



The Arthur Szyk Society

Dedicated to the 20th century master illuminator, miniature painter and activist-artist



Vol. 11

Newsletter

December 2011

UCLA Opens Exhibit January 4, 2012

Los Angeles Symposium To Spotlight Artist as Man of Dialogue

The **Dortort Center for Creativity in the Arts** at the University of California, Los Angeles, will host “Justice Illuminated: The Art of Arthur Szyk” (January 4–March 23, 2012), the long-running exhibition of The Society’s Seymour Fromer Traveling Exhibition Program. The exhibition, which has never before traveled to Southern California, is co-sponsored by the **UCLA Center for Jewish Studies** and **Hillel at UCLA**.

Under the coordination of **Professor Todd Samuel Presner** (Sady and Ludwig Kahn Director, UCLA Center for Jewish

See page 14



“Jewish Sailors Exporting Polish Products Through the Port of Danzig,” Statute of Kalisz (Paris, 1927)

Polish Resurgence of Arthur Szyk Led by Poles Exhibitions in Kraków and Łódź Broaden European Revival



Installation of Szyk exhibition in Poznański Palace, Łódź

In a stunning turn of events, the year 2011 saw not one but two independently organized exhibitions in Arthur Szyk’s native Poland, each of which emphasized the artist’s role as a bridge between people and nations.

In Kraków, “Building Bridges: The Legacy of Polish-Jewish Artist Arthur Szyk” ran at the **Stradomskie Centrum Dialogu Kraków** [Stradom Dialogue Center] from June 20 through November 10, 2011. The exhibition of reproduction art was the result of months of work by **Dr. Aleksander Skotnicki**, a world-renowned physician, professor of medicine at the **Jagiellonian University**, and founder of Stradomskie Centrum Dialogu Kraków. A longtime admirer of Szyk’s art, Aleksander wished to spark dialogue on Poland’s past and present by sharing the artist’s work with the public.

A few months later, in Szyk’s hometown of Łódź, “Arthur Szyk: Man of Dialogue” (September 14–October 16, 2011) opened at the **Poznański Palace** at the **Museum of the City of Łódź**. The exhibition curator **Joanna Podolska**—a highly respected journalist and Łódź ghetto historian—is the

director of the non-profit **Marek Edelman Center for Dialogue**. (If Joanna seems familiar, it is because she has been an active contributor to Szyk scholarship since The Society’s missions to Poland in 2005.)

In addition to offering overviews of Arthur Szyk’s life and art, both exhibition venues featured Szyk’s rare *Statute of Kalisz*, of which only 30 or 40 copies are believed to exist. Kraków displayed a portfolio that Szyk inscribed to Ignacy Paderewski (1860–1941), the pianist and second Prime Minister of Poland. This previously unknown copy of the *Statute*, which Aleksander discovered while preparing the Kraków exhibition, was in the holdings of the Musicology Department at the Jagiellonian University. It was unveiled during a celebration in Kraków on October 10

See page 8 for more on the RESURGENCE

THE ARTHUR SZYK SOCIETY

A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

1200 Edgehill Drive
Burlingame, CA 94010
Tel: 650.343.9588
Fax: 650.579.6014
info@szyk.org
www.szyk.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sander L. Stadler
President

Wayne Feinstein
Vice President

Dr. Charles S. Syers
President Emeritus

Pamela H. Stein
Secretary

Irvin Ungar
Curator

Alex Lauterbach

John F. Rothmann

HONORARY BOARD

Alexandra Szyk Bracie
Daughter of Arthur Szyk

Theodore Bikel

DeeDee M. Coleman

Stanisław Obirek

John T. Pawlikowski

Jacob and Margie Pressman

Art Spiegelman

Paul Von Blum

Elie Wiesel

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Allison Chang, *Editor*

Irvin Ungar

Ken Hickmott Graphics

SOCIETY COORDINATOR

Allison Chang



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members and Friends of The Arthur Szyk Society,

The past year has been one for the record books. Two Szyk exhibitions in two major cities in Poland (*page 1*). A successful exhibition at a world-class fine arts museum (*page 4*). A popular edition of Szyk's Passover Haggadah from the nation's premier fine art publisher (*page 13*). The first-ever scholarly symposium on Szyk's *Statute of Kalisz* (*page 14*).

These successes prove that the Arthur Szyk renaissance has grown to be a self-sustaining, international movement larger and broader than The Society itself (though we will still take the lead in all matters Szyk). What a wonderful validation of the hard work we have done thus far—and will continue to do—with your support.

This holiday season, help The Society maintain its momentum. Make a gift or renew your membership today by returning the enclosed contribution envelope. Or contact us at **650.343.9588**—we are always delighted to take your call.

Thank you for enabling us to share Arthur Szyk's wonderful art and message with the world.

Peace and health to you,

Sandy Stadler, President

New Honorary Board Members

Rabbi Jacob and Margie Pressman met as teenagers on Yom Kippur in front of Congregation Beth Am Israel (Philadelphia). The Pressmans first met Arthur Szyk when Jacob, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary (New York), was hired in the 1940s as an assistant to **Rabbi Ben-Zion Bokser** at the **Forest Hills Jewish Center** (FHJC) in Queens, New York. While there, Jacob worked with Szyk on his designs for the Holy Ark of FHJC. Margie discovered The Arthur Szyk Society several years ago, rekindling her and her husband's love affair with Szyk's art and legacy. The rabbi emeritus of Temple Beth Am (Beverly Hills), Jacob is known and admired for his peerless work as a pioneer of Jewish life and institutions in Los Angeles throughout the 20th century. Ever the renaissance man, Jacob's activism included marching with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Montgomery, Alabama in 1965. According to Jacob, in their 70+ years together "Margie has been my inspiration, critic, provider and supporter." We are so delighted to include Szyk's personal friends on our Honorary Board.



A native of New Orleans, **Reverend Dr. DeeDee M. Coleman** is the Pastor of the Russell Street Missionary Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan, and the Founder and Executive Director of the Wings of Faith, Inc. where she implements a one-stop resource center for ex-offenders and various community based programs. In 2007 DeeDee received the Edwin T. Dalhberg Peace Award for outstanding work in prison ministry and reentry services to this country.



A pro-Israel advocate, DeeDee is nationally recognized as a speaker on issues of human and social rights and also serves on the National Council for the **American Israel Public Affairs Committee** (AIPAC). She also is the Chair for the Progressive National Baptist Convention's Social Justice and Prison Ministry Project, and locally she serves as 2nd Vice President for the Council of Baptist Pastors of Detroit and Vicinity.

She has a B.A. from William Tyndale College in Farmington Hills, Michigan; a M.A. from Marygrove College in Detroit, Michigan; and a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

Dr. Stanisław Obirek (*see page 9*)

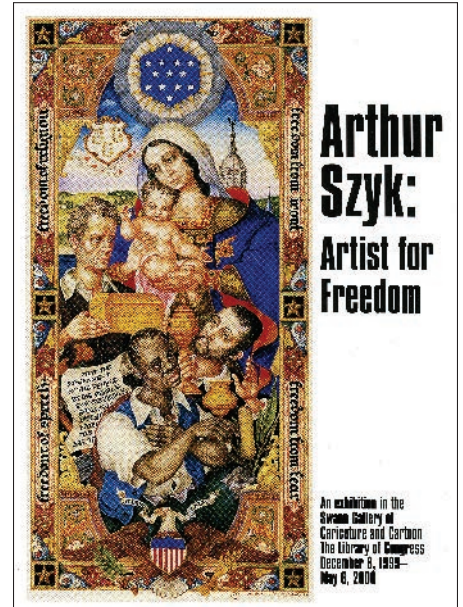
Library of Congress Continues to Acclaim Szyk

America's oldest federal cultural institution, the **Library of Congress**, featured *The Szyk Haggadah* alongside its prized *Washington Haggadah* in an illustrated article in its glossy *Information Bulletin* (Vol 70, No. 4) published April 2011. "Headline Haggadot: Two Rare

This is the second time Szyk's art has been featured so prominently in the Library's *Information Bulletin*. Szyk was also featured as the cover story for the January 2000 issue (Vol 59, No. 1), which coincided with the exhibition *Arthur Szyk: Artist for Freedom* at the Swann Gallery of Caricature and Cartoon at the Library of Congress.

