Jewish Culture and Information Center

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Jewish Culture and Information Center

- The Vilnius Jewish Culture and Information Center is a not-for-profit organization established by Vilnius Municipality, Lithuanian Jewish Community and Vilnius Jewish Community. It is located in the former Jewish quarter in the old town of Vilnius and offers information about the Jewish past of Vilnius.
- The Vilnius Jewish Culture and Information Center has art gallery “Shofar”, tourism information center with bookstore and hiding from Nazis place during WWII called “Malina” exposition in an original cellar, where it shows at regular intervals and upon request an audio-visual presentation of Vilnius.
- One of the main JCIC‘s goals is to foster respect for Jewish tradition and culture and stimulate dialogue in the spirit of mutual acceptance and tolerance, to foster all Lithuanian citizens to remember the victims of the genocide, not to erase them from historical memory.
- The JCIC mission is: to meet the residents of Vilnius and city visitors' interests in cultural and information activities of the rich Jewish cultural heritage, as Lithuania's Jewish culture is an integral part of culture of Lithuania.

JCIC activities

- JCIC main activity is to collect, store and provide information and preserve the memory about Jewish cultural heritage.

JCIC implementing its objectives and tasks:

- Presents the most significant achievements of the Lithuanian Jewish community in culture and social activity.
- Promotes the Jewish cultural events, executes educational activity.
- Organizes representational, cultural and other events;
- Develops relationships with other foreign communities and organizations;
- Implements information dissemination of Litvak culture in the world.

JCIC Tourism Information Center

- Almost half of the Vilnius population used to be Jewish. As a result, there are many sites that relate to that glorious past. The Vilnius Jewish Culture and Information Center provides information on sites related to this Jewish heritage of the city, on Jewish and other museums, religious sites, sites related to the Holocaust, as well as information on more general issues such as accommodation, dining options, etc. Upon request, the Center organizes personalized tours for visitors to see places outside Vilnius.
- Has a library with books about Jewish life, tradition , culture and history.





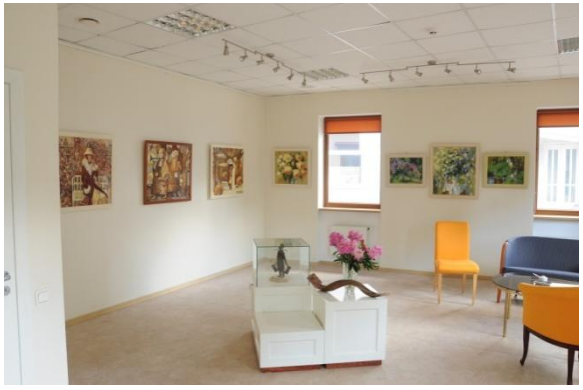
JCIC Art Gallery “Shofar”

We organize individual exhibits of local and foreign artists. In Shofar Gallery you will find original paintings, sculptures, lithographs and engravings.

Exhibitions at Shofar Gallery: Rafael Chwoles (France); Malka Tsenciper (Israel); Matvey Basov (Belorussia); Svetlana Avinova (Russia); Lithuanian artists. Here is a small café for Jewish cooking heritage presentation.









Jewish Vilnius

Exceptional subjects of history are related to Vilnius in the Jewish tradition. Due to its cultural and religious importance Vilnius has acquired the honourable name of “Jerusalem of Lithuania”.Legends about Vilnius prominent traditional Jewish community that has many educated and prominent rabbi have lived on since the 17th century. It is true; Vilnius is not the only “Jerusalem” in Europe: Toledo was called “Jerusalem of Spain”, Troyes – “Jerusalem of France”, Prague – “Jerusalem in Bohemia”. Granting this name means the recognition of the cities that gave refuge to the most prominent Jewish communities. Historically the establishment of the Jewish community in the most attractive city of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – Vilnius was not easy and rather late. In 1633 the Great Synagogue, was built, as well as the historical Jewish quarter was started to be formed. The fame of the Vilnius Jewish community is mainly related to the Vilnius Gaon – Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman (1720-1797), who, by his activity, authority and with the community’s support, precluded the spread of Hasidism to Vilnius and determined the establishment of the misnagds. Vilnius became the centre of religious books and the centre of the Orthodox Judaism. After Vilna Gaon died there was no other famous and universally recognised religious scholar and interpreter of biblical texts. Wisdom and tradition that he spread through his disciples inspired the world known eminent Jews from Vilnius.The most varied and active life of “Jerusalem of Lithuania” was ended by Holocaust: on 6th of September 1941 the Ghetto in Vilnius was set up. Today the “Jerusalem of Lithuania” as the whole of personalities, phenomena, important events and institutions is the most popularised and best-known symbol of the more than six-hundred-year-old Jewish history in Lithuania. It connects the following characterisations of the city – the citadel of an anti-Hasidic movement and orthodoxy, the centre of religious and world Jewish culture, the beginning of the current Hebrew literature and periodicals, the place of the development of the Yiddish culture and literature, the city of deep traditions of Zionism, the place of the establishment of the socialist Bund movement, the space of the development of creative work of the group of artists “Jung Vilne”, a source of YIVO functioning in New York up till now. The Jewry of Lithuania and the world is constantly reminded of the exceptionality and significance of Vilnius, ever new signs of the city’s phenomenal character are discovered, and many Litvaks hope that their family has a connections with Vilna Gaon and his family. Today the Lithuanian Jewish Community inherits the image of “Jerusalem of Lithuania“.

