

Histoire du Jewish Museum / Over 100 Years at The Jewish Museum: A Timeline

- January 20, 1904** Judge Mayer Sulzberger donates 26 objects of Jewish ceremonial art to The Jewish Theological Seminary of America as the core of a museum collection. The newly formed museum is the first institution of its kind in the United States and one of the first of a handful in the world.
- 1925** Through the efforts of Seminary President Cyrus Adler and Felix M. Warburg, the Museum purchases the important collection of 400 Jewish ceremonial objects assembled in the 19th century by Turkish art dealer Hadji Ephraim Benguiat.
- 1931** The collection is installed in the Seminary's new Jacob H. Schiff Library as The Museum of Jewish Ceremonial Objects.
- 1939** The imperiled Jewish community of Danzig (Gdansk, Poland) sends ritual objects from its synagogues and homes to New York City for safekeeping. Some 350 of these objects, entrusted to the Museum, are later incorporated into the collection.
- 1941** Dr. Harry G. Friedman presents a major collection of ceremonial objects, paintings, sculptures, prints and manuscripts to the Museum. His continuing donations, eventually numbering more than 6,000 works, include pieces from Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.
- 1944** Frieda Schiff Warburg gives the Seminary her family residence at 1109 Fifth Avenue to house the Museum.
- 1947** The Jewish Museum inaugurates its home in the former Warburg mansion. Curator Stephen Kayser declares the mission of using the fine arts to explore the substance of Jewish life and history. He defines the Museum's audience as "the American community," which should "be given insight into the traditions, history, legends and aspirations of the Jewish people."
The Museum purchases the rare and important collection of Polish Judaica assembled by Benjamin and Rose Mintz.
- 1952** One hundred and twenty ceremonial objects, looted by the Nazis and recovered by the United States Military Government, are presented to the Museum by Jewish Cultural Reconstruction.
- 1956** Dr. Abraham Kanof and his wife, Dr. Frances Pascher, establish the Tobe Pascher Workshop for the creation of Jewish ceremonial art in a modern style.

- 1957** To mark its 10th anniversary at 1109 Fifth Avenue, the Museum presents a pathbreaking contemporary art exhibition, *Artists of the New York School: Second Generation*, featuring works by 23 emerging artists including Helen Frankenthaler, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and George Segal.
- 1959** Alan Solomon becomes Director and confirms the Museum's commitment to exhibiting the work of New York City's most advanced artists.
- 1963** Vera and Albert A. List underwrite a building expansion that provides flexible modern galleries and an outdoor sculpture court. The Museum organizes the *Recent American Synagogue Architecture* exhibition, including designs by Louis Kahn and Barnett Newman.
- 1964** Jasper Johns' first solo museum exhibition is presented.
- 1965** Sam Hunter becomes Director of The Jewish Museum.
- 1966** *Primary Structures*, the landmark exhibition that defined the Minimalist movement; the first major exhibition of the paintings of Ad Reinhardt; and the exhibition *Lower East Side: Portal to American Life* are organized.
- 1967** The exhibition *Masada: Struggle for Freedom* is presented.
- 1968** Karl Katz becomes Director of The Jewish Museum.
- 1970** *Software*, a pioneering exhibition about information technology and interactive art is organized.
- 1971** A permanent installation of archaeological artifacts is opened.
- 1972** Joy Ungerleider becomes Director. The Museum negotiates the acquisition of nearly 6,000 ancient artifacts found in Israel. The Museum curtails its exhibitions of avant-garde art to refocus on the Jewish community.
- 1975** *Jewish Experience in the Art of the 20th Century* exhibition.
- 1978** *Jack Levine: Paintings, Drawings and Graphics* retrospective exhibition.
- 1980** Jacques Lipchitz's sculpture *The Sacrifice* is prominently installed.
- 1981** Joan Rosenbaum becomes Director.

The Museum's archaeological holdings expand with the gift of Max and Betty Ratner's antiquities collection.

The National Jewish Archive of Broadcasting, with a mission to collect, preserve and exhibit television, cable television and radio programs related to the Jewish experience, is founded at the Museum through support from the Charles H. Revson Foundation

- 1983** *Kings and Citizens: The History of the Jews in Denmark, 1622-1983* exhibition.
- 1984** *The Precious Legacy: Judaic Treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collections* exhibition.
- 1985** The Museum honors Dorothy Rodgers for her role in inspiring the development of a permanent core exhibition.
The plaster version of George Segal's *The Holocaust* is acquired, becoming one of the Museum's signature works.
- 1986** *Gardens and Ghettos: The Art of Jewish Life in Italy* exhibition.
- 1987** *The Dreyfus Affair: Art, Truth and Justice*, an acclaimed exhibition integrating the visual arts and social history.
- 1990** A renovation and expansion project, designed by architect Kevin Roche, begins.
- 1992** In collaboration with The Film Society of Lincoln Center, the Museum establishes The New York Jewish Film Festival.
Bridges and Boundaries: African Americans and American Jews exhibition.
- 1993** The Museum re-opens in expanded and renovated quarters. Inaugural presentations include *From the Inside Out: Eight Contemporary Artists* and the permanent exhibition, *Culture and Continuity: The Jewish Journey*.
The Museum initiates annual December 25th family programming.
- 1996** The exhibitions *Too Jewish?: Challenging Traditional Identities* and *Marc Chagall: 1907-1917* are presented.
- 1998** *An Expressionist in Paris: The Paintings of Chaim Soutine* exhibition.
- 2000** The newly reinstalled 4th floor galleries of the permanent exhibition *Culture and Continuity: The Jewish Journey* open, accompanied by thematic audio guides.

- 2001** *Marc Chagall: Early Works from Russian Collections* exhibition.
- 2002** The exhibitions *New York: Capital of Photography* and the widely discussed *Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art* are presented.
- 2003** The exhibitions *Entertaining America: Jews, Movies and Broadcasting* and *Schoenberg, Kandinsky, and the Blue Rider* are organized. The newly reinstalled 3rd floor galleries of *Culture and Continuity: The Jewish Journey* open.
- 2004** Centennial year celebrations highlighted by the exhibition *Modigliani: Beyond the Myth*.
- 2005** The exhibitions *The Power of Conversation: Jewish Women and Their Salons*, *Wild Things: The Art of Maurice Sendak* and *Sarah Bernhardt: The Art of High Drama* are presented.
- 2006** The Jewish Museum marks Joan Rosenbaum's 25th anniversary as Director. The exhibitions *Eva Hesse: Sculpture* and *Alex Katz Paints Ada* are organized.
- 2007** *The Sculpture of Louise Nevelson: Constructing a Legend*, the first major American survey of the artist's work since 1980, is organized to be shown in New York, and later in San Francisco.
- 2008** *Action/Abstraction: Pollock, de Kooning, and American Art, 1940-1976*, the first major U. S. exhibition in 20 years to rethink Abstract Expressionism, is organized to be shown in New York City, and later in Saint Louis, MO and Buffalo, NY.