But Szyk's history with the Library of Congress goes even farther back. The artist's first exhibition at the Library (January 28–February 1, 1934) featured the thirty-eight miniature paintings of *Washington and His Times*, a series dealing with the American Revolution. During Szyk's visit to Washington, DC, to view the exhibition, Congress awarded him the George Washington Bicentennial Medal.

Today the Prints and Drawings Division of the Library of Congress has a significant collection of original Szyk art, including his "Declaration of Independence of the United States of America" (New Canaan, 1950). It also owns the 1940 vellum Szyk Haggadah, as well as the Premier Edition published by Historiana in 2008.



Read Library of Congress articles about Szyk

"The Art of Arthur Szyk: 'Artist for Freedom' Featured in Library Exhibition" *Information Bulletin*, January 2000
www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/0001/szyk.html

"Headline Haggadot: Two Rare Passover Texts Published in Facsimile" *Information Bulletin*, April 2011
www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/1104/haggadot.html



Declaration of Independence of the United States (New Canaan, 1950); Original artwork gifted anonymously to the Library of Congress in 1999

Passover Texts Published in Facsimile," an essay by Audrey Fischer, devoted three pages to Szyk's Haggadah, the new popular edition of *The Haggadah* published by Abrams Books, and Szyk's long history with the national library of the United States.

Society Curator Speaks at the Library of Congress

On April 4, 2011, Society Curator Irvin Ungar visited the Library of Congress to present the illustrated lecture "*Arthur Szyk and his Passover Haggadah*," sponsored by the Hebraic Section of the African and Middle Eastern Division, the Rare Book and Special Collections Division and the Prints and Photographs Division. The special event was coordinated by Dr. Peggy K. Pearlstein, Head of the Hebraic Section at the Library of Congress.

The entire talk (46 minutes) may be viewed as a webcast on the Library of Congress website at www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature_wdesc.php?rec=5150

Szyk Exhibition at the Palace of the Legion of Honor an Art Historical Triumph

Curated by Karin Breuer and Colleen Terry of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF), the new Legion of Honor exhibition *Arthur Szyk: Miniature Paintings and Modern Illuminations* (December 4, 2010–March 27, 2011) was an art historical triumph as well as a genuine crowd-pleaser. The beautiful display included sixty original works by Arthur Szyk, ordered chronologically, plus a handful of comparative works by Léon Bakst, Aubrey Beardsley, and Albrecht Dürer. Society spies who spoke with museum guards stationed at Gallery 1 reported that the Szyk exhibition was amazingly popular with the public, attracting a high percentage of repeat visitors. Indeed, the illustrated exhibition brochure—with an original essay by guest curator Irvin Ungar—was reprinted several times to meet strong demand.



Arthur Szyk: Miniature Paintings and Modern Illuminations in Gallery 1 of the Legion of Honor
Image copyright the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Photographer Jorge Bachman.

Concurrent with the exhibition, the panel discussion “Social Justice in the Work of Arthur Szyk” was held at the Legion’s Florence Gould Theater on January 30, 2011. The discussion, which explored the artist’s commitment to the ideals of social justice, was moderated by Lee Bycel, executive director of the Redford Center (Berkeley, California). Panel participants included: Naomi Natale, founder of art non-profit One Million Bones (www.onemillionbones.org); Paul Von Blum, senior lecturer in African American Studies and Communication Studies at UCLA and Szyk Society Honorary Board



(left to right) Lee Bycel, Naomi Natale, Paul Von Blum, and Irvin Ungar
in the Legion’s Florence Gould Theater

member; and Irvin Ungar. The symposium may be viewed in its entirety online: search for “Szyk” on FAMSF’s YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/FAMSF.

Media Coverage of

In addition to features in the Fall 2010 members’ magazine of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the Szyk exhibition also attracted glowing coverage from a full spectrum of publications.

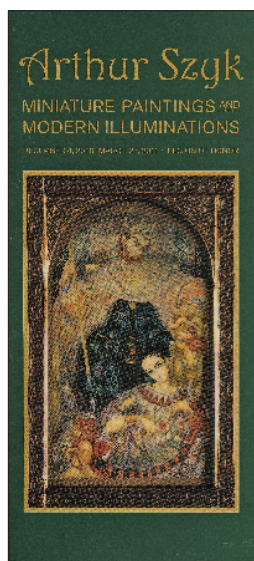
—“His champions say **Szyk is finally getting recognition as a creator of serious art.** A new exhibition, *Arthur Szyk: Miniature Paintings and Illuminations*, presented by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, **reveals Szyk for the master painter he was.**”

—“Brush with greatness: Mastery of artist on display at San Francisco Museum,” Dan Pine, *j. the Jewish news weekly of Northern California*, December 16, 2010

“I fell in love again today with **a man who illuminated my childhood dreams.** My grandparents had a lovely library, which included, among other books, Szyk’s illustrated Hans Christian Andersen’s *Fairy Tales*, *The Arabian Nights Entertainments* and *The Canterbury Tales*. I didn’t know his name—as a child, who bothers with the name of the illustrator or that he was a tireless fighter for justice, a political cartoonist of the highest order during WWII and a man who combined amazing skills with 20th century political acumen.... He has been called a modern Byzantine and the many intricate illustrations at the Legion exhibition justify this title. ...[The] **Legion exhibition places his work firmly within the realm of fine art, a major milestone in returning Szyk to his rightful place in the art world.**”

—“Arthur Szyk at the Legion of Honor,” Nancy Ewart, SF Museum Examiner blog, *SF Examiner*, December 19, 2010

Legion of Honor Exhibition



Legion of Honor exhibition brochure featuring "David and Saul" (Paris, 1921) on cover

"...When cartoonist Arthur Szyk was sketching his dense, fantastically detailed news caricatures, politics were still in need of explication—and all the more better if it was beautiful to boot. How else can one explain why one of the most whimsical artists of the 1930s and '40s became best known for his sketches of Hitler and Stalin playing poker? ... His details are so extraordinary it's no wonder that a lot of adult children will get a sense of time travel vertigo dipping into his stash of kid's book illustrations. The flowers with faces Szyk brought into being for the 1945 edition of *Andersen's Fairy Tales* -- well Walt, you have some explaining to do about Alice's rose garden buds. **You should be witness to all this, of course.**"

— "Arthur Szyk: beauty in fairy tale... and Stalin," Caitlin Donohue, *San Francisco Bay Area Guardian*, December 27, 2011

"Political cartoons may often be little more than hastily scribbled broadsides, but Arthur Szyk, a Jewish refugee to the United States from Poland, turned the form into fine art."

— "The Pen that Satirized the Sword," Joel Schechter, Arty Semite blog, *The Jewish Daily Forward*, January 4, 2011

The Society led docent tours for more than two dozen groups, including **Congregation Emanu-El** (San Francisco), **Temple Beth El** (San Mateo, California), **Congregation Beth David** (Saratoga, California), the **Kraków-San Francisco Sister Cities Association**, Peninsula JCC Seniors, and a group of physicians from Kaiser South San Francisco. Among numerous school groups attending the exhibition were the classes of Society member **RuthAnn Spike**, a teacher at Del Mar Middle School (Tiburon, California). The Society Curator gave multiple talks about Szyk throughout the Bay Area both during and following the run of the exhibition, including the illustrated lectures "Arthur Szyk: Miniature Paintings and Illuminations" at the **Burlingame Public Library** on December 8, 2010 and "The Exquisite Art of Arthur Szyk" at the **Commonwealth Club** on June 13, 2011.

Lead sponsors of the Legion exhibition were the **Koret Foundation** and the **Taube Foundation for Jewish Life and Culture**, with additional support provided by **Bernard and Barbro Osher**.

