

# Jewish Public Library Annual Report 2012



Jewish Public Library  
Bibliothèque publique juive  
הספריה היהודית העממית  
ידישע פאלקס ביבליאטעק



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President Alain Murad



Executive Director Michael Crelsten

## Message from the President and the Executive Director

A 2010 University of Michigan study has concluded that “College kids are about 40% lower in empathy than their counterparts of 20 or 30 years ago, as measured by standard tests for this personality trait.” At the same time, a 2011 York University study demonstrates that reading fiction “may improve skills of empathy and social understanding.” Empirical research is beginning to demonstrate that developing a capacity to understand the other through, for example, reading fiction, enhances the characteristic of empathy thus increasing the potential greater community involvement. Initially, these correlations were greeted with some skepticism but, as is often the case with ground-breaking research, the conclusions are now becoming mainstream and are cited in such venues as Forbes, The Harvard Business Review, and Scientific American. Turns out Libraries, performing arts centres, museums and cultural associations are not nice frills to have – they are essential and represent a strategic investment in the future of our community.

Building on this, our community’s 5 leading cultural agencies (the JPL, The Segal Centre, the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, La Communauté Unifiée Sepharade and the Jewish Community Centre) have formed a cultural alliance to enable closer collaboration as well as communicate the centrality of our agenda to the well-being of our community and, in particular, our youth.

That being said, it is clear that the role of libraries is changing, significantly and quickly. In this regard, the JPL is ahead of the curve. As libraries begin to stake out a position as “third spaces” in their communities, the JPL continues a longstanding tradition of excellence through innovative and compelling, world class cultural programming.

The events hosted by the JPL this past year are too numerous to list in their entirety (over 75 events in 8 languages) but highlights include:

- Supported by the Drimer Foundation, Tatiana de Rosnay, author of *Sarah’s Key*, as our **Jewish Book Month** Keynote.
- Our **Evening of Russian Culture**, sponsored by Barbara and Ronny Kay, was a tour de force of song, dance and theatre.
- For the first time, the **JPL Hebrew Theatre** collaborated with The Segal Centre to present two sold out performances of Goren Agmon’s play *Mother in Love*.
- In collaboration with Concordia University the JPL presented a French exhibit and conference on the **history of Sephardic Jews in Quebec**.
- In association with FCJA, we implemented a **Yiddish cultural Programming Survey**. The results were encouraging with 81% of respondents wanting to attend more Yiddish programming and almost two thirds of the sample responding that our **Yiddish programming** made them feel more connected to the Jewish Community and to the Jewish world.
- A lecture by the renowned psychiatrist, Dr. Irvin D. Yalom, was more than sold out to an exceptionally diverse audience.
- Woven through all of our programming were 7 **Jewish Genealogical Society** events that bear testament to our community’s abiding interest in their family history.

All of this programming can be understood as outreach which is supported by our programming collaboration with over 50 schools and organizations. Our outreach also includes receiving students from Marianopolis and Concordia in bible classes and research methods using Jewish texts.

Our renowned **Norman Berman Children's Library** continues to offer a range of programmes to youngsters and their families. Among many examples, award winning author, Aubrey Davis entertained over 1600 students from grades 1 through 6 in 10 Jewish and secular schools. The NBCL continues to lead the way through parents and children's programmes such as the Global Day of Jewish Learning, Girls' Night Out, this year with author Ally Carter, our Mother Daughter Book Club and more. Our children's library is now graced at its entrance with beautiful artwork by internationally renowned artist, Marie Louise Gay. The work was commissioned by Jacob Raby to honour his wife, Eva Raby, our beloved immediate past Executive Director of the JPL and the Director of the NBCL for 18 (an auspicious number) years.

