



Press Release

25th Jewish Culture Days

September 8–18, 2011

25 years of Jewish Culture Days in Berlin. That's 25 festivals full of exhilarating culture, living memorial, and joyful prospects for the future. This anniversary year is a year of encounters. Whether in the poets' discussion between the Iranian poet SAID and the Israeli poet Asher Reich, or in the reading marathon for the three books of world religions—culture and religion enter into dialogue. And in the series, "What you always wanted to know about Judaism, but were afraid to ask," the questions that have always weighed on visitors' minds can finally be asked.

The Music

"You don't know me, but you have already heard a lot about me." Everyone knows the songs, "Ein Freund, ein guter Freund" (A Friend, a good Friend) or "Das gibt's nur einmal, das kommt nie wieder" (It can only happen once, it can never happen again). **Werner Richard Heymann** shaped musical life in Germany like no other composer—until the rise of National Socialism—yet his name is largely unknown. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his death and the festival kickoff, **Dagmar Manzel** and **Tal Balshai** present a profile of his artistic career.

Hebrew Hip Hop reflects, more than any other music, the reality of many of the country's young people: economic crisis, poverty, crime, and not least, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. **HaDag Nachash**, one of the most important bands in the scene, comes to Berlin again after five years and meets the most beloved acoustic Hip Hop ensemble in the city: the **Ohrbooten**. A few years ago, these four Berliners rose from a street band to pop stars. This will be a musical encounter with a lot of hand-made grooves and intelligent texts in ASTRA Kulturhaus.

The cooperation of the **RIAS Kammerchores** (RIAS Chamber Choir) with the Israeli conductor Ud Joffe has developed in recent years into a new tradition in the area of synagogal music. It builds on the choir's large concerts with the unforgettable cantor Estrongo Nachama. This year, the focus is on the synagogal music tradition of the soloist **Israel Rand** and his country. The title of the concert: "Israel's Prayer"—nomen est omen!

Hardly any artist is able to express the ethnic diversity of the Israeli people better than **Idan Raichel**. In his songs, Ethiopian folk music meets Arabic poetry, Yemenite songs meet Biblical psalms, reggae collides with pop, and Afrobeats mix with Caribbean rhythms. At the 20th Jewish Culture Days, Idan Raichel celebrated his German debut with an acclaimed concert. Since then, he has become a world music star and tours worldwide in sold-out concert halls. Now he is finally back in Berlin and plays an acoustic concert in the Ryke Street Synagogue, which promises to be an intimate musical experience.

Jasmin Tabatabai amazes as a jazz and chanson singer on the CD *Eine Frau* (A Woman), and sings for the first time a complete album in German. Tracks include songs composed especially for her, as well as well-known pieces by Jewish composers. The pianist and composer **David Klein** is surely still known to the Jewish Culture Days audiences from the evening *Selma—in Sehnsucht eingehüllt* (Selma—Wrapped in Desire), and Jasmin Tabatabai is also featured on the accompanying CD. We are delighted to feature both artists for the festival with their CD-release concert.



Giora Feidman's importance as a musician goes well beyond his reputation as "King of the Klezmer." His playing style is unmatched and can hardly be better described as in this quote from Leonard Bernstein: "Long live Giora, his clarinet, and his soul music. He builds bridges between generations, cultures, and classes and he does it with perfect artistry!" On the occasion of his 75th birthday and 65th stage anniversary, he plays a concert with friends in the Ryke Street Synagogue.

Since its founding in 1996, the **Amsterdam Klezmer Band** (AKB) has made astonishing development. Initially only a trio that played in bars and on the streets of Amsterdam, the band is now in demand at international festivals, dance events, and clubs. The AKB draws its influences from the music of the East. The seven musicians combine the legacy of klezmer music, the intensity of punk, and various styles from gypsy and dance music from the Balkans, and after their performances leave behind astonished audiences sweaty from dancing.