JCIC projects and propositions

„Jewish Vilnius highlights“

Water Carreer sculpture in a former Vilnius Ghetto territory
Fiddler on the roof on JCIC building
Ghetto victims square with information stand in Mesiniu str. In front of JCIC
Great Vilnius synagogue memorial

Educational and cultural programs

Educational lessons on Holocaust theme
Projects for children
Annual monoperformance festival “Shalom”
Concerts

Book publishing (translations to and from Lithuanian language)

Impact on the Jews of Natsizm and Stalinism
Jewish culture heritage, relations with other cultures

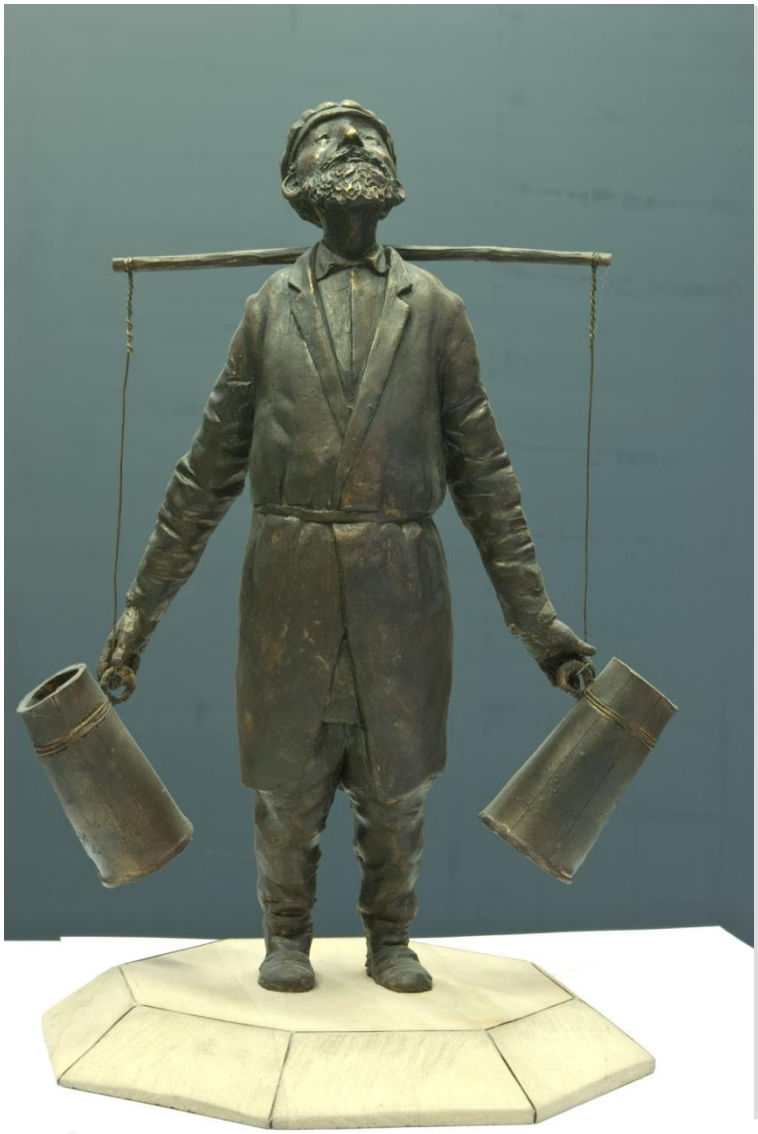
International research programs

Synagogues in Litvak country Belorussia research program

Rememberance programs

Memorial plaques
Genocide day of Lithuanian Jews commemorations

Water Carrier sculpture



One of the well-known Vilnius residents of Jewish origin was the poet Moshe Kulbak, whose best poems were written in Vilnius. May be the nicest of them is a poem about Vilnius itself, describing it as a spiritual city, where neither poverty, nor suffering cannot conquer the power of idealism. One of most prominent symbols of Vilnius in the poem of M.Kulbak is „the water carrier“:

You are a dark amulet set in Lithuania.
Old grey writing – mossy, peeling.
Each stone a book; parchment every wall.
Pages turn, secretly open in the night,
As, on the old synagogue, a frozen water carrier,
Small beard tilted, stands counting the stars.

On the pedestal of the sculpture there will be engraved 7 excerpts of the phrase mentioned above in Lithuanian, Polish, Yiddish, English, German, Russian and Hebrew languages.

Fiddler on the roof sculpture

Excerpt of Norman Jewison film “Fiddler on the roof”:

And how do we (Jews) keep our balance?

That I can tell you in one word – Tradition. Because of our traditions we have kept our balance for many many years.