This program at the Burlingame Public Library was inspired by the San Francisco Legion of Honor exhibition



"The world is blessed..." (New York, 1945)

Honoring Greatness with Art

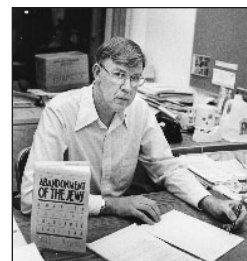
In recognition of Bernard Osher's lifetime of philanthropy for education and the arts, an original Szyk work of art—"The world is blessed most by men who do things, and not by those who merely talk about them..."—was donated to the Fine Arts of Museums of San Francisco in his honor. Inspired by a quote from James Oliver, "The world is blessed..." was the first of a series of twenty-three inside front covers Szyk illustrated for *Coronet* magazine between May 1945 and April 1948.

Peter Bergson at the Wyman Institute, Yad Vashem and StandWithUs

After decades at the margins of history, this past year the controversial activist **Peter Bergson** (a colleague of Szyk's) and his work to rescue European Jewry during the Holocaust have attracted international attention.

Arthur Szyk served as the one-man art department for Bergson's organizations, while most of the text for Bergson's ads and programs was written by Hollywood playwright **Ben Hecht**. (Hecht was the first screenwriter to receive an Academy Award for an Original

About the Wyman Institute



David S. Wyman is the author of several books about the United States' response to the events of the Holocaust, including the landmark best-

seller *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945* (Pantheon, 1984). From 1966 until his retirement in 1991, he taught at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where he was the Josiah DuBois professor of history and was twice chairman of the Judaic studies program.

Based on the research of Professor Wyman, the non-profit David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies focuses on the abandonment of Europe's Jews during the Nazi era, the efforts to promote rescue, and the moral and historical lessons of those experiences. The Wyman Institute strives to bridge the gap between the scholarly community and the general public, by making the historical record accessible to a broader audience through exhibits, speakers, educational curricula, and other forms of media.

For more information, visit

www.wymaninstitute.org



We Will Never Die at Madison Square Garden, March 9, 1943

A leader of the resurgence of interest in Bergson has been **Dr. Rafael Medoff**, Director of **The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies**, who has written several books on the Bergson Group. In July 2011 Yad Vashem—Israel's official memorial to the Holocaust and an important center for Holocaust studies—and the Wyman Institute cosponsored the international conference "The Bergson Group and America's Response to the Final Solution." It was the first time Yad Vashem had hosted an event about the Bergsonites.

Bergson (1915–2001, born Hillel Kook) was a prominent Revisionist Zionist and member of the Irgun who relocated to the United States in 1940 to incite the American public (especially American Jews) to rescue the Jews of Europe from Nazi genocide. Under the umbrella of the Bergson Group were several committees (many of which counted Arthur Szyk as a member), including: the Committee for a Jewish Army of Stateless and Palestinian Jews; the Hebrew Committee for National Liberation; the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe; and the American League for a Free Palestine.

Screenplay, and his credits include *Scarface* (1932), *Gone with the Wind* (1939), *A Farewell to Arms* (1957), *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1962), and *Casino Royale* (1967).) Szyk illustrated the program for Hecht's play *We Will Never Die* (1943), which dramatized the plight of Europe's Jews.



Arthur Szyk's art reproduced on the front cover of the program for "We Will Never Die"

Encouragingly, more people today look to Peter Bergson as an activist role model. For example, every year the non-profit educational organization **StandWithUs** (www.StandWithUs.com) presents the Peter Bergson Award for outstanding service on behalf of the Jewish community and the State of Israel. (Founded in 2001, StandWithUs works to combat anti-Semitism and inform the public of the facts regarding Israel as it stands up to Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movements.) At this year's annual StandWithUs banquet in Los Angeles, posters of Arthur Szyk's *Visual History of the State of Israel* were presented to each attendee.

In a perfect world, Bergson would be alive to see the world come to understand and admire his role in rescuing thousands of Europe's Jews more than sixty years ago. Though that recognition was too long in coming, for the sake of those he saved, the memory of Peter Bergson live on forever.

Recommended Viewing

The Wyman Institute recently created the online exhibition "The Bergson Group: A History in Photographs," which may be viewed at www.wymaninstitute.org/special/bergsonexhibit.

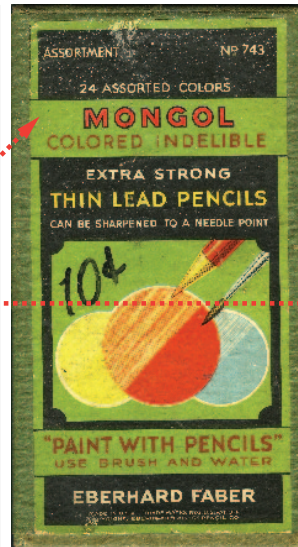
Recommended Reading

Shake Heaven & Earth: Peter Bergson and The Struggle to Rescue the Jews of Europe by Louis Rapoport (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 1999) is a terrific introduction to the little known story of Bergson's efforts during World War II. Also recommended is *A Race Against Death: Peter Bergson, America, and the Holocaust* by David S. Wyman and Rafael Medoff (New York: The New Press, 2004), which relies on firsthand interviews to present Peter Bergson's own account of his remarkable life.

Roman Vishniac and Arthur Szyk



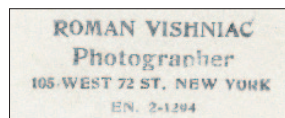
Arthur Szyk at work in his New York studio. Image courtesy International Center for Photography. Photographer Roman Vishniac.



In the summer of 2010, researchers at the **International Center of Photography** (www.icp.org) rediscovered black-and-white photographs of Arthur Szyk taken by the famous Russian-American photographer **Roman Vishniac** (1897–1990). After reviewing the images at the ICP’s request, The Society was able to date at least one photograph to 1942, based on the presence of the artwork “Douglas MacArthur Unfair to Japanese,” which was completed that year. The photographs were taken at Szyk’s home at 323 West 74th St in New York; Vishniac probably visited on more than one occasion.

An amazing portrait of Szyk at work in his studio reveals such details as the brands of colored pencils and cigarettes that the artist favored (Mongol and Chesterfield, respectively). The artist’s desk is piled with sheets of paper, pots of paint, and extra pairs of glasses.

Roman Vishniac is best known for his extensive photography of Jewish life in Eastern Europe before World War II. Between about 1935 and 1938, he visited Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia to document the daily lives of Jews, with a special focus on the poor. The photographs were collected and published in books such as *Polish Jews: A Pictorial Record* (1947) and *The Vanished World: Jewish Cities, Jewish People* (1947 and 1983). Like Arthur Szyk, Vishniac came to New York City in 1940. As he struggled to learn English, he made a living doing portraiture of mostly foreign clients, including Albert Einstein and—as we know now—Arthur Szyk.



Verso of photo print with Vishniac’s stamp



Łódź in the 1930s. Photograph by Roman Vishniac

Szyk Catalogue Featured at WWII Exhibition in Chicago

This summer the **Art Institute of Chicago** mounted the marvelous exhibition “Windows on the War: Soviet TASS Posters at Home and Abroad, 1941-1945,” which focused on propaganda art produced by the prolific TASS News Agency in the Soviet Union during WWII. (Though the exhibition concluded October 23, 2011, the fabulous catalogue by the same name may still be purchased through the museum shop at www.artinstituteshop.org.) The TASS artists, who produced the posters by hand at a

breakneck pace, used color and composition to combat the invading German forces and promote the Soviet cause abroad. “During my visit to see the exhibition, I nearly stopped dead in my tracks as I passed by the museum shop,” said Society Curator Irvin Ungar. “There, next to the Soviet propaganda catalogue, were hardbound copies of the 2008 **German Historical Museum** catalogue, *Arthur Szyk—Drawing Against National Socialism and Terror*, featuring Szyk’s anti-Nazi propaganda art.”



