

MELISSA SHIFF

Artist and Adjunct Professor, Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Toronto

GROUP SHOWS

2010

**With This Ring: Marriage Ceremonies in Contemporary Art
*Postmodern Jewish Wedding***

Beth Hatefutsoth, (Museum of the Jewish People) Tel Aviv, Israel
(February 25- April 12)

2009

Judaica Twist

JAMS: Jewish Animated Mandala Series

Beth Hatefutsoth, (Museum of the Jewish People), Tel Aviv, Israel
(December 31 2009- March 31, 2010)

2009

**Kol Ishah, In her Voice,
*Postmodern Jewish Wedding***

Emet Gallery, Montreal
(March 25 –September 7)

2009

**The Dorothy Saxe Invitational: Artists Reinterpret the Seder Plate
*Cine-Seder Plate: The Six Questions***

Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco
(March 1- May 31)

2008

**Off The Wall: Artists at Work,
*JAMS: Jewish Animated Mandala Series***

The Jewish Museum New York
(March 16 - 27)

2008

Repairing The World: Contemporary Ritual Art

Elijah Chair, Jewish Museum New York, including Richard Meier
(October – March 16)

2007

Nuit Blanche, *ICONOCLASH*, Grange Park Toronto, (September 29)

2007

TerGloba, Crush Oppression Project, Oakland University Art Gallery,
Michigan, Including: Hasan Elahi, Dread Scott, (March 10 - April 15)

2005

Command J: Jewish Laws, Digital Arts, Gender Cuts/The Jew Under the Knife,
Including: Helene Aylon, Simon Glass, and Jeffrey Shaw
Presented as part of the University of Toronto conference:
Rejewvenation: The Futures of Jewish Culture, (October 21 - November 20)

2000

Distinguishing/Distinguished Jewish, Gender Cuts/The Jew Under the Knife,
Starr Gallery, Leventhal-Sidman Jewish Community Center Newton Mass. Curator, Louis Kaplan,
Professor of Modern Art History, Tufts University, (December 13, 1999—February 20th, 2000)

Dream Imprints, Tufts Gallery, Aidekman Arts Center , Medford Mass. (February 5—March 10)

1999

Dream imprints Aidekman Gallery, Somerville, MA.
Grossman Gallery, School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (June 1—30)

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PERFORMANCES

2011

Forthcoming: **The Medium is the Matzo**
Venue TBA
Sponsored by The Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal

2010

Cine-Seder Roundtable
University of Toronto, Alumni Hall, Victoria College
(March 23)

2006-2007

ARK, Jewish Museum in Prague,
Keynote project for “The Year of Jewish Culture”
in honour of the JMP’s Centennial Celebration
(September 13—January 14)

2006

Melissa Shiff: Reframing Ritual, Postmodern Jewish Wedding
Jewish Museum in Prague (April 5—June 4)

2005

The Medium Is the Matzo: A Passover Installation
The Bronfman Center NYU. New York, NY. (April 8 - May 2)

2004

Passover Projections, The Museum of Jewish Heritage
New York, NY, (April 4)

2004

Elijah Chair, Goodkind Media Gallery, The Jewish Museum, New York, NY.
(February 6—April 11)

2003

Passover Projections—Slaves to Memory, The Jewish Museum New York NY.
(May 22)

Chuppah in the Succah, Distillery Fermenting Room, Toronto, (October 12)

2002

Times Square Seder, Chashama Arts Organization New York. NY. (March 30)

Pink Ghetto, Grossman Gallery, School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston.
(February - March)

1998

Pink Ghetto, Bad Girrrls Gallery, Jamaica Plain MA. (April – May)

VIDEO SCREENINGS

2008

Postmodern Jewish Wedding, Colloquium
Objects of Affection: The Jewish Wedding in Media and Material Culture,
organized by the Jewish Working Group, Center for Religion and Media,
NYU at the Center for Jewish History, NY New York
(April 13)

2008

ARK, DigiFest, “At Water’s Edge: Catastrophe, Trauma, Possibilities”
The Design Exchange, Toronto Canada
(March 29)

2007

ARK, Limmud, University of Coventry, Warwick, UK, (December 23)

Postmodern Jewish Wedding, Limmud, University of Coventry, Warwick, UK, (December 26)

Times Square Seder, Limmud, University of Coventry, Warwick, UK, (December 24)