The Theater

This year, Jewish Culture Days collaborates with the **Schlosspark Theater** for the first time. In the piece *Besuch bei Mr. Green* (Visiting Mr. Green), the lives of two generations of Jewish emigrants clash in New York. A young man, Ross Gardener (**Steffen Schroeder**), has been sentenced by a judge to take care of Mr. Green (**Michael Degen**) once a week, for almost running over him with a car. Because Ross also has a Eastern European Jewish background, the narrow-minded and grumpy Mr. Green is quickly forgiving. However, as Ross tells him about his homosexual inclinations, the cautious rapprochement between the two men is destroyed. But Mr. Green also has a secret . . .

Encounters and Spoken Words

A special project is the public **reading of the great religious books** in front of the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Street. The Hebrew Bible for Judaism, the New Testament for Christianity, and the Koran for Islam will be read on four consecutive days. Between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., the Evangelical theologian **Dr. Felix Leibrock** takes on this task and reads the three books without interruption. In addition, celebrities will be asked to participate in the reading.

With *Das Haus, das uns bewohnt* (The House that Inhabits Us) **Asher Reich** (Israel) and **SAID** (Iran) seek the poets' conversation. In the 40 poems—which respond to or reflect each other and allow themselves to be read like echoes, interjections, or questions—they enter into dialogue. A lyrical evening that sets a clear example of the prophetic power of poetry with the encounter of the two poets.

The Jewish community in Germany has a visible and audible presence. And yet it is hardly known by non-Jewish Germans. What does it mean to be Jewish German? How do Jewish people perceive the non-Jewish environment? What is life like in two calendars? What is kosher? Is Judaism a religion or a culture? What world view do Jewish Germans have? How does an Orthodox Jew live in Germany? In the series, **What you always wanted to know about Judaism, but were afraid to ask**, three experts are available for visitors' questions and discussion after a short presentation.



Thus far, she is only a household name for few: the Berlin painter and Käthe-Kollwitz student **Gertrude Sandmann** (1893–1981). Her life story is now available in the series *Jewish Miniatures* from Hentrich & Hentrich Publishers. Annekathrin Bürger reads from Sandmann's unpublished diaries, which give moving insight into her thoughts about war, religion, Jews, Shoah, art, and the role of women.

The Exhibition

The **Berlin Jewish Museum** was the largest and most modern Jewish museum in the world. It was opened on January 24, 1933 at Oranienburger Street 31 next to the New Synagogue. Only a week later, the National Socialists came to power. It existed only a few years, but succeeded during this time to carry out a series of unique exhibitions and to build an extraordinary art collection. On November 10, 1938, it was forcibly closed and the entire museum inventory confiscated. The **Centrum Judaicum** has undertaken extensive research on the whereabouts of the collection. For this exhibition, representative works return to their original location after more 70 years.

On the occasion of the exhibition opening, **Judith Ingolfsson** (violin) and **Vladimir Stoupel** (piano) play music from Erich Wolfgang Korngold and Erwin Schulhoff.

The Festival

Because of the huge success in previous years, we bring the **Shuk Ha' Carmel** in all its diversity back to Berlin: intoxicating scents from exotic spices and fresh bread, a sea of colors as far as the eye can see, and stirring music—the *Shuk Ha' Carmel* is the largest market in Tel Aviv. Fruits and vegetables are traded here, along with clothes, art, and Judaica. There is eating and drinking, people meet their friends here and exchange news. Here, we celebrate with a big party and everyone is invited!

Open House

Berliners and their guests are once again invited to the **Long Night of the Synagogues**, to learn about religious life in synagogues, to participate in the Havdala ceremony on the Sabbath, and to explore a diverse program. Through tours, concerts, or discussions with community members interesting opportunities present themselves to gain insight into religious Jewish life in Berlin.

Additionally, the Berlin synagogues cordially invite guests to participate in the **Sabbath service** on September 9.