RESURGENCE

(Continued from page 1)

by a group of Polish dignitaries: **Professor Karol Musioł**, Rector of the Jagiellonian University; **U.S. Consul General Allen Greenberg**; **Professor Jacek Majchrowski**, President (that is, mayor) of Kraków; and **Janusz Pęcherz**, President of Kalisz. The copy of the *Statute* on view at the Poznański Palace in Łódź was loaned by the Łódź Public Library.

Both exhibitions benefited from the cooperation of Łódź scholar **Marek Szukalak**, director of **Monumentum Judaicum Łódzense** and author of numerous Polish-language works about Arthur Szyk. Additionally, Marek and documentary filmmaker **Piotr Zarębski**—director of the 2005 film “Arthur Szyk—Illuminator” (which aired numerous times on Polish TV)—participated in a panel discussion at opening of the exhibition in Łódź.



Panel discussion in Łódź, with (left to right) Joanna Podolska, Marek Szukalak, Piotr Zarębski, and Irvin Ungar

The Arthur Szyk Society consulted on the two Polish exhibitions and provided digital files from the Arthur Szyk Image Database for reproduction at the exhibition venues. Society Curator Irvin Ungar traveled to Poland twice to attend the exhibition openings and participate in related programs. Irvin contributed the



Professor Skotnicki delivering lecture at exhibition in Kraków

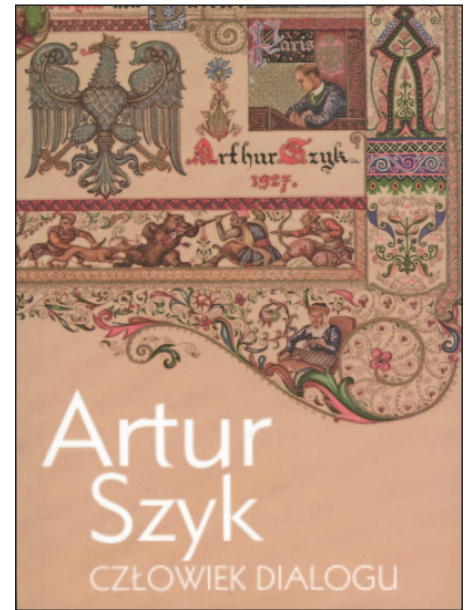


Unveiling of rediscovered Statute of Kalisz at the Stradomskie Centrum Dialogu Kraków

essay “Building Bridges, The Legacy of Polish-Jewish Artist Arthur Szyk, Fighter for Justice and Freedom” to the catalogue produced for the Kraków exhibition. The Łódź center translated the essay from English to Polish.

These two exhibitions are only the beginning of the Szyk resurgence in Poland. Another Szyk exhibition is scheduled for next year (February 15–March 31, 2012) at **Kraków’s Palace of Art** on Szczepanski Square. Also, the dialogue centers in Kraków and Łódź centers are discussing the possibility of creating an Arthur Szyk exhibition to travel throughout the region to mark the 80th anniversary of the 1930s tour of the *Statute of Kalisz* original art to fourteen Polish cities. Venues under consideration include Vilnius (Vilna), Lviv (Lwów), and Kalisz.

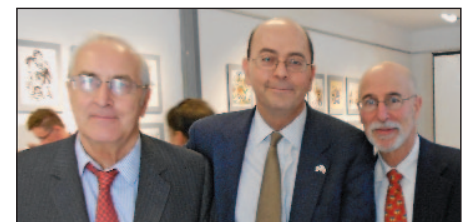
As these exciting developments demonstrate, the Poles have determined that it is time to return Arthur Szyk to the prestige he enjoyed during his lifetime in Poland and Europe at large. If Kraków and Łódź are now onboard with the Szyk renaissance, surely Paris and London are not far behind.



Cover of catalogue for Łódź exhibition



Poznański Palace in Łódź



Professor Aleksander Skotnicki, Consul General Allen Greenberg and Society Curator Irvin Ungar at the Szyk exhibition in Kraków

Szyk Renaissance Gaining Momentum in Poland

Exhibitions are not the only evidence of Poland's resurgent interest in Arthur Szyk. **Professor Michał Galas**, Head of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University, is writing an Art History Paper for The Society on Szyk's depiction of the Jewish martyr Michał Landy; Warsaw University professor **Dr. Stanisław Obirek** recently accepted a seat on The Society's Honorary Board; and the Jewish publishing house **Austeria** in Kraków is in talks with **Abrams Books** in New York to reproduce *The Szyk Haggadah* in Polish translation.

Forthcoming Paper on Michał Landy



Szyk's "The Jew Michał Landy Holding the Cross" (circa 1930) as reproduced in *Panorama*

Professor Michał T. Galas, PhD at Kraków's Jagiellonian University is working on an Art History Paper for The Society. Michał plans to examine the heroics of the martyr **Michał Landy**, one of numerous Polish Jews throughout history who have come to the support of their Christian neighbors. After a Russian soldier shot a priest during a peaceful demonstration in Warsaw in 1861, seventeen year old Michał bent down and lifted the fallen cross, an act of bravery and solidarity that cost him his life. Szyk painted this tragic yet inspiring event at least once in his career; the work was reproduced on the back cover of a 1930s issue of the Polish magazine *Panorama*.

Stanisław Obirek Joins Honorary Board



Dr. Stanisław Obirek

Stanisław Obirek, Ph.D, has happily agreed to serve on the Honorary Board of The Arthur Szyk Society. A cultural anthropologist and former Jesuit priest, Stan is a professor at the University of Łódź and teaches in the Department of Transatlantic and Media Studies. He was a visiting professor at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, and a fellow at Saint Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri. He also has taught numerous courses on the Holocaust at universities throughout Poland and makes regular use of Szyk's art in his lectures.

Stan's books include *The Vision of the Church and the State in Piotr Skarga's sermons* (1994); *The Jesuits in the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania, 1564-1668* (1996); *What we Have in Common? Dialogue with Nonbelievers* (2002); *Religion a Shelter or a Prison?* (2006), *On the fringes of Catholicism* (2008); *Catholicism as a Cultural Phenomenon in the time of Globalization: A Polish Perspective* (2009); *Winged Mind. Walter Ong's Anthropology of Word* (2010); and *Liberated Mind. In Search of Mature Catholicism* (2011). He is interested in the place of religion in modern cultures, interreligious dialogue, and strategies for overcoming conflicts between different civilizations and cultures.

Arthur Szyk: Illuminator of Poland's History

A poem by **Henryk Zbierzchowski** (1881–1942), poet laureate of Lwów [Lviv], translated from the Polish for The Arthur Szyk Society by Maciej Siekierski, Hoover Institution.

Illuminator

*I was there...saw...cannot forget
And keep on bringing out impressions out
of darkness,
Because you showed my soul the way
To the Land of Art full of secrets.*

*You are like ancient monks-wizards
When your brush dips in the sun,
You create colorful knightly epics
On a shred smaller than a rose leaf.*

*Nevertheless all this Lilliputian world
When the microscope takes it out of hiding
Feels and thinks, is happy and sad
And beats with the rhythm and fluidity
of life.*

*The Statute of Kalisz, your highest creation
Will serve us long to remember,
That what is beautiful and already past
Can live again only in art.*

*In your cardboards there is ebullience of
colors
But in it also the light of the heart shines
Because it was brightened by the love of the
fatherland
You illuminator of Poland's History.*

— Thank you to Joanna Podolska for bringing this poem to our attention



Self portrait. Arthur Szyk - Enlumineur. (Łódź, 1935)

Polish Exhibition Catalogues For Purchase

The fully illustrated Polish-language catalogues from the Kraków and Łódź exhibitions may be purchased by contacting Paulina in Kraków (sara.najbar@gmail.com) and the dialogue center in Łódź (biuro@centrumdialogu.com), respectively. Society members may receive a complimentary English-language copy of Irvin Ungar's essay "Building Bridges, The Legacy of Polish-Jewish Artist Arthur Szyk, Fighter for Justice and Freedom" by emailing info@szyk.org.