2006

Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding,
Limmud New York: Festival of Jewish Learning,
Kutshcer's, Monticello, New York
(January 15)

2005

Looking for Ararat, National Museum of Photography, Television and Film,
Bradford England, (July 2)

Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding, Seattle Jewish Film Festival, U.S.A, (March 15)

2004

Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding, Argentina Jewish Film Festival, Buenos Aires
(November 4, 7, 10,)

Looking For Ararat, Alley-Jaunt Festival, Toronto, Canada, (August 22)

Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding, Toronto Jewish Film Festival, (May 9)

Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding, New York University, NY, NY. (May 7)

2002

Looking for Ararat Diasporic Art and Culture –
York University Advanced Research Centre, Toronto, Canada (April 24)

L'Chaim Las Vegas, The Society For Photographic Education, (March 23)

L'Chaim Las Vegas video screening,
Humanities at Noon, University of Toronto at Mississauga, (November 27)

2001

Gender Cuts/The Jew Under the Knife video screening,
Oraynu, Organization for Secular Humanist Judaism, Toronto, (March 24)

JURIED COMPETITIONS

2009

Honorable Mention: The Dorothy Saxe Award for Creativity in Contemporary Arts
For *Cine-Seder Plate: The Six Questions*
Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco

2007

Shortlisted: City of Toronto Permanent Public Art Project: Fort York/ Original Lake Ontario Shoreline Commission

WEB PROJECTS

2005- present

Modiya, New York University, selected as featured artist to present projects,
The Medium is the Matzo and Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding

<http://modiya.nyu.edu/modiya/handle/1964/799>

<http://modiya.nyu.edu/modiya/handle/1964/800>

2003- present

Looking for Ararat Webvideo, www.mosaica.ca/diaspora--
Website for Jewish culture, (August 2003—present)

REVIEWS

Canadian Jewish News

Heather Solomon

“Kol Ishah amplifies voice of Jewish women through art”

Curator: The Museum Journal

Bruce Jenkins, "Melissa Shiff's ARK/ARCHA"
(September 2007 issue)

DNES Mlada Fronta

(Prague), Vladimira Sumberova, "ARCHA Promlouva k lidem",
(Saturday October 7, 2006)

The Prague Post

(Prague), Mimi Fronczak Rogers,
"Ship of Memories: Melissa Shiff's video ark is a Jewish Museum centennial highlight"
(September 13-19, 2006)

Lidove Noviny

(Prague), "Archa se rozsveci po setmeni"
(September 16, 2006)

The Forward

(New York), Dinah Spritzer, "Video Artist Present a Reinterpretation of Scripture"
(May 12, 2006)

The Prague Post

(Czech Republic), Tony Ozuna "Revisiting Ritual, The Jewish Wedding,
Past, Present and Postmodern, (April 26, 2006)

Jewschool

Dan Sieradski, "JAP: Shopping for Social Justice",
www.jewschool.com/?p=10343#motr-10343 (April 24, 2006)

The Jewish Week

(New York) Paul Zakrzewski
"The Graven Image, ReJewvenated", (Nov. 28, 2005)

NOW Magazine

(Toronto) Kevin Temple "Command Central: Ten Commandments Fuel
ReJewvenation", (Exhibition Cited with Four Stars)
(http://www.nowtoronto.com/issues/2005-11-10/art_reviews.php)
(November 10, 2005)

Jewschool

Dan Sieradski, "Command J: Innovative Jewish Art for the 21st Century"
(<http://www.jewschool.com/2005/11/command-j-innovative-jewish-art-for.php>)
(November 4, 2005)

The Varsity

(University of Toronto) Nicole Lavigne,

“Making It Jew: Mini-Fest Explores Judaism’s Future”
(<http://www.thevarsity.ca/media/paper285/news/2005/10/27/News/Making.It.Jew.MiniFest.Explores.Judaisms.Future-1036663.shtml>)
(October 27, 2005)

Daily Kos

Jeffrey Feldman, “Matzo Ball Activism”
<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2005/5/1/202916/6374> (May 1, 2005)

The Globe and Mail, Canada

Simon Houpt, “Read Your Matzo It’s Good For You” (April 30, 2005)

Jewschool

Douglas Rushkoff, “Crush Oppression”
<http://www.jewschool.com/2005/04/crush-oppression.php>, (April 21, 2005)

