

I HAVE SWORN UPON THE ALTAR OF GOD ETERNAL HOSTILITY AGAINST EVERY FORM OF TYRANNY OVER THE MIND OF MAN — THOMAS JEFFERSON

THE ARTHUR SZYK SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE RENAISSANCE
OF ARTHUR SZYK

Vol. 7 No. 1

Newsletter

Spring 2006

Traveling Exhibition Opens at HUC New York Campus

Justice Illuminated on view through April 28, 2006



SATAN LEADS THE BALL. NEW YORK, 1942. In wartime, Szyk became – in the words of an American journalist, an “artist-warrior.” Szyk did not produce art for the sake of art or for the applause of art critics. Rather, he produced art for the masses whom he hoped to enlist in his moral crusade against those who follow evil. Here the leaders of the Axis powers and their collaborators are not portrayed as leaders, but as followers. They follow their leader – Satan, the Devil himself.

A reception is planned at the HUC-JIR gallery for Wednesday, March 22 at 5PM, followed by a lecture from 6:00-7:00 PM with Society curator, Irvin Ungar. For info, phone HUC-JIR 212-824-2205.

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is hosting The Arthur Szyk Society’s traveling exhibition from February 7, 2006 through April 28, 2006 at the Brookdale Center campus Art Gallery, One West 4th Street, New York City.

Following a successful tour of “Justice Illuminated: The Art of Arthur Szyk” to three cities in Poland, June through December 2005, the exhibition has traveled to New York. Arrangements to showcase Szyk’s art in New York were made by HUC staff members, Jean Bloch Rosensaft, Exhibitions Director, and Laura Kruger, Curator of Museum Exhibitions. Jean had attended the opening of the Szyk exhibition, “the Art and Politics of Arthur Szyk” at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC in 2002, and Laura has been a long-time admirer of Szyk. The Society is grateful to these two women for their vision in bringing Szyk back to the New York area, where he resided from late 1940 until his death in 1951.

The Arthur Szyk Society coordinated two delegation trips to Poland in 2005 to coincide with the showing of its traveling exhibition in Warsaw, Lodz, and Krakow. We are pleased to share a summary of our Summer and Fall (Renaissance Tour) Missions. *See pages 3–6*



Szyk Renaissance Tour to Poland, October 2005. In front of the Hotel Copernicus, Krakow. Father Stan Obirek (long coat) is standing in center.



SZYK IN THE NEWS

Arthur Szyk featured in PBS's History Detectives episode

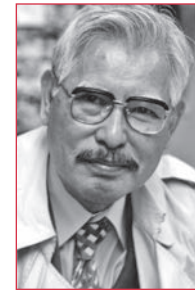
An episode of the PBS series **History Detectives**, shown throughout the United States July 18-20, 2005, featured a story entitled *Arthur Szyk's Earliest Cartoons*. A Polish-American art collector in Southern California came across four striking drawings while browsing an online auction. He believed they bore a remarkable similarity to Szyk's work. The episode followed an art historian as she tried to determine the authenticity of the drawings, uncovering little known facts about Szyk's early work, and tracing his migration through Poland and Europe to the United States. Society Curator, Irvin Ungar, interviewed during the episode, clarified subtle shifts in Szyk's signature over time, which ultimately resulted in the determination that the drawings were indeed authentic early Szyk pieces.



Society Member, Julian Padowicz publishes his memoirs

Julian Padowicz escaped the Holocaust as a small boy, immigrating to the United States with his mother in 1941. His story tells about the challenges he and his mother faced in fleeing from Poland during the Warsaw bombings in 1939. Julian's grandmother and Szyk's mother were sisters; his mother and Szyk were first cousins. In 1941, when Julian and his mother came to the US, they stayed with the Szyks in New York until his mother could find her own apartment near them. "I've written *Mother and Me* with love and humor," Julian says. His story, available from Academy Chicago Publishers in June 2006, has been described as "part Anne Frank, part The Great Escape, and part Marx Brothers."