60th Anniversary Commemorations Held in Łódź and Long Island



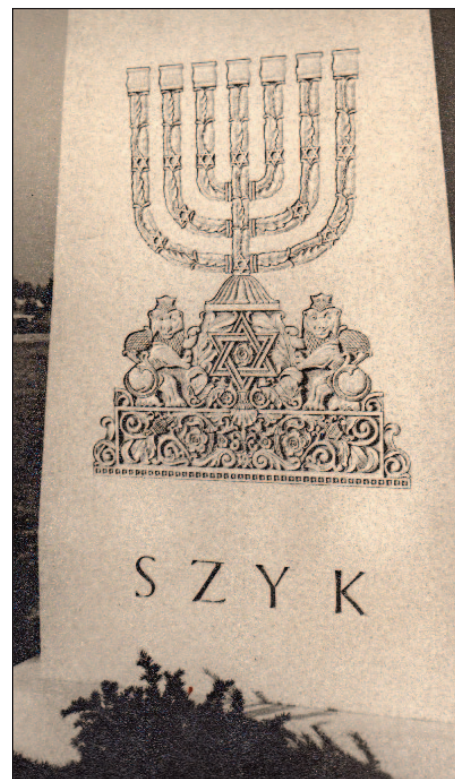
Headstone of Arthur Szyk's father, Solomon Szyk



Israeli students gathered to listen to Society Curator Irvin Ungar at the Jewish Cemetery in Łódź

This year marked the 60th anniversary of Arthur Szyk's sudden death on September 13, 1951, in New Canaan, Connecticut. In conjunction with the opening of the Łódź exhibition in Poland, on September 13, 2011, members of the local community gathered at the graveside of Szyk's father, Solomon, at the **Łódź Jewish Cemetery**. Together they recited the Memorial Prayer as well as the Mourner's Kaddish in remembrance of the artist. As fortune would have it, that very day fifty students from Israel were visiting the cemetery. They joined the commemoration and lingered to speak (in Hebrew) with the Society Curator about Szyk's life and art.

On September 25, another group came together to recite prayers at Arthur Szyk's gravesite in the Forest Hills section of the **New Montefiore Cemetery** in Suffolk County, Long Island. Among those gathered were the Society Curator; **Rhoda Miller**, Society genealogist and Szyk scholar; and Society member **Perry Bolkin**. Szyk's daughter, **Alexandra Szyk Bracie**, participated in the commemoration via telephone from her home in Florida.



The Arthur Szyk gravesite at New Montefiore Cemetery, Long Island

New Szyk Scholarship from Forest Hills



Arthur Szyk's Aron Ha-Kodesh at Forest Hills Jewish Center, New York

Michael Perlman, a resident of Forest Hills, New York, has written an essay for The Arthur Szyk Society on Arthur Szyk's three-dimensional art, including the monumental and historic Holy Ark created in the 1940s for the Forest Hills Jewish Center (FHJC) in Queens. The essay "Arthur Szyk's Holy Ark" will be available for download on the soon-to-be-launched new Society website (www.szyk.org). Michael is the Chair of the Rego-Forest Preservation Council (Rego Park & Forest Hills).

On a related note, our new Honorary Board member Rabbi Jacob Pressman (*see page 2*) was once a rabbi at the Forest Hills Jewish Center; he worked with Szyk to design the Ark for the synagogue.

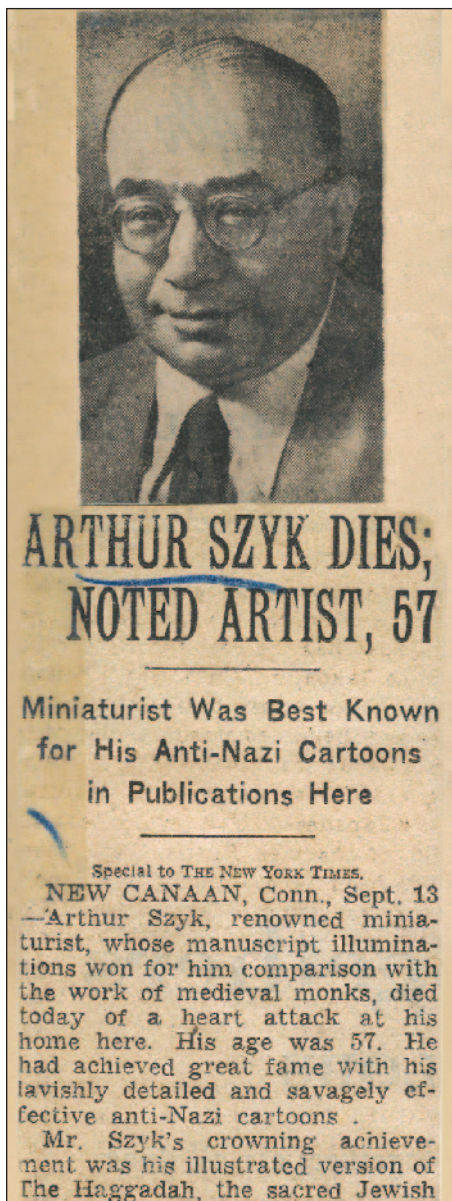
Excerpt from "Arthur Szyk's Holy Ark"

by Michael Perlman

The Ark doors, cast in bronze, tell a story of their own. The bronze frame is surrounded by thirty-nine jewels, each representing a book of the Bible. An upper panel with twelve jewels is a representation of the breastplate worn by the High Priest at Temple services in Jerusalem. Each of these jewels stands for one of the twelve tribes. The twelve tribes are also represented, according to their scriptural epithets, on the two panels which appear on the face of each of the two doors. Below is a panel with the design of the two deer, a symbol of agility. The border of the design contains selections of Psalm 19: 8-11, inscribed in bold letters, running from left to right:

*The Law of the Lord is perfect,
restoring the soul.
The testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple.
The precepts of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart.
The commandment of the Lord is pure,
enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is clear,
enduring forever.*

Szyk and The New York Times



“Arthur Szyk’s Haggadah and Singapore’s Sunken Arab Treasure”

Eve M. Kahn
March 11, 2011

Feature on Szyk and the new popular edition of *The Szyk Haggadah* (New York: Abrams Books, 2011)

“Szyk (pronounced shik) sardonically ornamented the drawings with gilded flourishes that made his works into modern versions of illuminated medieval manuscripts.”

Read the *New York Times* articles online

The above articles may be accessed on the *New York Times* website:
topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/s/arthur_szyk/

From his arrival in the United States in 1940, Arthur Szyk was a fixture in the nation’s newspapers, including the venerable *New York Times*. Upon his death in 1951, the *New York Times* ran an obituary (ARTHUR SZYK DIES; NOTED ARTIST, 57; Miniaturist Was Best Known for His Anti-Nazi Cartoons in Publications Here) that lauded his many achievements here and abroad. But the coverage did not stop there. Indeed, Eve M. Kahn’s lengthy feature (published in March) on the new popular edition of *The Szyk Haggadah* is only the latest in a series of stellar articles about Arthur Szyk and his art.

“A Caricaturist, But No Funny Stuff Here”

Michael Kimmelman
September 8, 2008

Review of *Deutsches Historisches Museum* exhibition Arthur Szyk—Drawing Against National Socialism and Terror

“In his dexterity Szyk recalls a bygone age of monastic scribes slaving over parchment pages. [His] illustrations are more intricate than Swiss watch works and sublimely obsessive. Reproductions hardly do the original drawings justice.”

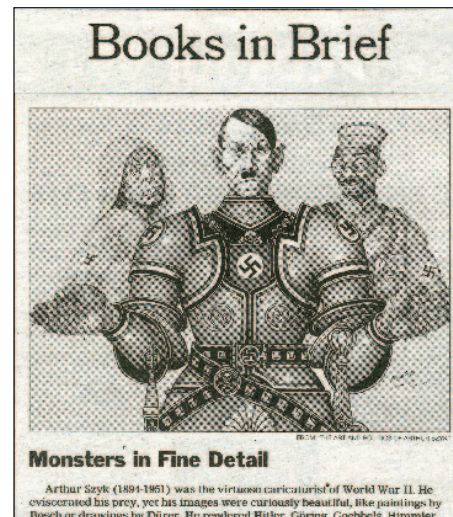


“The Power of Pen and Ink”

Bess Liebenson
July 16, 2000

Review of the *New Canaan Historical Society* exhibition *Humanity: Arthur Szyk’s View of the World*

“[Szyk’s] work was crafted with minute detail in electrifying colors, gold adding momentum and fervor. And exhaustive research enabled him to interpret historical events in graphically compelling ways.”



