelyn Levinson, director of International Student Admissions, AU has drawn students from around the world, including many from the Middle East, but



Einar Bar Shira

undergraduate students from Israel have not attended AU in recent years. When Levinson told the Center for Israel Studies that AU wanted more Israeli undergraduates to increase our student body’s diversity, the center reached out to Howard Rosenbloom, who generously established the Ben and Esther Rosenbloom Foundation Scholarship to attract Israeli students to AU. Einar Bar Shira is the first recipient of the scholarship. As part of her campus experience, she is volunteering at the Center for Israel Studies. ■

AU President Visits Israel

AU president Neil Kerwin was part of an elite group of university presidents on a trip to Israel sponsored by Project Interchange of the American Jewish Committee. The trip provided an opportunity for university presidents and chancellors to examine academic, geopolitical, and societal issues facing Israel and to explore potential educational and research partnerships. The group met with representatives from Tel Aviv University, Ben

Gurion University, and Hebrew University. They also visited Al Quds University in Abu Dis to discuss educational initiatives related to Palestinians. President Kerwin described the program as a “first-rate” experience and exposure to Israel. He commented on “the deep commitment of Israelis” and “the intensity of life in Israel” that he witnessed firsthand. Kerwin also noted the importance of AU’s study abroad program in Israel and its continued affiliation with Israeli universities. ■



AU president Neil Kerwin, *right*, in Israel.

Leah Quaile Leaving the Center

Leah Quaile hadn’t planned to apply for a work-study position at the Center for Israel



Leah Quaile

Studies, but her last-minute change of mind proved fortunate for both the center and for her. In her third year at the center, Quaile readily admits that she did not know much about Israel when she applied for the position, but she was

interested in international studies and thought it would be an interesting job. She was right. Her work at the center opened a new area of the world to her. It motivated her to enroll in Calvin Goldscheider’s Israeli Society course, where she wrote a research paper on the religious and civil court systems in Israel. She now advises her friends on Israel-related topics and courses.

Quaile has been critical to the smooth operations of the center, offering her insight, critical eye, and student perspective to center programs. Leah will graduate early from AU with a degree in international studies and plans to attend law school. She has made her mark on the center and will be sorely missed by all. ■

Sklarew Establishes Award for Writing on Israel

Professor of literature emerita Myra Sklarew continues her strong connection to the Center for Israel Studies and the Jewish Studies Program as an advisor and supporter in many ways. In recognition of her deep commitment to Israel and her love of writing, Sklarew established an annual student award at the center for the best paper or poem related to Israel. The award is in memory of her uncle and aunt Benjamin and Eva Wolpe Reinkel and in honor of her uncle Harry Rinkel. Students should e-mail their entries to adina.kanefield@american.edu by December 15, 2008. The winner will receive \$150. ■

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Abramson Dinner Reception

On September 3, 2008, Gary and Pennie Abramson, with Lillian Klein Abensohn, graciously hosted a dinner reception in recognition of the Center for Israel Studies and the Seymour and Lillian Abensohn Endowment to enhance our efforts toward completing the endowment for a chair in Israel studies at American University. The event was enthusiastically attended by special guests AU president Neil Kerwin and the center's Dollye and I. Wolford Berman Visiting Professor, Yoram Peri, who lectured on Israeli politics. For information about joining the effort to complete the endowment, contact Adina Kanefield at 202-885-3780. ■



Lillian Klein Abensohn
with Visiting Professor
Yoram Peri



Gary Abramson with
Israeli student Einar Bar
Shira



AU president Neil Kerwin addressing
reception guests

Center for Israel Studies The mission of the center is to examine and interpret modern Israel's intellectual and creative contributions and achievements in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and arts. Located in Washington, D.C., at American University, a major institution of higher learning, the center is uniquely positioned to be a national and international hub for the dissemination of information about Israel and the discussion of Israeli developments, issues, and concerns. The center's challenge is to connect Israel to the next generation of leaders who are matriculating today in America's universities and colleges.

For further information, call 202-885-3780, e-mail rstone@american.edu or adina.kanefield@american.edu, or visit our Web site at www.american.edu/israelstudies.

Jewish Studies Program American University's commitment to the Jewish Studies Program dates back to the early 1970s. Since then, AU's Jewish Studies Program has included a major and a minor and offered courses across the curriculum, including in our General Education Program, for all AU students. The program takes great pride in being the first in the nation to offer a minor in Israel studies.

For further information, call 202-885-2425 or e-mail the director at pnadell@american.edu

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