

**Hanno Loewy**  
**Jan-Christopher Horak**  
**Ofer Ashkenazi**  
**Natasha Gordinsky**  
**Sarah MacDougall**

**Leo Baeck Institute**  
**Lecture Series**  
**London, 2021**

**Conceptions of**  
***Heimat* in Jewish Visual**  
**History and Culture**

# Conceptions of *Heimat* in Jewish Visual History and Culture

Leo Baeck Institute Lecture Series  
London, 2021

This season's series examines the German-Jewish and European-Jewish notion of *Heimat* and its diverse and changing visual representations and interpretations during the course of history. It looks at the subject through a prism of visual media, such as the arts, photography, film and fashion, as well as literature and social media, etc.

\*Due to current restrictions the first three lectures of this series will be held online. Please check our website ([www.leobaeck.co.uk](http://www.leobaeck.co.uk)) closer to the date of the event for a Zoom link to participate in this talk or alternatively register with us at [info@leobaeck.co.uk](mailto:info@leobaeck.co.uk).

As soon as this will be possible again, lectures will be held at: German Historical Institute, 17 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2NJ. Places at the GHI are strictly limited and must be reserved in advance by contacting the Leo Baeck Institute London. e: [info@leobaeck.co.uk](mailto:info@leobaeck.co.uk) t: +44 (0)20 7882 5690 Admission is free. Lectures will begin promptly at 6.30pm. Latecomers may not be admitted.

Hanno Loewy

Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, Austria

**Unrewarded Love: Alpine Clubs, Ski-Tourism, Folklore and the Jews**

6.30pm, Thursday 11th February, 2021

Among the pioneers turning the Alps into the playground of Europe, the urban Jewish middle class played a crucial role. While cities like Vienna, Berlin or Prague offered Jews access to secular culture, industry or higher education, the domesticated 'wilderness' of the mountains provided 'innocence' of togetherness and belonging beyond confines of class, religion and ethnicity. Jewish climbers, environmentalists and pioneers of tourism were among the first to organize Alpine clubs, while others reinvented folklore dressing. All of them lost faith in the Alpine *pastorale* after 1933. Memories of innocent moments enshrined in memorabilia and tales live on. Some of this has its afterlife in the Alps, even today.

Hanno Loewy, PhD, is a scholar of literature and film, an exhibition curator, and, since 2004, the Director of the Jewish Museum Hohenems, Austria. He is the author and editor of several books on film theory, Holocaust, Jewish history and popular culture.

*This lecture will be held online\**



Jan-Christopher Horak

UCLA. Los Angeles, USA

**Helmar Lerski between the Diaspora and a Jewish Homeland**

6.30pm, Thursday 18th March, 2021

The nomadic photographer and filmmaker Helmar Lerski was born in Alsace, raised in Switzerland, began his professional career in Milwaukee, moved to Germany, travelled to Erez Israel and ultimately retired in Switzerland. Aesthetically, Lerski sought to communicate timeless values through the manipulation of light and the physiognomy of the human face in extreme close-ups. His photo project 'Jewish Heads' started his search for a distinct Jewish identity. While advocating a Jewish homeland as a Zionist filmmaker, Lerski remained loyal to his artistic vision. This dichotomy between identifying Jewishness in the Diaspora and a national Jewish identity tied to the land of Israel, between biology and environment, eternal art and propaganda, makes Lerski's work rich and still contemporary.

Prof Horak is the former Director of the UCLA Film & Television Archive, the Munich Filmmuseum and Curator at the George Eastman Museum. He teaches at UCLA and is the multi-award-winning author of numerous books on film historical subjects.

*This lecture will be held online\**



Ofer Ashkenazi

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

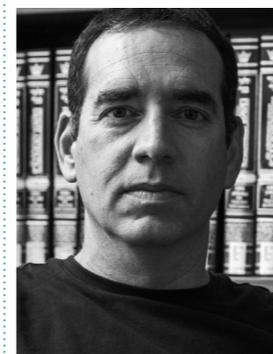
**Heimat as a Shelter from Nazism**

6.30pm, Thursday 22nd April, 2021

This talk analyses the presence of generic *Heimat* imagery in German-Jewish family albums from the 1930s and highlights two major tendencies: the appropriation of *Heimat* iconography in photographs of the Jewish home, and the endeavour to situate Jewish family members within generic *Heimat* scenes. In both cases, *Heimat* iconography alluded to an alternative notion of German identity – and of belonging in the German landscape – which allowed and encouraged the integration of Jews within it. Consequently, in Jewish family albums, *Heimat* imagery provided an imagined landscape that sheltered Jews from the menace of Nazism.

Ofer Ashkenazi is an Associate Professor of History and the Director of the Koebner-Minerva Center for Germany History at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He is the author of three monographs on German film (most recently, *Anti-Heimat Cinema: The Jewish Invention of the German Landscape*, 2020). His current research project considers Jewish photography under Nazism.

*This lecture will be held online\**



Natasha Gordinsky

University of Haifa, Israel

**'Your Heimat is our Nightmare': Post-Soviet Poetic Interventions in German Culture**

6.30pm, Thursday 14th October, 2021

In the past decade, post-Soviet Jewish writers, poets and artists who live and work in Germany, have been playing a crucial role in the ongoing debate on the various forms of migrant belonging in contemporary German culture. This lecture explores how these different cultural agents reflect and de-stabilize, performatively, the meaning of *Heimat*, a concept that is highly charged both in German and Soviet contexts.

Dr Natasha Gordinsky is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of Haifa. She is co-author of *Canon und Diskurs: Über die Literarisierung der jüdischen Erfahrungswelten* (2008), written with Susanne Zepp, and author of *In Three Landscapes: Lea Goldberg's Early Writings* (2016, Hebr.) She is currently working on a book-length project that deals with spatial history of World War II in post-Soviet Germanophone literature.



Sarah MacDougall

Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, London, UK

**From Heartland to Homeland? – German-Jewish Émigré Artists in Britain, c. 1933-45**

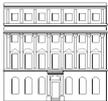
6.30pm, Thursday 11th November, 2021

Founded as an arts society in 1915 in London's East End, Ben Uri's collection, exhibition history and programming were significantly impacted from the 1930s onwards by the artistic influx of the so-called 'Hitler émigrés'. This lecture examines the conception of *Heimat* in relation to the lives and work of German-Jewish artists from this cohort, among them Frank Auerbach and Eva Frankfurter, as they navigated their new host culture, touching on notions of national cultural heritage and belonging.

Sarah MacDougall is Director of Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, where she has been a curator since 2002 and Head of Collections since 2012. Her research focuses on Jewish and/or immigrant artists in Britain in the 20th century with exhibitions including *Forced Journeys: Artists in Exile in Britain* (2009–10) and *Finchley Strasse* (German Embassy, London, 2018). She is a member of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies at the University of London.



The Leo Baeck Institute  
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