

# International Center for the Study of European Jewish Art and Art of the Holocaust



## Newsletter – September 2015



**From the Director  
Ronit D. Appel**

I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a shana tova. May you and your families be blessed with a happy, healthy, and sweet New Year and may the coming year be one of peace and prosperity.

### Featured Lecture

**Peter Zvi Malkin: Artist, Mossad Agent, and Capturer of Adolf Eichmann**

On August 11, 2015, an audience gathered in the garden of Congregation Edmond J. Safra for an evening of Art and Schmoozing hosted by Manhattan Jewish Experience East. The highlight of the evening was a talk by our Director about the life of Peter Zvi Malkin, an artist and Mossad agent who was part of the team that captured Adolf Eichmann in Argentina in 1960. After the talk, the members of the audience enjoyed food and drinks as they mingled with each other and reflected on the inspiring life of Peter Zvi Malkin.



Peter Zvi Malkin  
in 1960, age 33

### Remembering Joseph Bau and His New Year's Cards

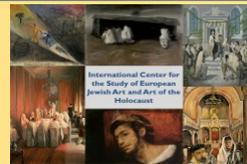


Joseph and Rebecca Bau

Joseph Bau (1920-2002) was a famous Jewish artist who was born in Poland in 1920 and who risked his life to forge documents that enabled hundreds of Jews to escape the Krakow Ghetto and the Plaszow Concentration Camp. He courted and married his wife in the Plaszow concentration camp. Bau, who was one of the Jews on Oskar Schindler's list, survived the Holocaust, immigrated to Israel, introduced animation to Israel, and was one of Israel's greatest animators. Each year, he would create humorous New Year's cards which he would distribute to his friends. The humorous New Year's card pictured to the right, titled "Certificate of Happiness," states that the "Protexia Department" requests that the governmental authorities cooperate and allow a woman named Shoshana Cohen and her family to have a good year.



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## Featured Artwork – *Solitude* by Marc Chagall



Marc Chagall, *Solitude*, 1933; Oil on canvas; Collection of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art

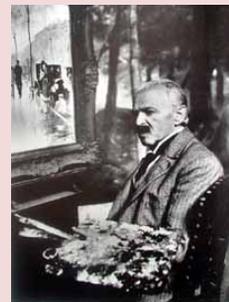
*Solitude* was painted by Marc Chagall in 1933 as the Nazis rose to power in Germany. It is symbolic of the isolation Chagall felt in Europe both as an artist and as a Jew and of the imminent destruction of European Jewry. In *Solitude*, a Jew clutching a Torah sits alone, engrossed in his thoughts and staring at the ground with sorrow in his eyes as ominous gray smoke fills the sky above him, indicating a fire in the town. The painting may depict the aftermath of a pogrom in an Eastern European Jewish town and may also be symbolic of the prophet Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem. The man's only companion is a hopeful and innocent-looking white cow with a violin. The white cow may represent sacrifice while the violin, a common motif in Chagall's paintings, may represent what is left of the destroyed Eastern European Jewish town. An angel hovers above the dark smoke, symbolizing eternal hope for the Jewish People.

## About the Center

The Center was established in January of 2015 in New York City with the purpose of promoting research on European Jewish art and art of the Holocaust, including art looted during the Holocaust, furthering the public's understanding of the roots of Jewish and Israeli art, furthering the public's knowledge of European Jewish art and art of the Holocaust, and ensuring that the lives and artwork of the great Jewish artists who risked their lives to paint during the Holocaust are remembered for eternity.

## Featured Artist – Lesser Ury

Lesser Ury, one of Germany's greatest painters and one of the greatest Jewish artists of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, was born on November 7, 1861 in Birnbaum in the province of Posen. Ury struggled with poverty most of his life. After his father passed away when he was a young boy, Ury and his mother were unprovided for.



Lesser Ury

Ury first apprenticed with a merchant, with the intention of becoming a trader. He lacked an interest in business, however, and soon decided that he wanted to pursue a career in painting. Before settling permanently in Berlin, Ury studied painting in Düsseldorf and then in Brussels, Paris, Stuttgart, and Munich. His first exhibition in Berlin in 1889 brought him little money. Soon thereafter, however, he won an art prize at the Berlin Academy of Art, which sent him to Italy. His first retrospective exhibition in Berlin in 1916 earned him widespread recognition as a great artist. The National Gallery in Berlin acquired three of his paintings in 1923. Ury was honored as the "artistic glorifier of the capital" by the mayor of Berlin during an exhibition of 150 of Ury's paintings in Berlin.

Ury's paintings typically depict landscapes and city life. He also painted scenes of Jewish life and Biblical themes. Ury died in his Berlin studio on October 18, 1931, three weeks before his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday and just before a large solo exhibition of Ury's works was scheduled to open in the National Gallery in Berlin in honor of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.



Lesser Ury, "Holsteinsche Schweiz" Landscape, 1908; Oil on canvas; Collection of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art