“Monsters in Fine Detail”

Steven Heller
December 1, 2002

Review of exhibition catalogue *The Art and Politics of Arthur Szyk* (Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2002)

“Arthur Szyk was the virtuoso caricaturist of World War II. He eviscerated his prey, yet his images were curiously beautiful, like paintings by Bosch or drawings by Dürer. He rendered Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, Himmler, Mussolini and Hirohito as buffoons, inflating their features into indictments of evil, yet his images are so precisely detailed that it is difficult not to be seduced by their majesty.”



Arthur Szyk Playing Cards Published

The popular edition of *The Szyk Haggadah* (New York: Abrams Books, 2011) is not the only exciting new Arthur Szyk publication to be released this year. **Historicana**, the publisher behind the 2008 luxury limited edition of *The Szyk Haggadah*, has just published the *Heroes of Ancient Israel: The Playing Card Art of Arthur Szyk* Deluxe Limited Edition Box Set.

Limited to only 1000 sets, *Heroes of Ancient Israel* includes two decks of never-before-published Szyk playing cards, an original hardcover book about Szyk's playing card art, and a portfolio suite of twelve fine art prints, all housed within a custom, fabric-covered box. The Deluxe Limited Edition Box Set is now available for purchase exclusively from



Collector's Deck

the publisher at www.szyk.com.



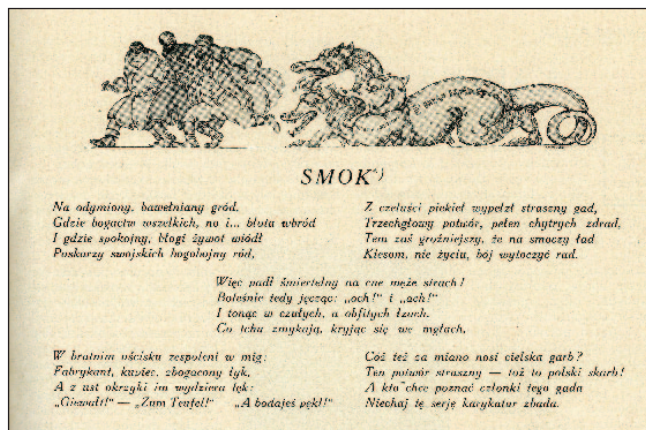
Playing Card Art (Łódź, 1930s), each sheet measures 5 inches x 12 inches [Jacks not shown]

Szyk Illustrated Book from 1920s Recently Discovered

In addition to his extensive knowledge of world history and Jewish tradition, Arthur Szyk also was an expert on the movers and shakers of the Łódź finance industry in the 1920s. He had to be, in order to create twenty-three caricatures of bankers, secretaries, politicians, investors, and military figures for a commemorative volume on the history of public finance in Łódź.

The 1929 book—with the extremely long title *A short outline of the history of the development of public finance, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Society of Treasury Officials of the Łódź Region: 1918-1928*—chronicles a decade of

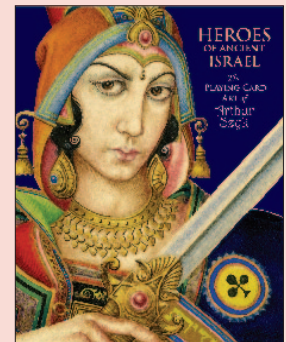
public finance in Łódź. The publishers also included an advertising section to raise



Szyk and the Financial History of Łódź

Excerpt from *Heroes of Ancient Israel: The Playing Card Art of Arthur Szyk* by Allison Claire Chang

“In the 1930s Arthur Szyk joined a storied artistic tradition by illustrating an exquisite set of playing cards.



“Painted in his highest style in watercolor and gouache on paper, the twelve court cards—four Kings, four Queens, and four Jacks—each feature a different Jewish hero from the Bible or ancient history. Every idealized portrait includes the hero’s name in Hebrew calligraphy and a symbolic element alluding to his or her story.

“One of his finest contributions to the applied arts, Szyk’s design showcases not only the rich aesthetic potential of playing cards but also the artist’s commitment to celebrating the history and virtues of his people in his art.”

funds for “a sanatorium for treasury administrators with lung ailments.” The final sentence of the flowery introduction reads: “Taking this opportunity, we permit ourselves to direct the attention of the Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen-Readers to the artistic and historical value of the caricatures of Arthur Szyk, painted from nature by this distinguished artist-miniaturist, and reproduced in our book as 23 illustrations.”

Thanks to Warsaw resident and antiquarian **Paweł Podnieśiński** for bringing this book to our attention, and to curator **Maciej Sikierski** for his translation of the introduction.

Arthur Szyk and the Jewish Book Council

Adapted from the article by Irvin Ungar, published in *Jewish Book World* (Winter 2011)

Arthur Szyk was a member of the National Committee of the Jewish Book Council of America during the presidency of **Rabbi Mortimer J. Cohen**. Even during his busiest period creating art for the Allied war effort, in 1943 Szyk found time to create his first poster for **Jewish Book Council**, which showed a helmeted American soldier seated, reading a Jewish book while balancing a machine gun on his lap. This work also was used as the war-time cover for the 1943–1944 *Jewish Book Annual* and reproduced as bookmarks.



In 1946 Szyk collaborated with Mortimer Cohen, President of the Jewish Book Council, to illustrate *Pathways Through the Bible* for the **Jewish Publication Society**. In that same year, for the Jewish Book Month poster, Szyk illuminated the saying by 12th century Jewish scholar **Judah ibn Tibbon**: “Books shall be thy companions; book cases and shelves, thy pleasure-nooks and gardens.” In addition to its appearance as a poster, this work of art served as the cover for the *Jewish Book Annual* that year and was reproduced on bookmarks. Szyk’s illumination was featured by the Council several times before the artist’s death.



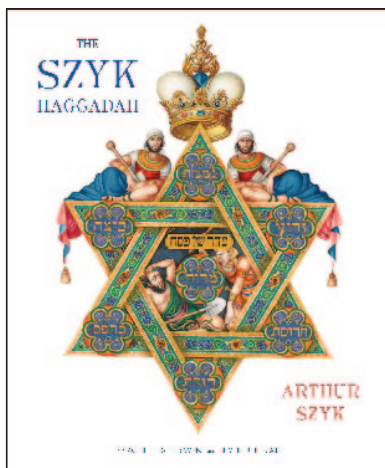
Jewish Book Month

As part of the celebration of **Jewish Book Month** (November 21–December 21, 2011), the Jewish Book Council prepares educational and promotional materials, including posters featuring the original work of a noted artist. This year the Council chose to reproduce once again the wonderful image Arthur Szyk originally created for the poster for Jewish Book Month in 1946. (The same image was also used on the cover of the 1946–1947 *Jewish Book Annual*, which included the essay “Szyk—Illustrator of Jewish Books” by Mortimer Cohen.) To provide a helpful historical context for the work, the Council commissioned the Society Curator to write a cover story about Szyk’s poster for the Winter 2011 issue of *Jewish Book World*. For another scholar’s view of the same Szyk work, the essay “Learning to Be Literate” by **Dr. Lissa Paul** in *The Cambridge Companion to Children’s Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) is highly recommended.

Update on The Szyk Haggadah

Abrams Books, the preeminent American publisher of high-quality art and illustrated books, released an all-new popular edition of Arthur Szyk’s illuminated Haggadah on March 15, 2011, just in time for Passover. It was favorably reviewed by opinion-makers worldwide (see sidebar).