Japanese Historian exhibits Szyk political cartoons in Japan



Professor Rinjiro Sodei, Szyk collector and political cartoon historian, recently introduced his personal collection of Arthur Szyk's cartoons in Japan for the first time at a meeting of the Japan Cartoonists'

Association. The response to the cartoons was strong. The Japanese people have never seen Szyk's art, primarily due to the fact that caricatures of Emperor Hirohito were prohibited during his reign. Political cartoons in Japan are rather weak, according to Sodei, in a recent article published in monthly newsletter of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan. In an interview with journalist Tony McNicol, he states that "*pressure from the Japanese government was strong before and during the war, and the occupation authorities also suppressed satirical cartoons about themselves. During and before the war the emperor was a god, according to Sodei; the people were not supposed to ridicule or to caricature him at all. To do so would have meant execution. Even after the war, the Japanese people were not allowed to see any kind of political caricature depicting the Japanese leader.*"

Professor Sodei has spent the last 20 years writing a book about Arthur Szyk's political cartoons. When he finished it last year, his publisher refused it, saying, "It is well written, nothing wrong with the content, but we can't print the pictures." Sodei is reasonably certain that the publishers fear that rightwingers would come after them and harass them for printing Szyk's cartoons in Japan. His book is currently under consideration by another university press.

See Szyk in the News on page 7

THE ARTHUR SZYK SOCIETY A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Debbie Spaizman

The Society welcomes Debbie Spaizman, our new Program Coordinator, who takes over for Stephanie Fullen. Debbie is handling all of The Society's day-to-day business, as well as promoting and scheduling the traveling exhibition "Justice Illuminated: The Art of Arthur Szyk" as it makes its way to different venues around the United States. Debbie comes to us with an extensive background in marketing communications and project management in the for-profit hi-tech sector, and brings to The Society her unique talents for organization and system streamlining. We are very pleased to have her here with us, and we already enjoying the positive changes she brings. Welcome Debbie!

SOCIETY MISSIONS TO POLAND



Paul Robbins, Alexandra Szyk Bracie, Stephanie Fullen (trip coordinator), Polish filmmaker Piotr Zarebski, & Irvin Ungar in the Krakow Sheraton lobby. Piotr recently completed a documentary about Szyk.

Summer Mission, 2005

The Arthur Szyk Society celebrated an historic event this summer. The traveling exhibit, "Justice Illuminated" opened in Warsaw after a 70-year hiatus of Szyk exhibits in Poland and the timing was ideal. This is because Poland is experiencing its own renaissance of Jewish culture and as a result, the exhibit was welcomed by Jew and non-Jew alike. The Society was fortunate to have two representatives present in Poland for the opening as well as for the preparation of the upcoming shows and travel tour scheduled for October. The Curator, Irvin Ungar and Program Director, Stephanie Fullen along with donor, Paul Robbins traveled to Krakow, Lodz and Warsaw. What made these events even more special was that Arthur Szyk's daughter, Alexandra Bracie, and family were present as well.



Marek Szukalak and Alexandra in the Lodz Jewish Center. Marek has published several books about Szyk, and is the guardian of the Jewish cemetery in Lodz.

The opening of the exhibit was only one facet of what was an unprecedented moment. The Society Curator was able to make his first visit to Poland and gain a deeper understanding of Szyk's birthplace and art, Szyk's daughter provided rich and detailed stories about Szyk as she relived her childhood moments and the Society was able to play a role in the rebirth of Jewish culture in a country where Jewish life had been dormant for years.

The week began in Krakow where preparations were made for the October opening and where The Society met with influential leaders in Jewish and non-Jewish life. Meetings were arranged with a Jewish publisher, a Catholic Priest and the director of The Jewish Cultural Center, among others. The city was vibrant with culture and youth, especially so because of the Jewish Cultural Festival in which thousands of Jews and non-Jews participated.