With the support of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation as well as Joel and Marlene King and Louis Dobrin (in memory for Helen and Sam Steinberg) the **PJ Library** has now distributed more than 36,000 Jewish themed books and CDs to young families in our community and offers an array of family programming in Montreal and environs. Not atypical of the comments we have received from participants in this wonderful programme is the following:

*"We cannot think of a better way to bring Judaism into the home. I look forward every month to the new book and I am as eager to read them as my daughters are to listen to them be read. They enable us to have conversations at a deeper and meaningful level, where we are both able to combine personal memories, facts and traditions in a way that cannot be described. Nothing is more important than our history and customs as Jews. The books have helped increase our children's passion and quest for knowledge."*

In the context of **technological change**, the Library has introduced innovations in the past year. The first, an on-line catalogue called Chamo, enables a much greater and more engaged level of interactivity between the public and our collection.

The second involves a **change in our cataloguing** procedures best understood and explained by our own redoubtable Eddy Paul. What is still more noteworthy is that the JPL is the first public library in the world to implement this system and the second of all libraries in the world after the Université Catholique de Louvain.

We continue to work closely with the **National Yiddish Book Center** in Amherst, Massachusetts. They have now digitized over 100 recorded Yiddish lectures which are, or will be, available for free on the Internet Archive. The lectures include those by Allen Ginsberg, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Leonard Cohen Saul Bellow, Chava Rosenfarb, Dora Wasserman, Rachel Korn and many others.

It is noteworthy that we have now established a materials collection committee which has produced a policy document soon to be brought forward to our Board for ratification.

Our **Archives** remains a jewel in both the Jewish community and beyond. We are a centre for research and learning for academics and the general public from Montreal, Quebec, Canada and around the world. Topics researched varied from Kristallnacht, Jewish Internees in Canada in WWII and Jewish war brides to the International Ladies' Garment Workers, Yiddish Theatre in Montreal and the Saidye Bronfman Centre.

The Archives are supported by the Azrieli Foundation and by the introduction of support by the Alex Dworkin Foundation for Jewish Archives. A special gift from Peter and Ellen Jacobs will allow the JPL-A to prepare several **virtual exhibits**, digitize specialized materials such as audio-visual recordings and take great leaps in the continued growth of our virtual archival presence.

In the context of significant and continuing fund raising challenges in our community, we note that our allocation from FCJA has diminished significantly in recent years while the JPL has sustained its level of service. The Library's **financial resource development** efforts, therefore, are more than ever, central to ensuring our viable future. Girl's Night Out, Co-Chaired by Joanne Garfinkle and Joy Melnick, presented with great success, author Ally Carter to our mom's and daughters.

Mia Swartzman Barsheshat, in the face of significant challenges, led and inspired her lay and professional colleagues as Chair of this year's **Gala** and raised significant funds for the library's operations.

Our deeply appreciated **Friends**, as supporters, volunteers and donors, continue to be a keystone of the Library.

We benefit from a range of grants and gifts from private donors, Foundations and government that are instrumental to our ability to offer the programmes for which we are known. In particular, **The Alvin Segal Family Foundation** enabled us to continue to implement many of the technological improvements discussed in this report and the **Trottier Family Foundation's** generosity continues to sustain our operations.

Plans for our 2014 **100th Anniversary** celebrations and Campaign are well underway. We are implementing a user survey. Our Case for Giving is nearly complete. We have a strong beginning prospect list. Our Table of Needs is near completion. Razor's Edge development software will go live in September. The Campaign leadership has met several times as we begin to build towards 2014. All of this bodes well for our three core objectives of the 100th: fundraising, increased development capacity and increased community profile.

Finally, some heartfelt thanks to the Library's staff and volunteers. Be it around special events like the Gala or Girls' Night Out, day to day operations, shut in programmes, Jewish Book Month and our array of cultural programmes, this Library would not exist without the ongoing work and support of a community of people who consistently go above and beyond, often in the face of daunting challenges.

As President and Executive Director of this venerable institution, we are profoundly aware that it is an extraordinary team that has made, and makes, this place the iconic institution that it has become over almost 100 years.

Thank you, all.

Alain Murad  
*President*

Michael Crelinsten  
*Executive Director*





## Special Projects and Library Outreach

### ***In a Nutshell: The Worlds of Maurice Sendak***

The Jewish Public Library hosted the travelling exhibition "In a Nutshell: The Worlds of Maurice Sendak," during Jewish Book Month 2011. Popular children's author Maurice Sendak's childhood in New York City inspired many of his most beloved books, such as *Where the Wild Things Are* and *In the Night Kitchen*. This exhibit provided the opportunity to the JPL to reach and invite groups of all ages to visit and explore the story behind Sendak's stories.