We have traditions for everything. How to sleep. How to eat. How to work. How to wear clothes. For instance, we always keep our heads covered, and always wear a little prayer shawl. This shows our constant devotion to God. You may ask how did this tradition get started. I’ll tell you – I don’t know. But it’s a tradition.

And because of our traditions every one of us knows who he is and what God expects him to do.

And we all live in simple peace and harmony.

Traditions, traditions. Without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky as…as…As a fiddler on the roof.

Fiddler on the roof



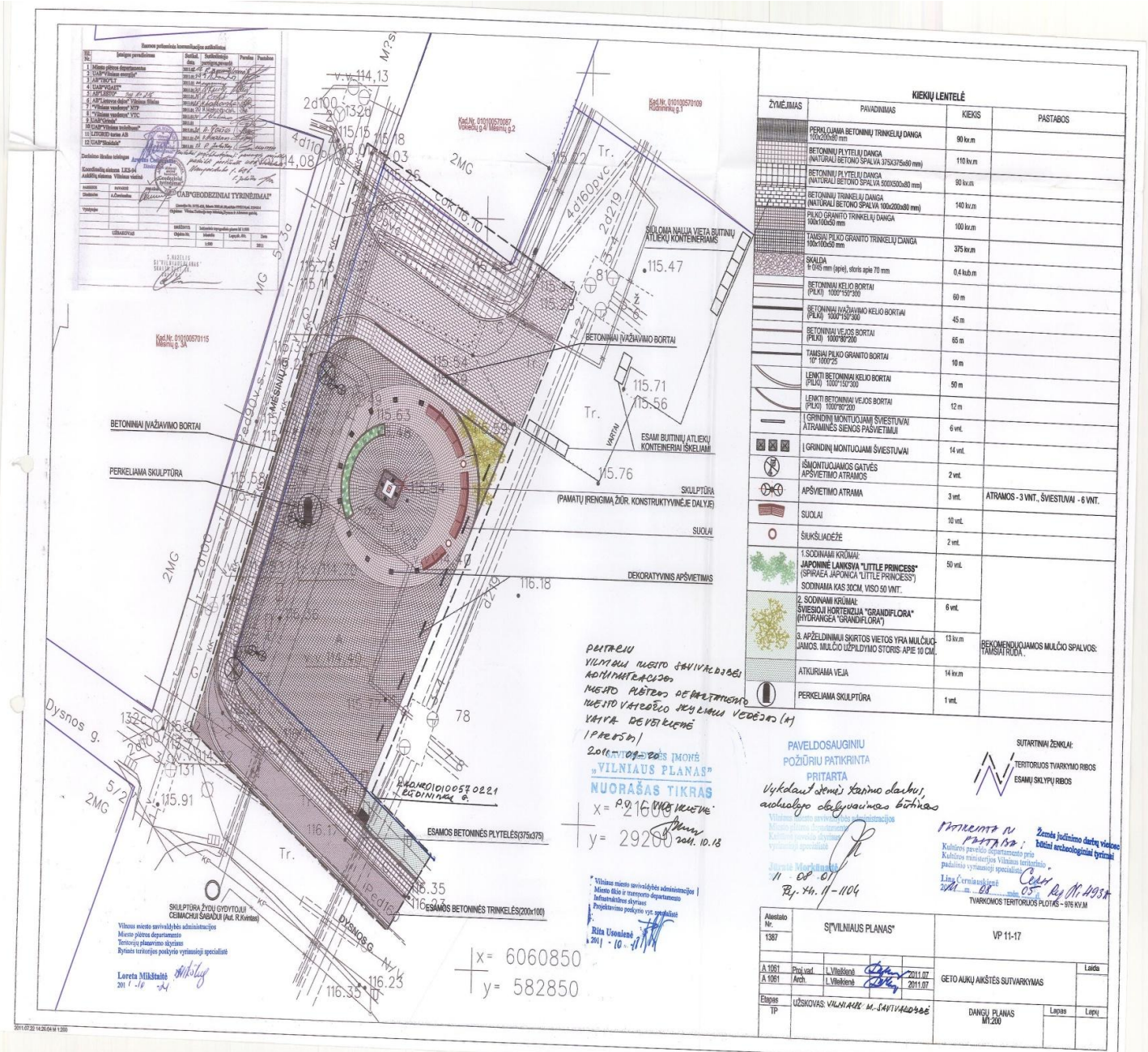
Ghetto Victims Square

- Vilnius City Council has decided in 1992 to give the place in Vilnius former Ghetto the name „Ghetto victims square“.
- The place has a monument mentioning „Ghetto victims square“ (photo left).
- Many tourists are visiting the place and leave small stone on the monument.
- Today the square does not look really as a square – it looks as a bound between street and parking place (photo right).
- The square is included into Jewish Vilnius visiting tour, thus it has to be prepared as a honourable place for Vilnius citizens and guests to be adequate to it‘s title.
- Jewish culture and information center appealed to Vilnius municipality with the proposition of reforming the place – liquidate the parking place and form the real square.
- Vilnius municipality agreed with this and issued an official decision in 2009. The technical plan has been made by municipality in 2010.
- In 2011 Municipality did not find budget possibility to build the square.
- Step after square building – to make an information stand over the whole wall along the square about Jewish Vilnius





Ghetto Victims Square



Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial

The Competition

In 1989 an international competitition for the design of a Jewish Memorial Centre was launched by the Lithuanian Ministry of Cultural Affairs in conjunction with several national art institutions and local Jewish organizations. The winning entry came from Sweden and was designed by the architect Tsila Zak and the sculptor Willy Gordon, both with their roots in Vilnius.

Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial

JCIC is an official Tsila Zak winning project custodian and one of promoters of the project, which has to be discussed on the highest level of Vilnius City Municipality

- ***Project description***
- Objectives
- The Memorial is designed to reflect and commemorate the once vibrant Jewish community of the city of Vilnius and its tragic fate. It will be situated in the heart of the Old Town, on the actual site of the "Schulhoif", which was the cultural centre of the community. This is where the Great Synagogue stood from 1573. This is also where the legendary sage, the "Vilna Gaon", used to live. Later on, in the early 1900s, the famous Strashun Library was added to the complex. Soon after the end of the war Stalin ordered the entire neighborhood to be completely demolished.
- According to the plan for the project the area will gradually be rebuilt from its buried ruins. It will combine several of architectural expressions ranging from part reconstruction of old to contemporary building and including symbols of its past greatness.
- The Memorial Centre, while reflecting the plura-listic past of the city, will also provide for the future.
- It is expected to become a focal point in Vilnius for public activities, functioning as an art centre - open for a variety of cultural events, such as stage perfor-mances and art exhibitions - also serving as a recrea-tion area for the general public. In addition there will be a research institute for Jewish history, a library of Jewish music and literature and a museum. It is designed to be a stimulant for creative imagination and a source of pleasure to the Vilnius community and its visitors.

Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial

- ***Reconstructing Žydu Gatve (Jews' Street)***
- During its hey-day, Jews' Street was defined by its densely built three to four storey houses. During the demolition of the "Schulhoif" in the 1950s', parts of the old street disappeared, leaving a gaping void.
- Jews' Street is now completely blocked at its junc-tion with German Street where new clumsy apart-ment buildings have been erected. The overdimen-sioned German Street now cuts right through the heart of the Old City.
- The proposed Memorial Centre, with its buildings and sculptures, aims at reviving the original charac-ter ofjew's Street and restoring its original direction. Those facades which once lined the street will be reconstructed: The Strashun Library, the house of the Gaon and his Academy. Some characteristic architectural details will be introduced such as the iron gateway to the courtyard and the fine archway to the house of the Gaon.
- ***The Strashun Library***
- The Library will combine the old with the new. The facade facingjews' Street will be rebuilt in its origi-nal state, with traditional materials, such as plastered
- brick and wooden frame windows, whereas the modern section of the building will be constructed in steel and glass. Tile Strashun Library will house a research centre, a library of Jewish music and litera-ture, and an exhibition gallery.
- ***The House of the Vilna Gaon***
- The name "Gaon" was an honorary title bestowed on the eminent sage, Rabbi Eliah Ben-Salomon (1720-1797), whose enlightment philosophy has had a profound influence on the Jewish religion. The house of the Gaon will be rebuilt as a museum, com-memorating his life history.

Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial

- ***The Gaons Academy***
- The original site of Beth Midrash is now partly occu-pied by post war blocks of flats. A small pavilion will be built on the remainder of the site, accommodating an information centre, a book-shop and a cafe.
- ***The Site of the Great Synagogue***
- The foundations of Great Synagogue were laid in 1573. Over the years it underwent many changes and additions in diverse architectural styles. The spacious building could hold up to six thousand people - the entire Jewish community in its early days. Strong-rooms were built into its massive walls to store valu-ables of the congregation during times of trouble. The courtyard of the Synagogue (Shulhoif) served as a cultural and religious centre . It was a public-meeting place, surrounded byJewish institutions, schools and the ritual bath-house("Mikve").
- The splendid assembly room, originally built in Renaissance style, will be represented by an "open room". This space will be defined by the principle elements of the original assembly room, namely the four giant pillars which rise from the sunken floor and the Eastern Wall which serves as its background. The magnificent interior of the Synagogue was far richer than its exterior and was not visible from the street. The "open room" will be similarly protected from view by the Strashun Library and by the vesti-bule at the entrance to the Synagogue yard.
- ***The Sunken Floor***
- The Great Synagogue of Vilnius was one of the largest ever built in Eastern Europe although from the outside it did not give that impression. Due to the regulations in those days, it was prohibited for Jewish buildings to be taller than their neighboring buildings. The ingenious solution to that restriction was to gain height by lowering the floor. This was, in fact, not out of keeping with Jewish religion: "From the depths do I call unto thee".
- The floor will be a reproduction of the old one, on the site of the original. Findings from the excava-tions, planned for the first stage of the project, will, where possible, be incorporated into the reconstruc-tion.

Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial

- ***The Four Pillars***
- The four mighty pillars, centrally placed, framed the magnificent 17th century rococo pulpit, and also supported the roof. Here the sculpture "A People's Metamorphosis" will be placed, symbolizing the spirit of Judaism, and the act of lifting the Torah with its spiritual message.
- ***The Eastern wall***
- According to Jewish tradition the Eastern synagogue wall holds the Holy Ark and its Scrolls and is always aligned with Jerusalem.
- The wall will be rebuilt to its full height with two of Willy Gordons' sculptures in low relief: "Jacob and the Angel" and "Am Israel Chai" ("the Jewish people live") but the cavity at the place for the Holy Ark will remain empty.
- ***Services***
- Adjacent to the vestibule a small pavilion will be erected, containing public toilets and storage facili-ties.
- On the arches facing the "Schulhoif', clock faces indicated the official religious time for the beginning and ending of the Sabbath and the time for lighting the candles during holidays.
- Replicas of the original clock faces will be installed here, together with a notice board, to be used by all who wish to announce forthcoming events or leave personal messages, as in the past.
- ***Landscaping***
- Most of the existing trees in the area will be preserved, forming a natural frame to the complex. The day-care centre, presently occupying the actual site where the Synagogue once stood, will be moved in cooperation with the Vilnius municipality to a suita-ble place nearby.
- A pond, symbolizing the waters of the "Mikve" (ritual bath-house), will be located north of the Synagogue, behind the house of the Gaon. It's form will follow the historic contours of the yard, that no longer exists.
- To symbolize the floors of the missing houses, the banks of the pond will be built up of monumental slabs, with staircases leading nowhere. The water will be a reminder of the well that used to supply the Jewish congregation with fresh water in times of per-secution.
- The area lends itself well to the development of a sculpture park, with motifs springing from Jewish culture.

Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial



Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial









Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial



Great Synagogue of Vilnius Memorial



Educational programs

- “Malina” exposition and cinema hall in JCIC cellar

- During WW II the Nazis turned a part of the old town of Vilnius (the JCIC building is located within it) into a Jewish Ghetto. In those terrible times Jews were living here and permanently getting orders to provide certain numbers of people to be taken to Ponary (place close to Vilnius) and to be killed there. Ghetto Jews tried to escape such destiny and were building hiding places, mostly in cellars, where they and especially their children could spend some time without being discovered. This way some of them survived. Such hiding places were called „Malina“.
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- The JCIC building has a cellar which is divided into two parts – one part with the old original walls and a new part with rebuilt cellar walls.
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- In the old part the JCIC has built a possibly similar replica of a „Malina“ accomodating an exposition. This „Malina“ museum is giving a very good illustration of those terrible conditions of Ghetto life.
- In the part with the new cellar walls we are giving lectures about the Holocaust especially for groups of school pupils. In addition we are planning to use this room with the capacity of 50 seats as a small cinema hall where visitors have the possibility to watch films about the Holocaust and the Vilnius Ghetto.
- One or two classes (up to 40-50 pupils) are coming to the JCIC and are led to the „Malina“ place. After seeing it with the guide they have a small lecture.
- Together with documentary films it would be a good occasion for school pupils to learn about the history which was hidden till the fall of the Soviet Union.

Cellar final site completion cost 10000 €

Malina exposition in a cellar



JCIC Cellar new part

The cellar is a place for educational seminars, film shows.







Social Aid Center of Lithuanian Jewish Community and JCIC educational project













Cultural programs

Mono performance annual festival “Shalom”

Festival runs since 2008. In the program there are mono performances of different genres – puppet, humor, musical, pantomime, historical, etc. We had performances from Israel, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Belarussia.

Festival theater – Vilnius puppet theater, former Jewish Vilnius Ghetto theater.

Concerts

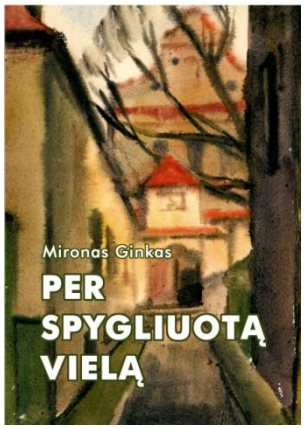
Concerts of Jewish composers, Jewish theme or with Jewish artists. Symphony concerts, chamber concerts, Jazz , klezmer etc.

JCIC director has a deep experience in concert organization. He created an internationally acclaimed Vilnius Municipal Choir “Jauna Muzika”, also he was an executive director of Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra and Russian Drama Theater of Lithuania.