The second destination was Lodz, Szyk's birthplace. Here The Society joined Alexandra Bracie as she returned to her Polish hometown. Witnessing her return was a tender, emotionally difficult and gratifying experience for all involved. The day consisted of visiting her grandfather's grave, finding her neighborhood and visiting Poland's own specialist on Arthur Szyk. The day ended with the premier of a documentary film on Szyk in the city's main theater to a packed audience. Alexandra's address in Polish won the

hearts of many and the enthusiasm towards Szyk was apparent by the Q & A session and the media crews who were there to film the event for local television.

Warsaw was the final destination of the week and it proved to be just as exciting as Krakow and Lodz. The Society again met with local leaders including representatives from the diplomatic core and leaders in art, history and education. The exhibit opening was sponsored by the U.S. Embassy Warsaw and the Ambassador delivered a thoughtful and eloquent address to officially begin the event. Tad Taube, an exhibit sponsor, and his entourage from The Bay Area were honored guests as well. Tad, Alexandra, Irvin and the museum director each contributed poignant remarks. Once again, TV crews were present along with close to 300 guests from many nations and professions.

These are simply the highlights of what was truly a historic trip to Poland. The impact of such an event on The Society, Alexandra, participating museums and involved individuals is difficult to measure. In fact, it will take a considerable length of time to truly understand how significant this trip was to all people involved and their families. Certainly The Szyk family is forever changed by Alexandra's brave journey to a country with a mixed history towards Jewish life and with such personal importance.



Szyk's father's tombstone in Lodz's 100 year-old cemetery, where over 160,000 Jews are buried. Salomon Szyk owned a textile factory in Lodz where young Arthur grew up.

Summer Mission, 2005



Stephanie teaches at Lauder Day School, in Warsaw, while Paul assists.



Szyk Justice Illuminated exhibition at Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw.



Dick & Catherine Talbot (Szyk's granddaughter) with Alexandra, Irvin, & Stephanie at the July 4th reception, US Ambassador's home in Warsaw.

Szyk Renaissance Tour, Fall 2005

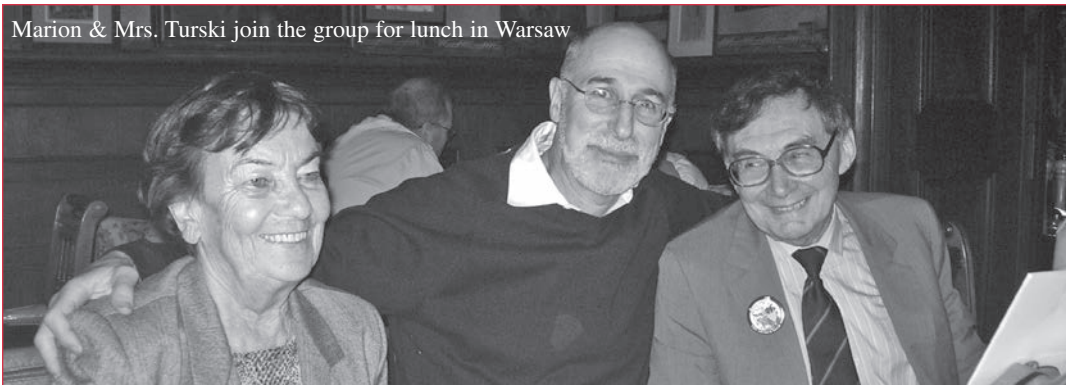
On October 21st, representatives of the Arthur Szyk Society, led by the Society Curator, arrived in Krakow to inaugurate The Szyk Renaissance Tour to Poland. For one week, Szyk delegates experienced a resurgence of interest in Arthur Szyk and Jewish life in Poland, visited places of memory, and dialogued with Poles and Jews engaged in building a new democratic Poland, while enhancing the legacy of Polish Jewry.



