



**Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi**

***Shirei Hodu: Celebrating the Jewish Saga of India***

**Two-day International Conference on Art, Culture and Heritage of Jews of India**

Inauguration of Exhibition, *Hodu and the Jews*, in the Auditorium

On Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 5 pm

(The exhibition will be on display at the Twin Art Gallery till 28 February, except on Mondays and Public Holidays)

**Conference Day1**

**Monday, 6 February 2017**

**Registration: 09.00am (Conference Hall, C.V. Mess)**

**Inaugural Programme at 10.00 am in the Auditorium**

**10:00 – 10:30am: Formal Inauguration Ceremony**

**10:30 – 11:00am: Keynote Address by Mr Nissim Moses**

**11:00 – 11:20am: Tea**

**Parallel sessions will be held on both days at the Auditorium and Conference Hall, C.V. Mess, IGNCA.**

**Venue 1: Auditorium, C.V. Mess**

**Session I: Jews and Judaism in India: Oral and Written Traditions**

**Chair: Prof. Shalva Weil**

**11:20 – 11:40am: Dr. Cybil Vinodan – Hermen Gundert and the Writing of the History of Jews in India**

**11:40 – 12:00noon: Dr. Shelly Johny- Corollaries of Trade, Conflict and Politics: The Earliest Jewish Communities of India**

- 12:00 – 12:20pm: Dr Syed Mohammad Amir – Re-Discovering Cultural Assimilation of Jews in India
- 12:20 – 12:40pm: Prof. Boaz Huss: The Jewish Theosophists of India
- 12:40 – 1:00pm **Discussion**
- 1:00pm: **Lunch**

## **Session II: Linguistic-Cultural Dimensions and Sung Traditions**

**Chair: Prof. Susan Visvanathan**

- 2:00 – 2:20pm: Prof. Scaria Zacharia—Hebrew Malayalam: Linguistic-cultural Traditions of Jews of Kerala
- 2:20 – 2:40pm: Mr Thoufeek Zakriya – Exploring Hebraic and Judaic Literary Treasures of Jews of Malabar
- 2:40-3:00pm: Mr Elijah Jacob: Bene Israel Kirtans
- 3:00- 4:00pm: **Discussion followed by Tea**

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**4:30 – 5:00pm: Screening of *Blue Like Me: The Art of Siona Benjamin* by American film maker Hal Rifken. The film follows the artist back to her motherland India where she did a Fulbright Art Project on her community of Indian Jews. Venue: Auditorium.**

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**Venue 2: Conference Hall, C.V. Mess**

## **Session I: Community and Identity**

**Chair: Prof. Joan Roland**

- 11:20 – 11:40am: Mr Nissim Moses- The Jewish Communities of India: Reconstruction of Community and Heritage
- 11:40 – 12:00noon: Dr Yulia Egorova- Being Jewish in Andhra Pradesh; Social Protest and New Meanings of Jewishness
- 12:00 – 12:20pm: Prof Marc Shapiro – The Bene Israel and the Larger Jewish Community: A Jewish Law Perspective



12:20 – 12:40pm: Dr Indubala Nahakpam- Baghdadi Jews in Surat: The Then Community

12:40 – 1:00pm: Dr Menashe Anzi- Yemenite Jews in India

1:00 – 1:15pm: **Discussion**

1:15 – 2:00pm: **Lunch**

## **Session II: Inter-Community Relations**

**Chair: Prof Boaz Huss**

2:00 - 2:20pm: Dr Sreekala Sivasankaran- The Question of Minorities and the Jews of India

2:20 – 2:40pm: Dr Navras Jaat Aafreedi- Jewish-Muslim Relations in India

2:40 – 3:00pm: Dr Ophira Gamliel- Circumstantial History of Jewish-Christianity Relations in Pre-Modern Kerala

3:00 – 4:15pm: **Discussion followed by Tea**

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**4:30- 5:00pm: Screening of *Blue Like Me: The Art of Siona Benjamin* by American film maker Hal Rifken. The film follows the artist back to her motherland India where she did a Fulbright Art Project on her community of Indian Jews. Venue: Auditorium.**

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**5:00 – 6:00pm: Public Lecture**