Book publishing

2009

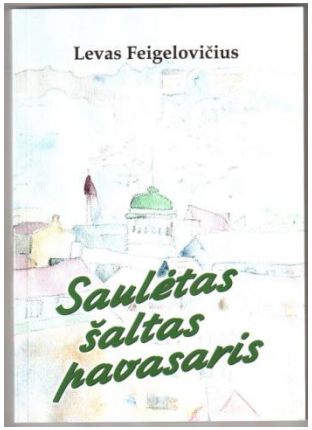
Miron Ginkas „Through barbed wire“



Doctor Miron Ginkas (1912-1983) book – one more tragic history of the Holocaust. When the Kaunas ghetto weekday, grisly sort of people for sending to death in the forts, the daily struggle for survival. After inhumane conditions, as if moving through a dangerous obstacle, it is important not only to prolong physical existence, but also to preserve the dignity and preserve the moral values of solidarity and love. Noble human - Lithuanians who risked their lives to rescue those under persecution, help, staying near, their courage and determination help ghetto fugitives to survive, moreover, after the war, to continue the rescue mission in other bars of being. The author - a former long-time Vilnius Ambulance Station chief physician.

2009

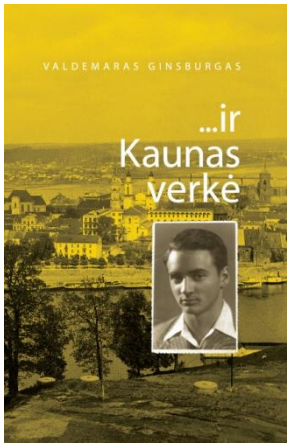
Lev Feigelovicz “Sunny Cold Spring”



The thrilling story of not far away past. The third - fourth decades of XX century Kaunas revives to us, the “Provisional Capital " is visible through the eyes of a teenager, overall triumph of Lithuania for winning the European basketball championship, and - a difficult challenge: exile, loss, struggle for survival. That by not avoiding oppressive stories, a book is written in encouraging manner. Perhaps important for author is a noble life position, fostered by friendship, loyalty to the ideals of goodness, and yet, naturally, a healthy sense of humor.

Book publishing

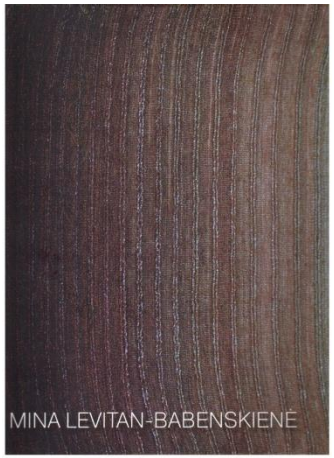
2010



Valdemar Ginsburg "…and Kaunas wept"

Valdemar Ginsburg memories book telling of his childhood in Kaunas and dramatic years of youth at the Kaunas ghetto and Nazi concentration camps. From a large and friendly family - the only survivor of the Holocaust – author dedicates this story to those killed, together, as a warning, to those living, to younger generation, children and children's children.

2011

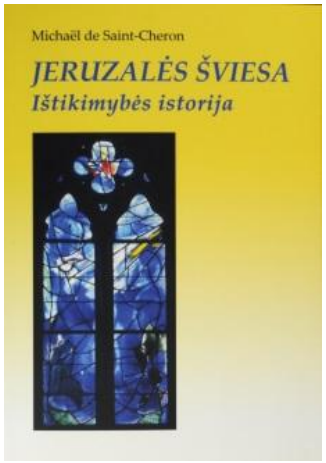


Mina Levitan–Babenskiene - Lithuanian textile arts master

In the review of the Mina's Levitan Exhibition in Kaunas Gallery is noted: "Every true artist is Demiurge. He creates a unique world, which housed the characters, feelings or things of artist's imagination. We, spectators, plunge to a new reality as deeper, as more realistically the artist creates. Furthermore: the artistic world, which attracts us all the time , evokes deep feelings, helps to open up and learn the important things within us ... " In this sense, long-year and fruitful works of textile master from Vilnius Mina Levitan - Babenskiene are huge, attracting and truly world, even it is safe to say - the universe. Now this album will provide an opportunity to discover or to plunge into the familiar and beautiful diversity in pastels.

Book publishing

2010

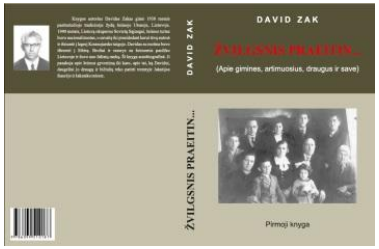


Michael de Saint-Cheron “Jerusalem Light “

If there is a Jewish issue, neutrality is impossible. I am philosemite, and let everyone know it. Andre Malraux

Michael de Saint-Cheron (g.1955) - Cultural historian and essayist. He graduated from the Paris National Institute of Oriental Languages. He studied Judaism at the Eastern European Jewish pedagogical school led by philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. He designated as to his teacher his studies "Four Talmudic lectures” and "Conversations with Emmanuel Levinas'. Monographs, essays designated to Nobel Prize laureate, writer Elie Wiesel, E. Levinas are published in the U.S., Korea and Germany.
Author over thirty years is exploring the works of Andre Malroux, life, philosophy. “Jerusalem Light " (original title: “Malraux et les Juifs”) reveals little explored life and activity moments of prominent person.