In front of Schindler's factory in Krakow

More than two years in the planning, the Renaissance Tour enabled its thirteen participants (from the San Francisco Bay Area and Houston, Texas) to truly meet and be touched by Poles and Jews who are today reshaping Poland, Jewish life in Poland, fostering Polish-Jewish dialogue, and enhancing relations between Poland and America. Among those individuals who spoke to and shared meals with the Society delegation were: Former Jesuit priest **Stan Obirek**, Holocaust survivor and political analyst and chairman of the Jewish Historical Institute and new Museum of Polish Jewry (to be built in the former Warsaw Ghetto) **Marion Turski**, Taube Foundation representative and Midrasz publisher **Kostek Gebert**, TV and documentary filmmaker **Piotr Zarebski** (who also recently made a film in Poland about Szyk), Poland Chief Rabbi **Michael Schudrich**, US Consul General **Ken Fairfax**, Lodz journalist, organizer and community activist **Joanna Podolska**, Ph.D. student and guide **Tomasz Cebulski**, **Joachim Russek** (Director of the Center for Jewish Culture in Kazimierz), Klezmerhois owner and publisher **Malgosia Ornat**

Marion & Mrs. Turski join the group for lunch in Warsaw



Photos courtesy of Pete Berkowitz and Richard Strax



Joachim Russek, Director of The Judaica Foundation - Center for Jewish Culture, toasts the Szyk exhibit.



Visiting Galicia Jewish Museum in Kazimierz with director, Chris Schwarz



On Wawel Castle grounds with guide Thomas Cebulski



Candlelight dinner at Klezmerhois, Krakow. Lynka and Ron, (upper photo) and Richard and Barbara, (below)

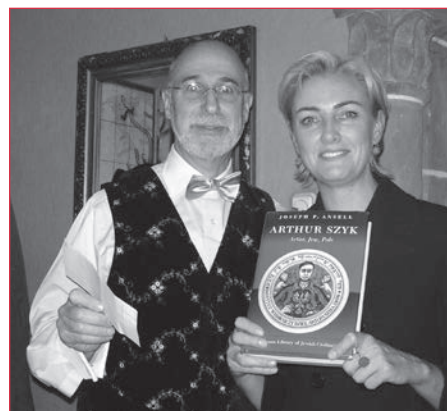
(who is currently republishing Joseph Ansell’s book about Arthur Szyk into Polish) and Members of the progressive congregation of **Beit Warszawa**, with whom the Society participants celebrated Simchat Torah in Warsaw!

The Society was so fortunate to have the planning expertise of **Stephanie Fullen**, former Program Coordinator, and the on-the-spot Poland logistics coordinator **Eva Wierzynska**. All Renaissance participants stayed in first class hotels and dined at the finest Polish restaurants.

General support from the Taube Foundation for Jewish Culture and the Robbins Family Philanthropic Fund assisted in the planning and programming of the tour, and in the opening of the Krakow exhibition “Justice Illuminated: the Art of Arthur Szyk”, attended by the delegation. An additional subsidy by Paul and Sheri Robbins produced a large keepsake poster of the exhibition.

Daily tours of city high spots in Krakow, Lodz, and Warsaw, included castles, palaces and parks, historic institutions and cultural icons, churches and synagogues, cemeteries and museums, Chopin con-

certs and klezmer music – yet it was the people and their stories of their past and present that provided the nourishment and soul-fulness of our experience.



Irvin presents check from The Arthur Szyk Society to Malgosia Ornat of Austeria Publishing in support of their planned translation of Joseph Ansell’s book about Szyk into Polish.

Of course, when appropriate, Szyk’s art and its messages were part of our daily conversations: our Krakow guide, who pointed to sculptures of dragons, and church steeples, and of Wawel Castle façades, which were clearly present in

Szyk’s art; our Jesuit Priest, who uses Szyk’s art in his teaching of his classes on the Holocaust; our US Consulate representative, who spoke of Szyk’s American ideals; and our meeting with the publishing house who plans to publish Joseph Ansell’s book “Arthur Szyk: Artist, Pole, Jew” into Polish.

And, of course, the opening of the Szyk exhibition in Krakow was a high spot of the trip, at which our society curator spoke.

