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FREE

HMC special exhibits: Jehovah's Witnesses, Japanese American internment and the Rwandan genocide

Leslie Pardo, special to the WJN

The Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus in Farmington Hills has announced its newest special exhibits which run January 13 through April 1, 2019. The special exhibits include "Jehovah's Witnesses: Faith Under Fire," "Rwanda: Personal Images" and "The Tragedy of War: Japanese American Internment."

"We take our mission very seriously and remain committed to learning lessons from the Holocaust and applying what we have learned to other genocides. In a world still filled with hate and bigotry, this is more important than ever," said Rabbi Eli Mayerfeld, CEO, Holocaust Memorial Center. "The most important lesson we teach is that history is made through a series of choices and that every choice has a consequence. Choices by individuals have power."

The three special exhibits debuting at the Holocaust Memorial Center in January include:

Jehovah's Witnesses: Faith Under Fire.

A Christian community of 35,000 Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany and occupied lands refused to conform to the Nazi ideology of hate. They were thrown into Nazi camps and became

eyewitnesses of Nazi genocide. The exhibition documents the story of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Holocaust and provides an in-depth look at ordinary people who followed their conscience in the face of tyranny. The exhibit was created by the Arnold-Liebster Foundation in Germany.



Vivian Bower

Rwanda: Personal Images-Artwork by Vivian Bower.

The exhibit is a series of pastel drawings by Vivian Bower about the genocide that took place in Rwanda during 1994 and 1995 when 500,000-1,000,000 Tutsis were brutally massacred by Hutu friends, family and colleagues. Bower's intention is to confront the truth and express her pain and horror. The exhibit is on loan from the Florida Holocaust Museum.

Japanese American Internment.

During World War II, 120,000 ethnic Japanese on the west coast were forced into a series of camps to live under armed guard. Two-

thirds of them American citizens. The exhibit revisits the injustice of Japanese-American confinement by telling their stories and asking a question that resonates today: How could the United States imprison people without due process, based solely on their ethnicity? The exhibit was curated by the Kennesaw State University Museum of History and Holocaust Education in Georgia.

"Jehovah's Witnesses: Faith Under Fire," "Rwanda: Personal Images" and "The Tragedy of War: Japanese American Internment" are generously supported by Barbara and Jim Bayson, Julie and Peter Cummings, Robin and Leo Eisenberg, Nadine and David Farbman, Nancy and James Grosfeld, the Karp family, Jackie and Larry Kraft, Susie and Norman Pappas, Malke and Gary Torgow, and in memory of Barbara and Lee C. Saperstein and Craig A. Saperstein.

The special exhibits are open Sunday through Friday and are free with museum admission or membership. Docent-led tours are available at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 17 and March 31. Docent-led tours also are available at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 4, March 11 and March 25. Sign up for a tour or more information by calling (248) 553-2400, ext. 145. ■

2019 Belin Lecturer is James Loeffler

Kelsey Robinette Keeses, special to the WJN

On March 12, the Frankel Center will welcome Professor James Loeffler to the University of Michigan to deliver the 2019 David W. Belin Lecture in American Jewish Affairs. Loeffler's lecture, "Prisoners of Zion: American Jews, Human



James Loeffler

Rights, and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," based on his recently published *Rooted Cosmopolitans: Jews and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, will explore how American Jews have become polarized over human rights issues related to both Israel and antisemitism. The David W. Belin Lecture in American Jewish Affairs was established at the University of Michigan in 1991, through a gift from the late David W. Belin, to provide an academic forum for the discussion of contemporary Jewish life in the United States. Previous speakers have included Deborah Lipstadt, Samuel Freedman, Lila Corwin Berman, and Ruth Messinger. Each lecture is subsequently published in the Belin Lecture Series.

"Global antisemitism has returned to the world in ways few ever anticipated after World War II," Loeffler explains. "For some in the Jewish world, the only solution is a renewed commitment to protecting human rights at home and abroad. For others in the Jewish world, the very phrase 'human rights' has become a symbol of today's antisemitism, especially in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."

Loeffler is Jay Berkowitz Endowed Chair in Jewish History at the University of Virginia, where he teaches courses on Jewish and European history, legal history, and the history of human rights. *Rooted Cosmopolitans* explains the history of Jewish political activism in human rights through the stories of five Jewish activists, and shows how the idea of human rights has been intertwined with Jewish history in the last 70 years. It was named a "new and noteworthy" book by *The New York Times*.

The book began as a relatively narrow study of American Jewish political advocacy and legal diplomacy on behalf of Eastern

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Fifty years of Feminist Activism Coming to Town

Paige Walker, special to the WJN

Engaging with and contributing to the University of Michigan and the surrounding Ann Arbor and Metro Detroit Jewish communities with dynamic public programs is a cornerstone of the Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP). Every JCLP event creates opportunities for students to bring together University and community members to discuss and explore the challenging questions that animate their own ongoing engagement with Jewish community and identity. In particular, students organize an annual Communal Conversation, held on campus, that brings together community members and prominent Jewish leaders, educators, and activists to deepen discussion and understanding of core issues in American Jewish life. This year, in partnership with the University's Frankel Center for

Judaic Studies, the Covenant Foundation, and the Jewish Women's Archive in Brookline, Massachusetts, JCLP is offering an extended and



quite remarkable series of public programs from March 13 through 17.

A special symposium, "Jewish Feminisms/American Visions: Perspectives from Fifty Years of Activism" will take place March 13 - 15th on

the UM Ann Arbor campus, primarily at the School of Social Work. The symposium will bring an array of pioneering and contemporary feminist activists to Ann Arbor to consider the role of Jewish identity in the framing and development of second wave American feminism. Using as a starting point the interpretations offered by historian Joyce Antler in her recent book, *Radical Jewish Feminism*, the symposium will ask activists from the 1960s through today to explore the significance of Jewish identities in the development of the women's liberation movement and the impact of feminism on American Jewish culture, politics, and religion. In addition to conversations between veteran feminists and more recently-minted activists, the program will include a screening of the documentary *Heather Booth: Changing the World*

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