2011



David Zak „Looking back“

David Zak author of the book was born in traditional affluent jewish family in 1930 in Utena. In 1940, when Lithuania was occupied by the Soviet Union, the family's assets were nationalized and the week before the start of the war his father was arrested and sent to a labor camp in Krasnoyarsk taiga. David and his mother were exiled to Siberia. David’s brothers and sisters with their families stayed in Lithuania and died at the hands of fascists. This is an autobiographical book, that tells us the story of family's life before the war as well as of what David and many of his friends were forced to suffer during exile in northern Yakutia.

Book publishing

2012

Aelita Ambrulevichiute “Vilnius Merchants Jews 1803–1861 (list)”

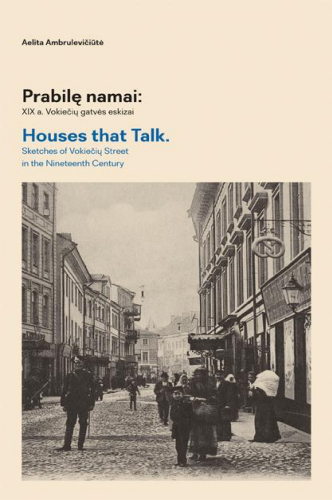


In the 19th century, the merchants of Vilnius founded factories, engaged in trade and financial activities, developed the service sector, took part in the city administration, financed cultural institutions and established charitable organizations. All that played a considerable role in social and economic life; however, the research on the 19th century merchant class in the Lithuanian historiography is only fragmentary. We are still lacking a more comprehensive monograph that would cover the economic and social activities of merchants. The aforementioned factors were the main stimulus that encouraged the publication of the list of Jewish merchants – the dominant group in the economic life of Vilnius (the largest economic and cultural centre among the Lithuanian provinces) – covering the period of 1801–1861.

The main base of sources consists of the documents from the offices of Vilnius City kept at the Lithuanian State Historical Archive (Lith. Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas (LVIA)) (Fund 937): the lists of Vilnius merchants and the books containing the copies of the issue of merchant certificates compiled by the Duma of the city in 1809–1861. The documents can be of use to historians studying the aspects of life of the Jewish community. They can also be useful to the researchers of anthroponyms who try to trace back the evolution of surnames, the fashions of name-giving, as well as sociologists studying the family composition of a certain social group, the marital and child-baring age, the aspects of employment of women and children within a single social group, etc.

Book publishing

2015



Aelita Ambrulevichiute “Houses that talk: Sketches of Vokiečių Street in the Nineteenth Century”

An Inspiring guide in Nineteenth Century Vokiečių Street that reflects its spirit, lifesyle, manner and tradition of that time. Here you will find stories of every house of the Street , their owners and businesses, will know what goods were offered to the citizens, what was advertised and appreciated.

International programs

Development cooperation program
The research of Litvaks' synagogues in Lithuania and Belarus



Program duration: 01/07/2008–01/12/2013

Implementing partners:

Jewish Culture and Information Center

Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Belarusian State University

Vilnius Academy of Arts

Who are Litvaks

Litvaks (Lithuanian Jews) are Ashkenazi Jews with the tradition spread through the region of Grand Duchy of Lithuania

Before World War II the Lithuanian Jewish population was some 160,000, about 7% of the total population

Vilnius had a Jewish community of nearly 100,000, about 45% of the city's total population.

As of 2005 about 4,000 Jews were in Lithuania.

There are still strong communities of Jews of Lithuanian descent especially in Israel, USA, South Africa and Australia

Development Cooperation Program
The research of Litvaks' synagogues in Lithuania and Belarus

Program objectives

- To promote the international research studies of Litvaks' cultural heritage in Lithuania, Belarus
- To enhance international academic exchange arranging the joint expeditions among the students and lecturers
- To undermine the well-established stereotypes, to foster humanistic approach to the common history and heritage
- To draft the proposal for the preservation of synagogue buildings and their reintegration into urban landscape and community life
- To use the visual material collected during the expeditions for exhibitions in Lithuanian and foreign educational institutions

Achieved results 2008 - 2013

The feasibility study for the research of Litvaks' synagogues is drafted

Five joint expeditions are arranged in Belarus (Ashmiany, Lida, Ostrovec, Varniany, Zuprany, Gerviaty, Slonim, Pinsk, Ruzhana, Kamenec, Nesvizh) and Lithuania (Vilnius, Kaunas, Kaišiadorys, Kėdainiai, Jonava, Čekiškė)

The digest of Litvaks' synagogues for prospective research and investigations is compiled

The exhibitions "*Sound of Silence*" and "*The traces of Litvaks' cultural heritage*" introducing the heritage of the Jewish communities of Lithuania and Belarus have been arranged and presented to the large public: during the conference "Holocaust Era Assets" in Prague; the 3rd World Litvak Congress in Vilnius;at the Beit Hatfutsot Diaspora museum in Tel Aviv, Israel



Development Cooperation Program
The research of Litvaks' synagogues in Lithuania and Belarus