How can one measure the impact of such an experience – perhaps in the stories that will stay with the participants forever, or the impact our visit had upon the Poles who had contact with our perceptions of Polish-Jewish relations. For some, Arthur Szyk had a role to play as a link and bridge in fostering dialog – for as a Jew and Pole he often spoke to the commonality of purpose – and it is that inspiration that served as the basis for creating an experience which goes beyond the telling, beyond the pages, and beyond the years – and we so privileged to participate in this journey have traveled and transcended into a new dimension of meaning and consequence of uplift, insight, and inspiration.



Warsaw US Consul General Ken Fairfax contemplates Pete's question as Charlotte and Richard listen in



Passing under the gate at Auschwitz, "Arbeit Macht Frei"



Israeli flag carried by youth at Auschwitz

Gail Shak, Mission Participant Summarizes her Experience

Our trip to Poland with the Szyk Renaissance Tour was a profound and life-changing experience. I had not fully appreciated what an important Jewish experience a trip to Poland would be. I came away feeling that while most of us acknowledge that as Jews we should all experience Israel, it is equally important that we, and our children, all experience Poland as well. There I felt that recent Jewish history was tapping me on my shoulder at every street corner and around every bend. I heard whispers from my ancestors in every Jewish neighborhood, ghetto, synagogue, umshlagplatz, factory, and graveyard.

The trip was enhanced a thousand-fold by the many guides and speakers that were arranged in advance. What a unique and valuable opportunity it was to spend time with a photographer of Jewish life in Poland, a Jesuit priest working to improve Jewish-Christian relations, a Hebrew professor from Warsaw University, and the variety of journalists, authors, filmmakers, book publishers, historians, concentration camp survivors, and diplomats that were assembled. Our guides were so knowledgeable about Jewish history and culture, and they were gentle and thoughtful, and interested in getting to know us as Jews. Truly, one of the best parts of this trip was the opportunity to talk with all of these Polish guides and friends. They seemed as interested in learning about us, as we were in learning about them.

The opening of the Arthur Szyk exhibit at the Jewish Cultural Center was, to borrow from Yiddish, *an ois-nam* (outstanding event)! I think the group got a lot out of every site, including our visit to the Center for Jewish Culture in Cracow, the tour of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and the visit to the Warsaw Ghetto. I will

always remember spending Simchat Torah with the congregants of Beit Warszawa. What an experience to meet these Jews who, with their Aron Kodesh and two Torahs, were clearly trying to learn, trying to daven, trying to be Jews. Everyone was drawn in, participating under the tallit, benching the new baby present, and dancing with the Torah scrolls.

I found all of our accommodations to be just first-rate. The Hotel Copernicus, built around a typical Polish courtyard, was particularly special to me, as I had always heard my father talk of the courtyard where he

grew up in Poland, and I imagined that it was just the same. And ahhh! the food! How many delicious plates of kreplach, pirogi, cabbage and meat, kasha and mushrooms, duckling and cherries, and salmon en croute do you think that we consumed?!

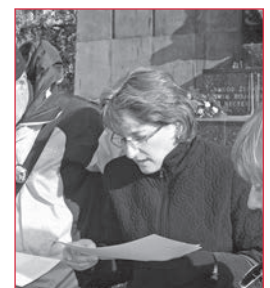
Since my return home I have advised so many people to visit Poland. The Szyk Renaissance Tour succeeded in demonstrating that American Jews are indeed the beneficiaries of Polish Judaism, the inheritors of that culture that has yet to be fully acknowledged and appreciated in our own day.



Celebrating Simchat Torah services at Beit Warszawa Congregation, the first liberal Simchat Torah service in Poland since before the Holocaust



In the Lodz cemetery. Gail leads group in Yiddish prayers at Rappaport Memorial in Warsaw Ghetto (far right)