We launched the exhibit with a family-oriented story time, "Let the Wild Rumpus Start!" featuring Sendak's works and monster crafts in the Norman Berman Children's Library. The JPL followed this by inviting all of the grade six students from the nearby Jewish day school, JPPS, to tour and learn about Maurice Sendak. Students answered questions to help them view and discuss the exhibit, and then were given the opportunity to rewrite and illustrate the ending to *Where the Wild Things Are*.

In conjunction with the Quebec Library Association, we celebrated Sendak's writing during a storytelling workshop held at the Jewish Public Library. Professional storyteller Selina Eisenberg-Smith animated the evening, using a felt board, puppets, and props to explore the various ways to engage children in a story. After her artistic retelling of *In the Night Kitchen*, she had the group participate in its own wild rumpus and then perform *Pierre*, a Cautionary Tale with her. She shared her experiences working with children of different ages

and explained how she adapts children's books in order to perform them for an audience. Seventeen librarians and early childhood educators crouched together over the felt, spoons, and googly eyes to practice the techniques described and create their own puppets for their storytime visitors.

Our community joined Oscar-nominated directors Chris



Lavis and Maciek Szczerbowski for the screening of their whimsical short film, *Higglety Pigglety Pop! Or, there Must Be More to Life* based on the book by Maurice Sendak. The directors opened the floor to a lively Q&A following the screening. Finally, our last group of students visiting the exhibit included the passionate and enthusiastic students of McGill's Community for Lifelong Learning. This group visited the JPL for an introduction to Sendak and a tour of the exhibit.

### ***The JPL's Mega Book Sale***

The JPL inaugurated its first one-day mega book sale last August in the lobby of the Cummings House, raising funds to help support the purchase of new books at the Library. All of the books sold were received by generous donation from the public. With the help of the city's most devoted group of volunteers, we sorted, priced and sold row after row of novels, religious works, cookbooks and more. Visitors to the sale included longtime book lovers well known to the JPL as well as plenty of new faces who left their first visit to the JPL with treasures under their arms.

### ***School visits and tours***

The JPL always opens its doors to class visits and tours of the Library. Students from Montreal's Jewish day schools, bar and bat mitzvah programs, cégeps and universities regularly visit the JPL to benefit from our specialized collection of material and learn about the library's role in the community. All of the grade seven students from Herzliah high school came to the JPL for a session about how to use the Library, and each one received a complimentary membership to the Library for one year. They were divided into teams in order to complete the ultimate library scavenger hunt with prizes for the winning team. Students from Dawson College visited us for their Integrative Seminar focusing on War and Genocide, and learned about the differences between primary, secondary and tertiary sources. Students from TAV visited the library for an introduction on library materials. The JPL continued its successful annual partnership with Marianopolis College and expanded this workshop to include students from Concordia University, teaching students about Biblical commentaries and exegesis.

### **Montreal Museum of Fine Arts**

The Jewish Public Library is proud to have continued its special partnership with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. As part of the Museum's outreach initiative, *Sharing the Museum*, the MMFA offered members of the JPL a number of free passes to their running exhibit, *Lyonel Feininger: from Manhattan to the Bauhaus*. This collaborative educational program for non-profit community organizations helps to make the museum's collections and exhibitions accessible to the public. The MMFA's rich program of educational activities and exhibits is a natural complement to the JPL's own mission in supporting the cultural interests of our community.



### **Afternoon Book Review Series**

Due to popular demand, the JPL began offering an afternoon series of book reviews, led by insightful and animated members of the Montreal community. Our reviews took place on a monthly basis throughout the spring, shedding new light on some of the most hotly discussed books: Jodi Picoult's *House Rules*, Erik Larson's *In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin*, Howard Jacobson's *The Finkler Question* and Lucette Lagnado's *The Arrogant Years: One Girl's Search for her Lost Youth, from Cairo to Brooklyn*. This new initiative was a resounding success and will be continued in the following season.