C Magazine

Scott Myers, review of ‘Elijah Chair’ special exhibition at The Jewish Museum, NY.
(Spring Issue, 2004)

Hadassah Magazine

review of ‘Elijah Chair’ special exhibition at The Jewish Museum, NY.
(Spring Issue, 2004)

Boston Globe

Christine Temin
Review of “Gender Cuts/The Jew Under the Knife”, (January 26, 2000)

Boston Phoenix

Christopher Millis
Review of “Gender Cuts/ The Jew Under the Knife”, (January 24, 2000)

Web / Radio / Television / Newspaper / Magazines Articles / Interviews / Cover ART

Jews God and Videotape: Religion and Media in America

Author Jeffrey Shandler

Cover image, Melissa Shiff: *The Medium is the Matzo*

The Chronicle

In Her Voice: Reclaiming Jewish Marriage Rituals

(March 18, 2009)

The Olympian

Olympia Washington,

“Artists chat about creativity, Speakers set to inspire students at Evergreen”

by Lisa Pemberton,
(February 2, 2008)

Art Crawl

on Melissa Shiff's *Iconoclash*, by Chelly Persad,
<http://artcrawl-chellypersad.blogspot.com/>
(October 3, 2007)

Toronto Star

“**Night of the Living Arts**” on Shiff's *Iconoclash* by Deborah Black,
(September 30, 2007)

Daily Jews

“**ARK Art in Prague**” by Leslie Bunder,
http://www.dailyjews.com/articles/511_ark_art_in_prague.htm
(December 22, 2006)

Reflex

(Prague), Barbora Klimova
(October 2006)

The Prague Post

(Prague), Cover Image- Night and Day Section, (September 13-19, 2006)

Ros Chodes

(Prague), Cover Image issue #68, journal for Jewish thought, (October 2006)

Metro

(Prague newspaper), “Realita, Ci iluze? ARCHA”, (September 14, 2006)

Expres

(Prague newspaper), “Archa jako symbol historie”, (September 14, 2006)

Sip

(Prague newspaper), “Archa zakotvila v ulicich Prahy” (September 14, 2006)

Kosmopolis—Czech TV

feature on *Reframing Ritual: Postmodern Jewish Wedding*
(July, 2006)

Jewish Telegraph Agency

Syndicated Article in Jewish Newspapers around the world
“Jewish artist reworks Bible's “offensive” bits in wedding video” by Dinah Spritzer,
www.jta.org/page_print_story.asp?intarticleid=16554, (May 1, 2006)

Interview with Keith Jones artistic director of MOFFOM film festival Prague

www.moffom.org/en/iaf-melissa-shiff.jsp (April 19 2006)

“Zwei Ausstellungen über Hochzeitszeremonien finden im Jüdischen Museum in Prag statt”

by Martina Schneibergova www.radio.cz/de/artikel/77958, (April 14, 2006)

“Melissa Shiff’s Postmoderne judische Hochzeit in der Spanischen Synagoge”
by Maritna Schneibergova, www.radio.cz/de/ausgabe/77972 (April 16, 2006)

Daily Jews

“ALT. Jewish Shopping”

by Leslie Bunder,

http://www.dailyjews.com/articles/250_alt_jewish_shopping.htm

(April 5, 2006)

Zeek: A Jewish Journal of Online Culture

Cover Image, *The Medium is the Matzo*

<http://www.zeek.net/604cover/> (April, 2006)

“Canadian multi-media installation in Prague’s Spanish Synagogue”,

www.canada.cz/am3/asp/tisktext.asp?Pageld=mhFuNvHH

CIUT-Radio

Toronto, Canada, Interview with Cheri De Novo

on The Radical Reverend Show, (November 2005)

Canadian Jewish News

“The Matzo is the Message for artist Melissa Shiff”

by Cynthia Gasner, (October 20, 2005)

Songlines

“Toronto Hip Hop Khupe” Feature article by Sophie Solomon.

London, UK, (March, 2004)

Canadian Jewish News

“Toronto Artist Turns Elijah’s Chair into Video Art,

Wedding Canopy into Movie Screen”

by Bill Gladstone, (February 26, 2004)

Forward

NY, NY

Feature Article about “Times Square Seder”

(March 22, 2002)

The Jewish Week

NY, NY. Daniel Belasco,

Feature Article about “Times Square Seder”

(March 29, 2002)

Village Voice

NY, NY.—listing of “Times Square Seder”

(March 23, 2002)

EXHIBITION CATALOGUES

New Works, Old Story: 80 Artists at the Passover Table (San Francisco: Contemporary Jewish Museum, 2008).