Inspired by the luxury limited edition of *The Szyk Haggadah* (Historicana, 2008), the new Abrams publication includes a newly commissioned and extremely practical English text by **Rabbi Byron L. Sherwin**. A special commentary section by Rabbi Sherwin with Irvin Ungar gives insight into both the rituals of the Seder and Szyk’s rich illustrations. This is the first edition since 1940 (besides the Historicana edition) to be reproduced directly from Szyk’s original art.



Cover of the Abrams publication

Offered both in hardcover and paperback editions, *The Szyk Haggadah* is perfect for use at the Seder table. (It even opens like a traditional Hebrew book.) It is available for purchase at www.Abrams.com, www.Amazon.com and bookstores everywhere.

On a related note, the luxury limited edition of *The Szyk Haggadah* continues to be an international success, with copies recently acquired by **University of Toronto** (Toronto, Canada), the **Graduate Theological Union** (Berkeley, California), the **Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies** (Oxford University, Oxford, England), and **Cambridge University Library** (Cambridge, England). The Oxford and Cambridge copies were donated by **Joanna and Daniel Rose** of New York.

Haggadah Reviews

“Every year, there’s a Haggadah for the person who loves Haggadot — and this year, the new Szyk edition is it.”

— “Why is Your Haggadah Different from Others?” by Jay Michaelson, *The Jewish Daily Forward*, April 15, 2011

“My vote for the best Haggadah to come out this year goes to *The Szyk Haggadah*...[I] urge you to get the new edition of this masterpiece, and use it to enhance the spirit of your Seder table.”

— “My Vote for Haggadah of the Year” by Jack Reimer, *Jewish Tribune*, April 12, 2011

“Szyk’s Haggadah is still fabulous and fresh.”

— “Haggadot: Yesterday’s Telling for Today,” *Hadassah Magazine*, April 2011

“[Szyk] ornamented the drawings with gilded flourishes that made his works into modern version of illuminated medieval manuscripts.”

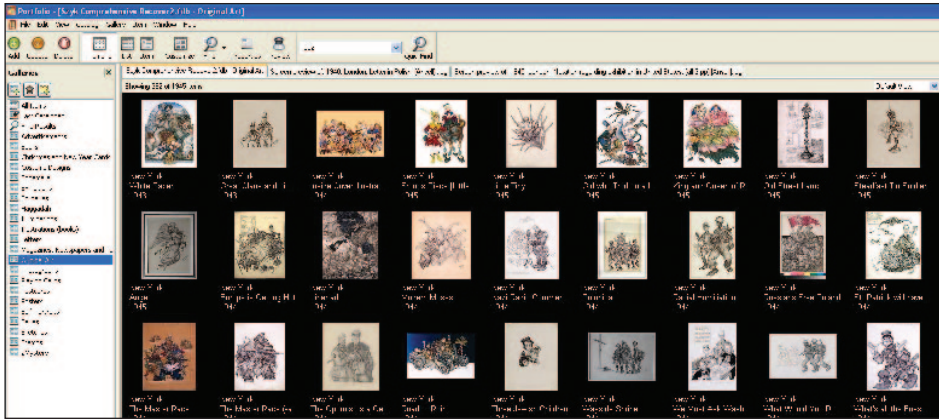
— “Arthur Szyk’s Haggadah and Singapore’s Sunken Arab Treasure” by Eve M. Kahn, *New York Times*, March 20, 2011

Update on Arthur Szyk Image Database

The Arthur Szyk Image Database, which for now is only accessible onsite at The Society, continues to be a boon to researchers. It proved a critical tool for heraldic scholar David Phillips in the preparation of his paper, “Arthur Szyk: Heraldic Artist” (Burlingame: The Arthur Szyk Society, 2010). The curators of the two exhibitions in Poland this year (see page 1) also benefited greatly from the large selection of carefully organized images.

That careful organization is largely the

work of **Cody Bahir**, who recently left the Bay Area for Taiwan, where he is pursuing a PhD in Eastern philosophy and religion. During his time as Head of the Arthur Szyk Image Database Initiative, Cody Bahir improved the database by leaps and bounds. He tackled the job of cataloging nearly two thousand images with complete information—such as title, place, date, signature, and provenance—a job that has made the database a real pleasure to use. Thank you, Cody, for your year of service to The Arthur Szyk Society!



Member Spotlight Howard and Jacqueline Levine



The Society is delighted to have as members **Howard and Jacqueline “Jackie” Levine** of West Orange, New Jersey, who celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary this year. We first met the couple in 2008 when they traveled to Germany to participate in The Society’s Szyk in Berlin Culture Tour, which coincided with the opening of the Szyk exhibition at the Deutsches Historisches Museum.

Since that memorable trip, Howard and Jackie have been staunch supporters of The Arthur Szyk Society, most recently pledging \$5000 toward our Documentary Film initiatives. In the past year, they also made a gift of a Deluxe Edition of *The Szyk Haggadah* (Burlingame: Historiana, 2008) to New York’s **Morgan Library & Museum**, which is world-famous for its extraordinary collection of illuminated manuscripts and printed books. Howard, a successful businessman, began his career as a professor of sociology. Jackie has devoted more than half a century to social justice and women’s issues. In 1954 she stood with the American Jewish Congress (AJC) in its fight against McCarthyism; in 1965 she marched from Selma to Montgomery in support of the civil rights movement; she was at the forefront of the “Free Soviet Jewry” movement; and in 1980 she became the first woman to serve as the national chair of the AJC’s governing council. In 2000 AJC honored Jackie with the Woman Who Made a Difference award.

There is no question that, had the Levines ever met Szyk, they would have been kindred spirits, enjoying countless hours of conversation about their experiences in social activism. The Society is truly privileged to count such outstanding individuals as supporters.

The Arthur Szyk Image Database Needs You!

Live in the Bay Area? Love Szyk’s art? Have an eye for detail and an obsession with accuracy? The Arthur Szyk Society needs you to volunteer on a part-time basis for the Arthur Szyk Image Database Initiative. (College credit may be available.) For details, contact us at 650.343.9588 or info@szyk.org.

UCLA (Continued from page 1)

Studies), the exhibition will be accompanied by the first-ever symposium on Arthur Szyk in the Los Angeles area. The symposium (February 9, 2012, 4:00–6:00PM) will focus on the historical *Statute of Kalisz*, a charter issued in 1264 by the Polish Grand Duke Bolesław and illuminated by Arthur Szyk in Paris between 1926 and 1928.

The Statute’s call for tolerance and acceptance of Jewish rights and privileges will be examined by two of the symposium participants, **Professor David N. Myers**, Chair of the History Department at UCLA, and **Joanna Podolska**, Director of the Marek Edelman Center for Dialogue in Łódź, Poland, and faculty member at the University of Łódź. David has written exten-



sively in the fields of modern Jewish intellectual and cultural history, while Joanna has become an expert on Szyk through her study of the history of his hometown of Łódź. Society Curator Irvin Ungar will also participate on the panel. The symposium will be followed by a public reception at the Yitzhak Rabin Hillel Center for Jewish Life on the UCLA campus.

New Design for Szyk.org

Society's Online Home to Relaunch with New Look and Features

The Arthur Szyk Society is pleased to announce that our newly redesigned website (www.szyk.org) will be launched at the beginning of 2012. The new Szyk.org, which will feature all-new content about Szyk's life and art, is a major improvement over the previous version, as visitors will be able to join The Society, make donations, and shop for Society publications online. Check back often so you don't miss the unveiling of The Society's new look on the web.

The Arthur Szyk Society
Dedicated to the 20th century master illuminator, miniature painter and activist-artist

Home The Artist The Activist Exhibitions & Events Publications & Resources News About Us Support Us

ILLUMINATOR AND ILLUSTRATOR ARTHUR SZYK (1894-1951) WAS ONE OF THE GREAT ARTISTS OF THE 20TH CENTURY. THE ARTHUR SZYK SOCIETY IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT PRESERVING HIS LEGACY OF ACTIVISM AND ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE.