### **Staff picks**

The ever popular staff picks list continued this past year with the best books of the year. JPL staff all helped to contribute to provide an array of reading

suggestions to the public.

### ***The Jewish Public Library is proud to thank its many partner organizations who visited us and collaborated with us this past year:***

- Akiva School
- L'Alliance Israélite Universelle
- Association of Jewish Libraries
- Ben Weider JCC
- Bialik High School
- Blue Metropolis Foundation
- Bnai Brith House
- Bnai Brith Lecture Bureau
- Bronfman Jewish Education Centre (BJEC)
- Canada Council
- Castel Royale
- Canadian Jewish Congress
- Communauté sépharade unifiée du Québec
- Concordia Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies
- Congregation Dorshei Emet
- Consulate of Israel
- Dawson College
- EBSI (L'École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information de l'Université de Montréal)
- Goethe-Institute
- Habait Halsraeli
- Hadassah Brandeis Institute
- Hampstead School
- Hebrew Academy
- Hebrew Foundation School
- Herzliah High School
- Hillel
- Jewish Book Council
- Jewish Communal Network
- Jewish Genealogical Society
- Jewish People's and Peretz School,
- Jewish Women International Canada
- Marianopolis College
- McGill University Community for Lifelong Learning
- McGill University Department of Jewish Studies
- McGill University School of Information Studies
- Merton School,
- Mission to Montreal
- Montreal Association for Independent Libraries
- Montreal Holocaust Museum Centre
- Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
- National Yiddish Book Center
- Ohr Sheli Daycare,
- Quebec Library Association
- Royal Vale School,
- Segal Centre for Performing Arts
- Solomon Schechter Academy
- Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue
- TAV Intitute
- Temple Emmanuel
- United Talmud Torahs
- Westpark School
- Yeshiva Yavne
- Yeshiva Gedolah

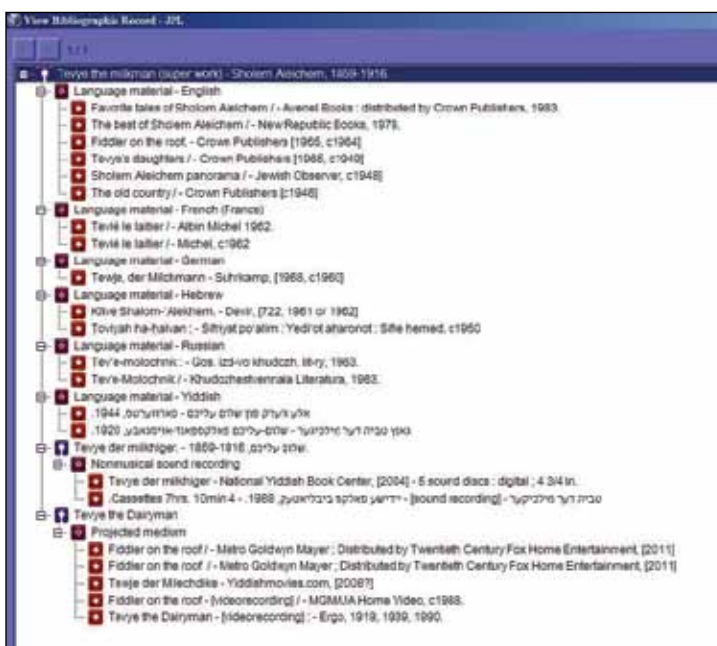




## Technological innovations, libraries teaching students

The library ushered in two technological innovations this past year. The first, a new public interface for the online catalogue called Chamo (short for Chameleon) that brought a number of important features to library users. The public is now able to determine a book's availability much more easily, and members can contribute their own reviews to books they've read that now display to the public in the catalogue, as well as create their own personalized alerts and lists of new or forthcoming titles by their favourite authors. The catalogue has brought a much greater degree of interactivity between our users and the collection.