Melissa Shiff: ARK,

this catalogue was made possible by the generous support of the Canadian Embassy in Prague

Melissa Shiff: Reframing Ritual / Promena Ritualu,

this catalogue was made possible

by the generous support of the Canadian Embassy in Prague

Command J: Jewish Laws Digital Arts,

published as part of the University of Toronto conference ReJewvenation: The Futures of Jewish Culture, this catalogue was created through the generous support of the Toronto Arts Council and the Ontario Arts Council

INVITED TALKS, LECTURES, AND PANELS

University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs,

"ARK: Restaging the Jewish Museum in Prague" Symposium: Restaging Jewish Modernity, (Sept. 20, 2010)

22nd International Sculpture Conference, London England

"The Multiple Languages of ARK" (April 9, 2010)

Association for Jewish Studies Conference, Los Angeles

"ARK Salvage and JAMS Preserve" (Dec 21, 2009)

"ARK Salvage and JAMS Preserve" at Robin Ostow's "Jewish Museums, Identity, and Public Memory" Course, York University, Toronto (June 15, 2009).

Kol Ishah, in Her Voice

Panel: **Gallery Emet** (May 5, 2009)

Fairfield University "Confessions of a Practicing Jewish Artist,"

Second biannual endowed Samuel and Bettie Roberts Lecture in Jewish Art, (April 23, 2009)

Council of American Jewish Museum's, Conference New York, NY

Panel: Collection as spectacle: New Display Strategies (Feb 2, 2009)

Downtown Jewish Dayschool JCC Toronto
Panel: Alternative Jewish Identities (Nov. 24, 2008)

San Jose State University, “The ARK of Melissa Shiff’s Art” artist talk, (April 1, 2008)

DigiFest- Design Exchange “The Archive in the Deluge”,
Toronto, panel discussion (March 29, 2008)

Evergreen College “The ARK of Melissa Shiff’s Art”, artist talk, (February 26, 2008)

Limmud UK, three artist talks and one workshop, (December 23-27, 2007)

Association of Jewish Studies Conference, paper on Shiff’s Work, (December 16, 2007)

TerGloba artist panel, presentation of *Crush Oppression Project*,
Oakland University Art Gallery, (March 9, 2007)

Council of American Jewish Museum’s plenary: 21st Century Audiences, presentation of
ARK and *Medium is the Matzo*, Toronto (January 22, 2007)

University of Toronto, presentation of **ARK** (Professor John Paul Ricco)
Dept. of Art History, (December 8, 2006)

Israel Today, one hour television interview with host Howard Adelman.
Projects covered: “Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding”,
“Times Square Seder” and “The Medium is the Matzo”, (October 15, 2006)

Limmud NY Conference, artist talk, workshop and panelist, (January 11-- 14, 2006)

XPACE, Toronto, artist talk, “Gender Cuts/The Jew Under the Knife”, (November 13, 2005)

University of Toronto, roundtable discussion: “The Futures of Jewish Ritual” at
The Futures of Jewish Culture conference, (October 28, 2005)

New York University, presentation of “The Medium is the Matzo” to Modiya Jewish
working group New York University scholars (May 3, 2005)

New York University, artist talk—presentation of “The Medium is the Matzo”
Bronfman Center for Jewish Student Life (April 27, 2005)

University of Toronto, artist talk—presentation of selected works Jewish Culture Seminar,
Professor Andrea Most, Department of Jewish Studies, (March 22, 2005)

Limmud Canada, presentation of “Times Square Seder” and “Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding”
York University Toronto, (November 21, 2004)

Ashkenaz Festival of New Yiddish Culture, presentation of “Times Square Seder” and
“Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding” (September 6, 2004)

New York University, presentation with Louis Kaplan on 'Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding' at conference Religious Witness: The Intimate, The Everyday, The World. (May 7 2004)

The Jewish Museum, artist talk to staff and docents on 'Times Square Seder' and "Avant-Garde Jewish Wedding. (February 25 2004)

UJA Federation, presentation of "Times Square Seder" and future Seder project "Tent Seder", Lipa Green, (June 18, 2003)