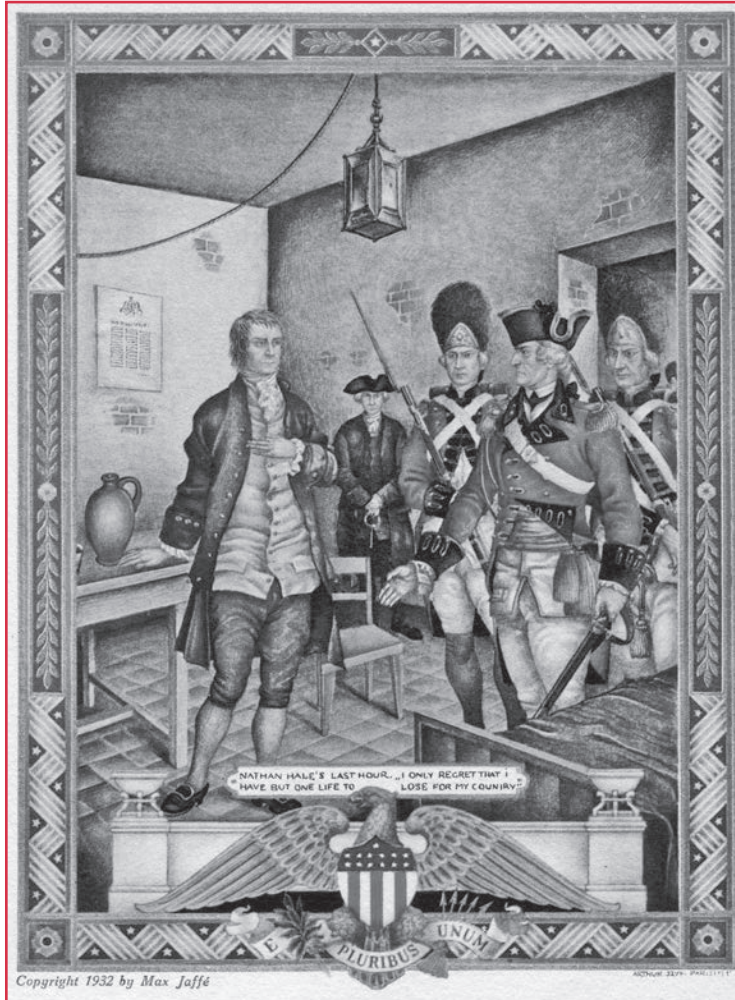


Nathan Hale Middle School Students Select Szyk as "Taking A Stand In History"

Three 6th grade students at Nathan Hale Middle School in Coventry, CT, wanted to learn more about the Holocaust and asked their enrichment teacher, Thomas Dzicek, for some help. As they searched the internet they literally stumbled on to Arthur Szyk, and upon discovering him, they also learned that he lived in Connecticut. Mr. Dzicek asked the students to consider doing a project on Arthur Szyk for the National History Day contest. Through the contest, students in grades 6-12 engage in discovery and interpretation of historical topics related to an annual theme. In the process, they hone their talents and produce creative and scholarly projects in the form of exhibits, documentaries, historical papers, or performances. After a series of district and state contests, the program culminates with a national competition at the University of Maryland in College Park each June. The theme for this year's history day contest is "Taking a Stand in History: People, Ideas, Events." Working with their school History Day coordinator the 6th graders visited the New Canaan, CT Historical Society to learn more about Arthur Szyk. The students also interviewed the Society Curator, and Alexandra Szyk Bracie by phone to get more information about Szyk for their project. We wish the students much success with their choice of Szyk as "one who took a stand." The Society donated a copy of Szyk's Declaration of Independence, to Nathan Hale Middle School in honor of the students' project.

Dowling College and the Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island Present 'Arthur Szyk: A Genealogical Journey'

As part of its year-long celebration of Jewish and Jewish-American Contributions to American Culture, Dowling College, in partnership with the Jewish Genealogical Society of Long Island, is pleased to announce "A Genealogical Journey" on Sunday, March 26 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. The presentation will be held at Dowling's Rudolph Campus in Oakdale. "A Genealogical Journey" will be presented by Professor Rhoda Miller, a Certified Genealogist, and Vice President of the Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island. Prof. Miller's presentation will take place from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. in the Hunt Room of Fortunoff Hall and will focus on Arthur Szyk. Using genealogical methods, the life of Arthur Szyk will emerge to reveal his significant contribution to Jewish-American culture. In addition, the Dowling College Library will feature a first floor exhibit of the life and work of Arthur Szyk. The exhibit will run through March 31, 2006. Featured during the entire program will be a book display of Holocaust and genealogy related materials. For more information, please call (631) 244-3030.