Illustrated Books Judaica Political Art Americans

News
Abrams to publish new edition of *The Szyk Haggadah*
New Art History Paper: "Arthur Szyk: Heraldic Artist"

Exhibitions & Events
Now through March 27, 2011
Exhibition: *Arthur Szyk: The Art of Painting and Making Illuminations, Legion of Honor, San Francisco*
January 30 Symposium: Social Justice in the Work of Arthur Szyk, Legion of Honor, San Francisco
New Art History Paper: "Arthur Szyk: Heraldic Artist"

Featured Topic
Decoding the Symbolism of *The Scribe*
This month we examine Arthur Szyk's wonderful miniature "The Scribe" (Paris, 1927), a work that synthesizes the traditions of the Renaissance and the modern era...

Szyk Shop
The Szyk Shop
Shop for Society's publications and explore Szyk books, reproduction art and more!

Support Us
Become a Member of The Society
Learn about member levels and benefits.
Volunteer with The Society
Sponsor our documentary film

Get Connected
Join Our Mailing List
& stay connected to news, events & more.
Join us on Facebook!

We rely on our generous donors | [Make a Donation](#) | Help us continue our important work

© 2011 The Arthur Szyk Society | 2400 Ridgehill Drive, Berkeley, CA 94709 | 415.333.9281 | info@szyk.org

An Open Letter to Paul & Sheri Robbins and Eva Chernov Lokey

Dear Paul, Sheri, and Eva,

Over the years you have been The Arthur Szyk Society's most loyal, steadfast, and generous supporters. Quietly and without fanfare, you have been the financial backbone of our ongoing programs. With your investment in our endeavors, our success has grown from year to year to have greater impact than we ever would have dreamed.

You have made it possible to staff The Society, publish and produce our Newsletters and Art History Papers, send our Traveling Exhibition to Poland (2005), finance our documentary shooting at the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin (2008), and—most recently—develop The Society's new website (scheduled to launch in 2012). You have supported The Society through your Family Philanthropic Funds and Endowments at the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, as well as through personal donations. How can one adequately pay tribute to you and thank you for your multitude of kindnesses?

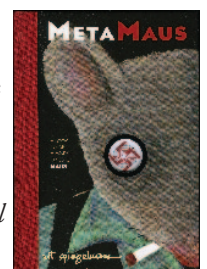
In the past, we have acknowledged your generosity through letters, telephone conversations, and personal visits, but we wish to publicly express our sincerest gratitude and appreciation for sustaining our efforts to create a legacy for Arthur Szyk. Millions of people will experience Szyk's art in the future, and we want the world to know that you have made it possible.

Paul and Sheri, and Eva, you are not only friends to Arthur Szyk but our personal friends as well. Thank you for sharing your generosity with us all.

Warmest regards,

The Arthur Szyk Society

*Congratulations to Honorary Board Member Art Spiegelman on the publication of **META MAUS**, an all-new commemorative volume published on the 25th anniversary of his Pulitzer prize-winning graphic novel **Maus**.*



IN MEMORIAM

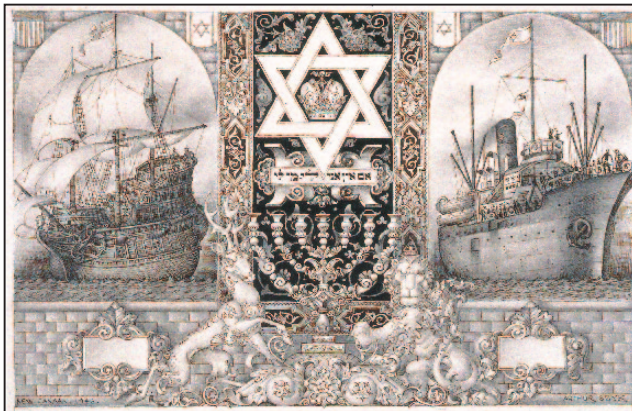
Bernard Gittelson (1918–2010), Agent for Arthur Szyk

A remembrance by Irvin Ungar

Bernard Gittelson, who once represented Arthur Szyk in New York and coordinated many of the artist's commissions, died on December 20, 2010 in Sarasota, Florida at age 92. I had my first of many telephone conversations with Bernie in October 1999, and that conversation was followed by three visits to his home: first in March 2000; again in February 2004 when I recorded an interview with him; and a final visit a few years later.

Bernie was a colorful fellow, to say the least. I adored him. He deeply loved Arthur Szyk and marveled at his genius. He first met Szyk when he was in his 20s and serving on the War Council Committee on Discrimination in Employment under **Governor Herbert Lehman** of New York. A public relations person to his core, Bernie approached Szyk to request he create a poster for the committee. His gutsy move resulted in the beautiful drawing "United in Common Cause" (New York, 1943), a work attacking racial inequality in the military.

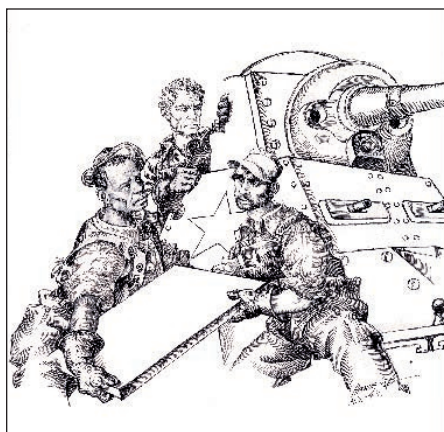
I remember Bernie once recounted the party Szyk threw for Bernie's 23rd birthday. Those in attendance included political journalist **Norman Cousins**, Szyk's client **Clarence Low**, actress **Dagmar Godowsky** (her brother Leo was married to **George Gershwin's** sister Frances), and acclaimed acting teacher **Stella Adler** (**Marlon Brando** was her prize pupil). As Bernie remembers, it was his first time meeting any of Szyk's many famous friends. Later Bernie had the chance to meet violinist **Misha Elman**,



'Illegal' Ship and the Mayflower (New Canaan, 1946)

represented Szyk in negotiating the large commission from **Kasimir Bileski** for the *Visual History of Nations* series. He also was a regular visitor to Szyk's estate in New Canaan, Connecticut, where the artist lived after 1945. Szyk made his first trip to Brooklyn to attend Bernie's wedding to his wife Rosalyn. In addition to his work as an agent, Bernie also was the author of two books: *Biorhythm: A Personal Science* (1975), and *How to Make Your Own Luck: The Secret of Turning Everyday Opportunities into Power and Personal Success* (1981).

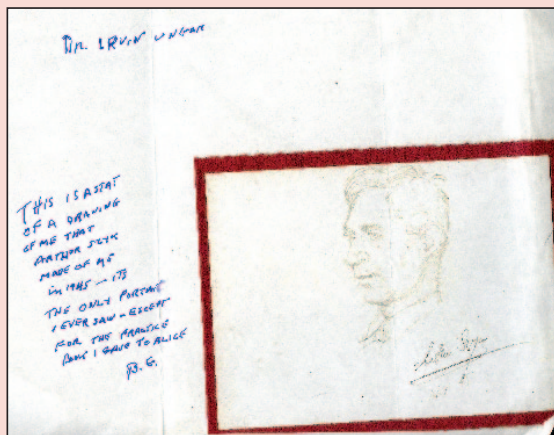
We will miss Bernie's stories of his long and fascinating life. I am grateful for the opportunity to know him, and, in turn, to know more of Arthur Szyk.



United in Common Cause (New York, 1943)

Arthur Szyk's Roster of Agents

Bernard Gittelson was one of several agents who worked with Arthur Szyk after he moved to the United States. Others included **Phillip Skyler** from Westport, CT and **Roger W. Straus, Jr.**, who wrote the introduction to Szyk's book of anti-Nazi caricature, *The New Order* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1941). Straus was co-founder and chairman of the publishing company Farrar, Straus and Giroux (established 1946), which is now part of Macmillan.



Arthur Szyk sketchbook (Kraków, 1914)

Editor's Note: Bernard Gittelson owned a small but significant collection of Szyk original art, a selection of which is reproduced here.