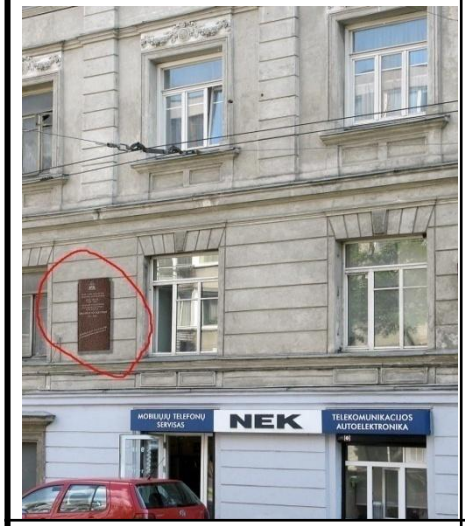
Planned activities

- To organize the field expedition for the research of Jewish architecture and synagogues in Glubokoe, Dolginovo, Mjadel, Budslav, Postavy, Kamayi, Vidzy, Braslaw in Belarus
- To arrange the photography exhibition "*The traces of Litvaks' cultural heritage*" and to open at the Jewish Culture and Information Center in Vilnius
- To compile the digest of Litvaks' synagogues and to translate to English and Russian





Memorial plaques

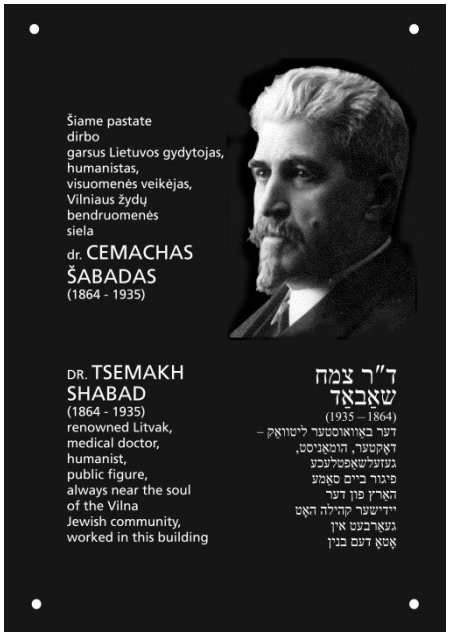
	In 2011 JCIC made and organized the unveiling ceremony of Vilnius Jewish poet Avraam Suckever memorial plaque on the house in Vilnius, Basanaviciaus 22, where he and “Jung Vilne” group poets were reading their poems.
	In 2012 was unveiled a memorial plaque on the house where between 1944 – 1950 40 Israeli citizens, former Vilne Ghetto survivors or their descendants come to Vilnius for a Holocaust commemoration. Many of participants have survived because of the professor Joseph Ribelsky, who established a children - ghetto survivors orphanage. The survivors will make a symbolic “March of living” to Ponary – place of massive Jews killing by Nazis and their collaborants. They will be joined by local Jewish community, foreign countries embassies, Vilnius school pupils, public organizations, citizens and guests. One of events of a whole program will be the plaque unveiling ceremony at the house – former orphanage in Vilna. Address – Žygimantų 6, Vilnius.

Rememberance programs
Memorial plaques



The plaque was unveiled on 21 September, 2014 on a former Jewish, today called M.Marcinkevičiaus hospital in Vilnius, Kauno str. 7/2

Memorial plaque for dr. tsemakh shabbad, famous doctor, leader of the vilna jewish community, builder of modern yiddish culture, , outstanding public figure, humanist



Rememberance programs

Genocide day of Lithuanian Jews commemoration

There is still a lack of knowledge about the Holocaust - people simply do not know what life was in full swing for the "gates of hell." One aspect was chosen - the cultural life of the ghetto, which was fixed in chronicles and diaries.

The remaining letters, documents and photographs probably can not fully reflect all the ghetto horror. However, even under the harsh conditions of ghetto, the Jewish life was accompanied by their own songs. Individual music or poetry born in the ghetto became a massive folklore or the expression of suffering souls, and reflected the feelings of difficult life. Many of poets wrote prose, composers joined theater bands and wrote music for them.

The program consists of Jewish poems, the ghetto memories of his contemporaries, and excerpts of Jewish prose works red by narrator. Together it sound the ghetto songs performed in Yiddish.

Program length - 45 minutes. This is a perfect lesson about the Holocaust, suitable for senior school students, as well as academics youth.

The songs of the ghetto are by Alexander Olšanetski, Avram Brudna, Hirsh Glik, Alexander Volkoviski, Naomi Shemer in addition to the texts by Volfson, Alexander Kacherginsky, Avram Suckever.

Excerpts from Herman Kruk "The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania - Vilnius ghetto and camps Chronicles 1939 – 1944"; Grigory Sur " Inscription - chronicles of 1941-1944 Vilna Ghetto", "Maria Rolnikaite "Diary".

Rikle Glezer, Avram Suckever, Violeta Palčinskaitė, Tomas Venclova, Grigory Kanovich stories and poetry.

The program is planned to perform in a former Vilnius Ghetto theater, today's puppet theater.