



FilmTalk



FilmTalk



# “I’ll have what she’s having”

Jews loving gentiles;  
gentiles loving Jews

Lectures are held at the Wiener Library and begin at 7.00pm. Admission is free. Places must be reserved in advance by emailing or telephoning the Leo Baeck Institute email: [info@leobaeck.co.uk](mailto:info@leobaeck.co.uk) tel: 020 7580 3493

Latecomers may not be admitted.

The Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1W 5BH  
*Underground: Great Portland Street, Regent’s Park. Bus: C2, 18, 27, 30, 88, 453*

[www.leobaeck.co.uk](http://www.leobaeck.co.uk)  
[www.wienerlibrary.co.uk](http://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk)

**The Wiener Library**  
Institute of Contemporary History

**LEO BAECK**  
**INSTITUTE LONDON**

Lecture series organised by the Leo Baeck Institute London and The Wiener Library

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**FilmTalk** 2010/11 In this season we examine love and desire between Jews and gentiles in popular cinema. How have cinematic representations of these things changed from the 1920s to the present day? What do these films tell us about society's attitudes towards 'impossible' relationships and forbidden love? What is so attractive about the ethnic 'other'?

*FilmTalk* stresses film as much as talk. The lectures are 20-25 minutes long and are followed or intercut with excerpts from the film under review.

# “I’ll have what she’s having”

## Jews loving gentiles; gentiles loving Jews

Dr Cathy Gelbin

University of Manchester

Monstrous Desires: Jewish-Christian Boundary Crossings in Paul Wegener's *The Golem* (Germany, 1920)

21 October 2010, 7 pm

This talk looks at the eroticized portrayal of Jewish-Christian relations in Paul Wegener's classic *The Golem*, one of the iconic films of the silent era. Set in late Renaissance Prague, Wegener's film shows the creation of a golem, an artificial human being from clay, according to medieval Jewish mysticism. As the being assumes a life of its own and stalks the ghetto, we witness the unfolding of forbidden desires between Christian and Jew, monster and human. The talk will trace how Wegener, by invoking Shelley's *Frankenstein*, portrays the gentile's image of the Jews' essentially 'different' body and soul. The film seems to anticipate the doomed project of the German-Jewish symbiosis.

Cathy Gelbin is Senior Lecturer in German at the University of Manchester. She specializes in German-Jewish culture, Holocaust Studies, gender and film. Her new monograph *The Golem Returns: From German Romantic Literature to Global Jewish Culture* is forthcoming in 2010 (University of Michigan Press).

Prof Ginette Vincendeau

King's College London

Lacombe, Lucien (1974): love, class hatred and the banality of evil in occupied France

9 December 2010, 7 pm

At the heart of Louis Malle's groundbreaking and controversial film is the liaison between Lucien, a young, uneducated peasant in Figeac, South-West France, and France Horn, the sophisticated daughter of a wealthy Jewish tailor in hiding. Lucien and France's budding relationship is played out against the background of the local Gestapo headquarters and the larger historical context in which normal power relations are inverted and moral boundaries blurred.

Ginette Vincendeau is Professor of Film Studies at King's College London. She has written widely on French Cinema. Among her books are *Stars and Stardom in French Cinema* (2000), *Jean-Pierre Melville, an American in Paris* (2003) and *La Haine* (2005). Her new book *Popular French Cinema, from the Classical to the Trans-national*, will be published in 2011.

Dr Nathan Abrams

University of Wales, Bangor

“(Jewish) men and (gentile) women can't be friends because the sex part always gets in the way”

10 February 2011, 7 pm

In this illustrated lecture, Nathan Abrams will explore possibly the greatest rom-com ever made, *When Harry Met Sally*. He will ask such important questions as: can men and women be friends, or does the sex part always get in the way? What makes Jews and gentiles so attractive to each other?

Nathan Abrams is a Senior Lecturer in Film Studies at Bangor University. His most recent books include *Jews & Sex* (2008), *Studying Film* (2nd edn., 2010) and *The New Jew in Film: Exploring Jewishness and Judaism in Contemporary Cinema* (forthcoming).

Prof Mandy Merck

Royal Holloway, University of London

Charlotte loves Harry – Ethnic stereotypes and Jewish jokes in *Sex and the City*

24 March 2011, 7 pm

Charlotte York is the über-WASP character in *Sex and the City*, longing for a suitable marriage to an Ivy-educated investment banker. But in the first season of the TV series she has wild sex with an orthodox Jew, and in series six she falls for Harry Goldenblatt, who is reluctant to marry out. Although Harry dumps her, Charlotte continues to go to synagogue, meets his mother, and gives up Christmas. When the two get back together she cooks Harry potato kugel and matzo-ball soup and then realizes that he intends to eat it in front of the baseball game: 'I gave up Christ for you,' she complains. 'You can't give up the Mets?' In this talk Mandy Merck will discuss stereotypes and Jewish humour in the American sitcom.

Mandy Merck is Professor of Media Arts at Royal Holloway, University of London. Her latest book, co-edited with Stella Sandford, is *Further Adventures of the Dialectic of Sex*.