**Prof Shalva Weil- Expanding Horizons, Contracting Paradigms: The State of Research into India's Jews  
Auditorium, C. V. Mess**

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**6:30 – 7:30pm: Performance by Bene Israel Kirtan Group.  
IGNCA Amphitheatre.**

**8:00pm onwards: Dinner, IGNCA Lawns (by invite)**

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## Conference, Day 2

Tuesday, 7 February 2017

### Venue 1: Auditorium, C.V. Mess

#### **Session I: Homelands, Migration and Diaspora**

**Chair: Prof. R. K. Jain**

- 10:30 – 10:50am: Mr. A. Sethumadhavan - *Aliyah*, the Return to the Promised Land- Agony and Ecstasy
- 10:50 – 11:10am: Prof. P.R. Kumaraswamy - India, Jews and the Second World War
- 11:10 – 11:30am: Dr. Margit Franz - Gateway India: German-Speaking Jewish Exile from National Socialism to India 1933-1945
- 11:30 - 11:50am: Prof. Joan G. Roland - The Bene Israel Migrations: Transformation of Indian and Jewish Identity in the United States.
- 11:50 – 12:10pm: Ms. Siona Benjamin – From Motherland to Fatherland: Transcultural Indian Jews in Israel
- 12:10 – 1:00pm: **Discussion**
- 1:00pm: **Lunch**

#### **Session II – Cross-Cultural Dialogue and Cultural Translation**

**Chair: Dr Ken Robbins**

**Co-Chairs: Prof. S.C. Malik and Prof. A.K. Ramakrishnan**

- 2:00 – 2:20pm: Ms. Esther David - Jewish writers in India and Jews in Indian writings.
- 2:20 – 2:40pm: Mr. Avi Solomon: From Patanjali via Al-biruni to Abraham Abulafia-A Case of Medieval Cross Cultural Translation
- 2:40 – 3:00pm: Dr. Tomer Persico- Bratslav Hitbodedut Meditation in Israeli contemporary spirituality: Indian inspiration and cultural translation.



3:00- 3:15pm: **Break**



3:15 – 3:35: Dr. Shimon Lev - The Cultural and Political Encounter between Indians and Jews in the Context of the Growth of their Respective National Movements

3:35- 3:55pm: Prof Susan Visvanathan- Dealing with Difference: Martin Buber, Edward Said and Hannah Arendt

3:55- 4:25pm: **Discussion followed by Tea**

4:30pm: **Valedictory Session in the Auditorium**

**Venue 2: Conference Hall, C.V. Mess**

**Session I: Art, Architecture and Cinema**

**Chair: Ms Esther David**

10:30 – 10:50am: Prof. Jay Waronker – Indian Synagogue Architecture: Its Design roots, Precedents, Tectonics and Inspirations.

10:50 – 11:10pm: Dr. Ken Robbins – Twelve Jewish Women Artists and the Indian National Art Project

11:10 – 11:30am: Prof. Anjali Gera Roy – Yehudi's in Hindi Cinema

11:30 – 11:50am: Mr Gerry Judah – Fragile Lands: Life and Work

11:50 – 12:50pm: **Discussion**

1:00 – 2:00pm: **Lunch Break**

**Session II: Cultural Preservation and Conservation of Heritage: Scope, Issues and Challenges**

**Chair: Mr. Elijah Jacob**

2:00 – 2:20pm: Dr. Bijulal MV - Development vs Heritage: Understanding the Cultural Dimensions of the Civil Defense Collective for Protection for Jewish Cemetery in Kerala

2:20 – 2:40pm: Dr. Jael Silliman – Recalling Jewish Calcutta: Building a Digital Archive

2:40 – 3:00pm: Mr. Ralphy and Yael Jhirad: Jewish Heritage of  
Maharashtra-Scope and Challenges

3:00 – 3:45pm: **Discussion**

3:45pm: **Tea Break**

4:30pm: **Valedictory Session in the Auditorium**

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**05:00 – 06:00pm: Public Lecture**

**Prof. R.K Jain: Diaspora, the Jews and India: Name of the Game and Game  
of the Name. Auditorium, C. V. Mess**

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