Artistic Director of this year's festival is Dr. Hermann Simon. He is the director of the foundation *Neue Synagoge—Centrum Judaicum*.

The complete program as well as all if the press information and photos can be found at: www.juedische-kulturtage.org

Program Overview Jewish Culture Days

Thursday | 9.8.2011

Ryke Street Synagogue

8:00 p.m. | Opening Concert | *Dagmar Manzel sings Werner Richard Heymann*

Friday | 9.9.2011

Sabbath Services in Berlin Synagogues

Saturday | 9.10.2011

Various Synagogues

beginning 7:00 p.m. | *Long Night of the Synagogues*

Centrum Judaicum

8:30 p.m. | Opening Event | *The Search for a Lost Collection*

ASTRA Kulturhaus

9:00 p.m. | Concert & Party | *HaDag Nachash featuring Ohrbooten*

Sunday | 9.11.2011

In front of the Community House on Fasanen Street

12.00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. | Festival | *Shuk Ha' Carmel in Berlin*

Ryke Street Synagogue

8:00 p.m. | Concert | *RIAS Chamber Choir & Israel Rand*

Monday | 9.12.2011

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

6:00 p.m. | Presentation & Discussion | *What you always wanted to know about Judaism ...*

Ryke Street Synagogue

8:00 p.m. | Concert | *Idan Raichel Project – Acoustic*

Tuesday | 9.13.2011

In front of the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Street

7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. | *Reading Marathon – Three Books of World Religions*

Jewish Museum

7:00 p.m. | Reading | SAID & Asher Reich | *The House that Inhabits Us*

Wednesday | 9.14.2011

In front of the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Street

7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. | *Reading Marathon – Three Books of World Religions*

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

6:00 p.m. | Presentation & Discussion | *What you always wanted to know about Judaism ...*

Schlosspark Theater

8:00 p.m. | Theater | Premiere *Visiting Mr. Green*

Thursday | 9.15.2011

In front of the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Street

7.00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. | *Reading Marathon – Three Books of World Religions*

Ryke Street Synagogue

8:00 p.m. | CD Release Concert | *Jasmin Tabatabai & David Klein Quartett*

Saturday | 9.17.2011

Ryke Street Synagogue

9:00 p.m. | Concert | *Feidman & Friends*

Sunday | 9.18.2011

Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung

11:00 a.m. | Presentation & Discussion | *What you always wanted to know about Judaism ...*

Centrum Judaicum

5:00 p.m. | Reading | *Annekathrin Bürger reads Gertrude Sandmann*

Ryke Street Synagogue

8:00 p.m. | Closing Concert | *Amsterdam Klezmer Band*



Service

Tickets and Information

Central Ticket Hotline 01805 . 57 00 00*

(*0,14 /Minute, Cell phone rates max. 0,42 /Minute)

Advanced Ticket Sales

Tickets are available at all the usual ticket outlets or in the Jüdische Literaturhandlung Berlin

Joachimstaler Street 13 | 10719 Berlin | Tel. 030 . 882 42 50

Online Orders** (** addl. 2,- Euro transaction fee per ticket)

www.juedische-kulturtage.org | www.eventim.de

The box office opens one hour before the performance.

Reduced admission prices are available on the presentation of suitable identification for students, seniors, unemployed, disabled, and welfare recipients.

Purchased tickets cannot be returned.

There will be no replacements for missed events.

Admission

We request your early arrival and your understanding for special security measures, which take some time. Admittance after the start of the event is only possible if the event is not disturbed.

Organizer

Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin

Jewish Culture Days

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Festival Directors: [kulturdienst: GmbH](http://kulturdienst.com) | www.kulturdienst.com

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rbb Fernsehen, rbb kulturradio, Berliner Morgenpost, tip Berlin, Landau Media, AVIVA-Berlin, Derag Hotel Living, Mercedes Benz**