NATHAN HALE'S LAST HOUR [from Szyk's WASHINGTON AND HIS TIMES series], printed in Vienna, 1932.

During the campaign about New York in the summer of 1776, Nathan Hale, son of a sturdy New England family, responded to the call for volunteers to reconnoitre the British forces on Long Island and in New York. He was captured on his way back to the American lines and brought before Sir William Howe at his headquarters in the Beekman Mansion in New York. Sentenced to death as a spy, he accepted his fate with a dignity and composure which won the admiration of the English officer, John Montresor, who later reported the details of his execution on the morning of September 22, including the famous words from his farewell address: "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." This is one of 38 paintings Szyk completed about George Washington and the American Revolution even before the artist first came to America for a short visit in 1934.

Society plans booth for Israel in the Gardens festival

As part of its outreach program, The Society will have an information booth at this year's Israel in the Gardens festival at Yerba Buena Gardens, in San Francisco, CA. The festival, the largest annual Jewish community event in Northern California, which attracts approximately 15,000 people, will take place on Sunday, June 4, 2006 from 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Justice Illuminated travels to University of Northern Iowa, Winter 2007

The Society is proud to announce that our traveling exhibit, *Justice Illuminated: The Art of Arthur Szyk*, will be featured at the UNI Gallery of Art, at the University of Northern Iowa, January 8, 2007 - March 1, 2007. UNI gallery space is such that Darrell Taylor, Gallery Director, has requested several original Szyk artworks be included with the traveling exhibition panels. An opening reception will be held on January 8, 2007, 7:00 P.M.

OUR NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Dennis Anderson - *Highland Park, IL*
 Aviva Astrinsky - *New York, NY*
 Allan Avery - *Tulsa, OK*
 Fiorella Bassan - *Rome, Italy*
 Jeanne & Stanley Baum -
Philadelphia, PA
 Jo Anne Bewley - *Weaverville, NC*
 Perry Bolkin - *Fair Lawn, NJ*
 Marvin Bostin - *Stamford, CT*
 Jennifer Breger - *Silver Spring, MD*
 Harvey & Penny Brode -
Farmington Hills, MI
 Diana Bryan - *Saugerties, NY*
 Bette Chachkes - *New Canaan, CT*
 Arnold Chekow - *Southampton, NY*
 Alden Cohen - *Evanston, IL*
 Ron Djuren - *Durham, NC*
 Elizabeth Edwards - *The British Library,*
London, England
 George & Diane Frankenstein -
San Francisco, CA
 Stanley Fried - *Roslyn Heights, NY*
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San Francisco, CA
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 Inez White - *Scottsdale, AZ*
 Richard Woldenberg - *Highland Park, IL*
 Robert Wolf - *New York, NY*
 Bernard Zuzo - *Lake Barrington, IL*

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Society would like to thank all members and supporters for their donations this year, and we would like to extend a special thank you to the following individuals and foundations for their generous contributions:

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 Jerome Stern Family Foundation
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 Pete & Charlotte Berkowitz
 Arlene Finger
 Barbara Mortkowitz
 Gail Shak
 David & Pauline Soffa
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\$250 - \$500

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 Bernard Rosenson
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 Albert Small
 Sandy Stadtler
 Green Library, Stanford University



Which Do You Prefer? ... The 8th of Montgomery.
 New York, 1943.

A caricature of Percy Aldridge Grainger (Australian-born American pianist and composer, 1882-1991) and a soldier are sitting on a New York park bench conversing. The GI asks Grainger, "Which do you prefer? The 6th of Tchaikovsky or the 7th of Shostakovich?..." The composer replies, (I prefer) "The 8th of Montgomery!..."