

The Michael & Irene Ross Program in Jewish Studies
Proudly Presents

JEWISH STUDIES CLUB HOUR EVENTS Spring 2026

Any City College student is welcome, but if you are registered this semester for a Jewish Studies course, here's a way to earn extra credit for your class:

Each of the following club hour events begins on **Thursdays at 12 noon** with pizza and soda (yes there is such a thing as a free lunch). The event itself runs from 12:30 till 1:30. *All events are in the Jewish Studies major's lounge: NAC 5-202.*

Come to each event, submit a short one-page response paper to your Jewish Studies prof, and you can earn up to 1% extra credit for each event you attend. (The fine print: if you are taking two or more classes in JWST, this can be submitted to only one class). It adds up fast and can make the difference between a grade and a higher one.

Now for the very cool stuff:

Thursday, February 19th: Dr. Natalia de Campos **Brazilian Jewish Artists: Contributions to Modernism**



Since the early 20th century, Jewish artists in Brazil have made significant contributions to art, architecture, landscape design, theater, and literature, among other art forms. Many found freedom in their new home, and others innovated new trends, forever changing the creative fields in South America and the world. This talk will bring to light works by selected Brazilian Jewish artists and illuminate their lives, their revolutionary ideas, and their experimentations.

Natalia de Campos, born in São Paulo, Brazil, is a performance artist, producer, writer, educator, language interpreter, translator, and activist. Natalia has taught English (ESL) and Portuguese to non-native speakers for more than 20 years. She moved to New York in 1998, and is a founder of the multidisciplinary arts collaborative Syncretic Pleasures with whom she teaches, translates, produces and performs works by Brazilian writers, including her own.

Thursday, February 26th: Aaron Alexander

Klezmer Music and the Legacy of German Goldenshteyn

Aaron is co-founder and artistic director of the NY Klezmer Series. He's an active and committed Klezmer drummer and also uses violin as a teaching and bandleading tool. He has performed and recorded with many of the leading Klezmer and Jewish Music artists of the day, including Frank London's Klezmer Brass All-Stars, Strauss Warschauer Duo, The Klezematics, Theo Bikel, German Goldenshteyn, Pete Sokolow, Adrienne Cooper, Alicia Svigals, Greg Wall, Itzhak Perlman with the Klezmer Conservatory Band, and many more. He's excited to introduce us to German Goldenshteyn's music with his violin and poyk!



Thursday, March 5th: Jeffrey Yoskowitz

Shtetl Kitchen: The Origins of New York's Iconic Foods



Heavy, brown, unhealthy, and out of season: these are the epithets hurled at eastern and central European Jewish cuisine, whether it be the brisket and kugel of the Passover seder or the pastrami and matzo ball soup of the Jewish deli. A deep dive into history, as well as the kitchen, tells a completely different story. In this lecture, Jeffrey Yoskowitz will explore why many American Jews perceive their own food tradition so negatively and how the food tradition transformed in the New World, while debunking the major myths about the Old World origins of this particular food culture.

Jeffrey Yoskowitz is a pickler, entrepreneur, and thought leader in the world of Jewish food. He co-founded The Gefilteria, a culinary venture that reimagines Ashkenazi Jewish cooking and co-authored the award-winning cookbook, *The Gefilte Manifesto*. He teaches, cooks, and lectures on food history to communities across the globe, and even taught “The Anthropology of Jewish Food” here in the CCNY Jewish Studies Program.

Thursday, March 12th: Joshua Halberstam, Ph.D.

An Ex-Insider's View of Hasidism

Dr. Joshua Halberstam has published widely in his field, philosophy, and is also the author of a novel, *A Seat at the Table*, about a young man growing up in Chassidic New York, and a book of Chassidic tales translated from Yiddish, *The Blind Angel*. He teaches Jewish philosophy in the Jewish Studies Program at CCNY.



**Thursday, March 19th: Sruli Dresdner and Lisa Mayer
Klezmer Extravaganza!**



Sruli and Lisa have performed all over the world. Their happy and poignant blending of Yiddish, Hebrew and English Music and Song, might make you feel like you're at a *Simkhe*-- a Joyous Occasion! They're back in The Jewish Studies Program by popular demand!

"Superb Musicians!" --*Los Angeles Times*

"Warm, Tuneful, and Sprightly!" --*New York Times*

**Thursday, March 26: Professor Robert Rovinsky
Why the Books?**

The physical extermination of the Jews was never going to sate Hitler's hunger for their total destruction. It was always going to be necessary to erase and distort the very memory of the Jews' presence on earth. To that end, the Nazis' assault on "The People of the Book" would culminate in what has been called "the greatest literary pogrom in history."

Robert Rovinsky, formerly a professor in the Department of Germanic Studies at the University of Texas, who has lectured widely on Holocaust-related themes, will tell the story of the assault on text.



Thursday, April 16th: **Professor Abby Kornfeld**

Medieval Haggadah Manuscripts



Abby Kornfeld will be discussing how art functions on the folios of three medieval Haggadah manuscripts. She will show the many ways that they enrich the Haggadah's interpretive possibilities, provide models (and directives) for rituals, and render faith into form. While some images appear to be a window onto medieval ritual, others are abstractions.

Abby Kornfeld is Associate Professor of Art History and Jewish Studies at CCNY. She focuses on intersections among Jewish, Christian, and Islamic art across the medieval Mediterranean. Her forthcoming book, *Art of the Haggadah in late Medieval Iberia* (Cambridge University Press 2027), resituates three Hebrew illuminated manuscripts within the broader context of medieval art in late fourteenth century Iberia.

Thursday, April 23rd: **Sarah Seltzer**

Humor and Pathos in Storytelling



How do we look at our own lives or our imagined stories, write them down, and make readers feel all the feelings? We will look at some great Jewish writers, see how they make us laugh, cringe, and cry — and try a few of their techniques!

Sarah Seltzer is the executive editor of *Lilith Magazine* and a widely-published journalist. Her first novel, *The Singer Sisters* (Flatiron) arrived on shelves in 2024.

Thursday, April 30th: Dr. Marisa Hollywood

Internships 101: Finding, Applying to, and Landing the Perfect Placement

Join Dr. Marisa Hollywood, HI Director, as she discusses the criteria for participating in the Humanities and Arts Internship Program and offers opportunities open to Jewish Studies and other Humanities majors. Learn tips for drafting a winning resume and cover letter, ideas for portfolio development, and review email and interview etiquette. Take the next step in planning for your future career!



Thursday, May 7th: Professor Terry Wasserman
The Genesis of Pop

Pop Culture is an integral part of the way we see the world. But did you know that the origins of pop culture go all the way back to the Bible? In fact, without biblical literature, we wouldn't have many of the cultural touchstones or references that we use in everyday parlance to this day.



Professor Wasserman will be teaching “Female Sexuality in Judaism” and “The Bible as Literature” in our program in the Fall.