Sketch, a not-for profit artist centre for street youth, Artist Talk, (June 4, 2003)

Sheridan College, Artist Talk, Presentation of body of work, (Oct 24, 2002)

Brandeis University. Public Lecture *Times Square Seder*. History of Video Art (Professor Pamela Allara) Dept of Art History-- (April 25, 2002)

Southern Illinois, presentation of installation work, Contemporary Art Issues (Professor Peter Chametsky) Dept. of Art and Design. – Carbondale Illinois (February 2002)

CRITICAL ESSAYS AND LECTURES ON SHIFF'S WORK

Linda Safran, "The Art of Passover," Lecture at the St. Jerome's University, Waterloo, April 4, 2009.

Reviewed in Mirko Petricevic *The Record*, April 4, 2009

<http://news.therecord.com/Special%20Sections/Faith/article/515159>

Jeffrey Shandler, *Jews God and Videotape: Religion and Media in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), pp. 172-174

Vanessa Ochs, "A Traditional Table, Set for Innovation," in

New Works/Old Story: 80 Artists at the Seder Table

http://www.thecjm.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&view=article&id=167&scope=exbt&oid=10

"The Art of Melissa Shiff and Hanah Iverson" by Professor Susan Chevlowe, "Nashim", 5000 word essay, (December, 2007)

Association of Jewish Studies Annual Meeting, "Displaying Judaica: Secularizing the Sacred" paper by Reesa Greenberg, Concordia University/York University, on panel: Jewish Museum's and Displays: New Directions, Obstacles, and Opportunities, Toronto, (December 16, 2007)

A Celebration of Jewish Studies in Ottawa, International Conference

"Mobile Monuments: War Imagery in the Art of Vera Frenkel, Susan Hiller, and Melissa Shiff"

Reese Greenberg, Concordia University/York University

(October 24-25, 2007)

“Activating Exodus Through Continuous Critique: The Art of Melissa Shiff”,
by Heather Diack, “After Image”, 3000 word essay (July/August 2006)

“Distinguishing/Distinguished Jewish” catalogue essay,
written by Professor Louis Kaplan. Analysis of *Gender Cuts/The Jew Under the Knife*

Rabbi Arthur Waskow

‘Melissa Shiff’s New Passover Paradiigm’,
Shalom Centre News Letter Also translated into German (April 2002)

COLLECTIONS

2004

Gender Cuts/The Jew Under The Knife

nominated for acquisition by The Jewish Museum, (May, 2004)

2003

Elijah Chair Acquired by The Jewish Museum, NY. (May 22, 2003)

Passover Projections nominated for acquisition by The Jewish Museum. (May 22, 2003)

**Private Collections include Professor Andrea Most (University of Toronto), Dena Dawson,
Curator Norman Kleeblatt of the Jewish Museum NY, Curator Fred Wasserman of the Jewish Museum NY.

GRANTS

2010

The Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal

\$22,000.00 to install the *The Medium is the Matzo*

Passover 2011

2005

Toronto Arts Council Media Arts Grant

for the creation of “Gender Cuts/The Jew Under the Knife”.

United Jewish Appeal Federation Grant

for video installation “Ten Plagues Pillow Project”

PUBLISHED ESSAYS BY MELISSA SHIFF

Sh'ma, "Times Square Seder: A Jewish Art Activist Performance", (January 2005)

Now Magazine, Shoppers Anti-Christ, (November 9, 2004)

Tikkun Magazine, "Happening for Homelessness: Times Square Seder, (March/April 2004)

COMMISSIONED PROJECTS

Trinity Square Video, Artist in residence Images festival Spring 2008,
Deferred due to time conflicts

"Video 7, Anniversary Book",
commissioned by Andrea Most Professor of English, University of Toronto

"Imaginary Jewish Homelands"
in conjunction with York University advanced research seminar, Toward a New Diaspora

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Curriculum Development Working Group, Downtown Jewish Dayschool
May 20, 2009

Adjunct Professor, Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Toronto,
September 2008 – September 2011

Board of Advisors Member, Mosaica Website for New Jewish Culture,
<http://www.mosaica.ca/> York University, Toronto Canada, (May 2004—present)

Chairperson - Board of Directors-Trinity Square Video, Toronto, (2003 – 2005)

Vice Chairperson - Board of Directors -Trinity Square Video, Toronto, (2002-2003)

BFA --Tufts University and The School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2001