The second major transition was the simultaneous implementation of two cataloguing procedures: Resource Description and Access (RDA) and the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR). RDA is the successor to the previous set of descriptive Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2) and is gradually being adopted by major libraries around the world after years of consultation. The JPL decided to transition early: RDA uses a more globalized descriptive vocabulary than AACR2, and opens up a greater number of access points and flexibility for searching and resource discovery. FRBR is a much more radical innovation: the JPL is the first public library in the world to adopt it (a university library in Belgium and specialized business library in Brazil have also adopted it). It is a conceptual model that takes the relationship between associated works (i.e. original and translations or subsequent editions, books with film or music adaptations, well-known canonical works with their associated variants, multiple recordings and versions of popular pieces of music) and depicts these relationships in a tree structure on the online catalogue. Since the JPL is a storehouse of multilingual works, Jewish canonical works with its centuries of Biblical, Talmudic, and halachic editions, as well as print and digital formats, FRBR has already allowed the cataloguing librarians to pull these associated works together in ways that show the ancestral pedigree and genealogy of our collections.





The annual visit of 2 religious studies classes from Marianopolis College once again showcased the JPL's mandate as a teaching library. Each year, students attend an orientation class that introduces some of Judaism's core texts to young people using them for the first time. We provided a similar session to a first-year introduction to Jewish history class at Concordia University last fall, to help students navigate many of the digital and online databases relevant to their research. The library staff is not just active in making these texts available, it is also instrumental in teaching people how to use them and to exercise sound judgment in using secondary sources.

In October 2011, 3 fellows from the National Yiddish Book Centre in Amherst, Mass, visited the library in order to borrow over 1100 of the JPL's recorded lectures that have taken place over the last 60 years to digitize them and make them available for free on the Internet Archive. The recordings consist of lectures by, and interviews with, writers and poets who visited the Jewish Public Library of Montreal between 1953 and 2005. The first 60 recordings have already been uploaded, and the balance is currently being processed and will be

uploaded over the next two years. Among the writers represented in the recordings that have been uploaded so far are: Aaron Glanz-Leyeless, Aaron Zeitlin, Abraham Sutzkever, Allen Ginsberg, Chava Rosenfarb, Chaim Grade, H. Leivick, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Itzik Manger, Jacob Glatstein, Kadia Molodowsky, Melech Ravitch, Rachel Korn, Rajzel Zychlinsky, Saul Bellow, Shmerke Kaczerginski, Yosef Kerler, Dora Wasserman, and Leonard Cohen. While the Yiddish Book Centre staff were here collecting the audiotapes, they also conducted interviews with some of the last participants in the Yiddish Talking Book series, as well as some local personalities who have been instrumental in sustaining and promoting Yiddish culture in Montreal for the last half a century. These interviews have been posted on Youtube, and in the autumn of 2012, the Yiddish Book Centre fellows will be returning to conduct additional interviews focusing on the library's focal role as a promoter of Yiddish culture in Montreal.

*If you tell anyone, we'll have to eliminate you...*



# GIRLS' NIGHT OUT

*Spy Series "Gallagher Girls"*

## The Norman Berman Children's Library

### *"Balancing? Act!"*

You and your family – or your friends and community? Education – or entertainment? Like their children, many parents and caregivers find it tough to budget the time, energy and money to get the best balance out of all these things. With schools facing similar challenges, kids today may often never discover that learning can become a lifelong habit that's both enjoyable and relevant. This year, we at the Norman Berman Children's Library provided a wealth of opportunities for families to do just that.

From Spring onwards, our classes for preschoolers and elementary school students were fully booked 6 days a week, based on our teachers' well-earned reputations for excellence and dedication. Courses included our 30 minute **Music and Movement** class and **Drop-In Story Times**, 45 minute **Mother Goose and Music** classes and **Sunday Story Time and Crafts**, a 60 minute art and music-filled **Shabbat course**, and a 75 minute **Rhythm Rhyme and Story Time**.

Over the Summer, the last programs motivated children to read whatever they liked as **Summer Reading Club** members. On Wednesday nights, families got comfortable in their pajamas and enjoyed our animator's skills as she told **Summer Bedtime Stories**. We also helped visiting students from the **Mack Belson Summer Reading Camp** learn the rudiments of reading.

October saw award-winning author, raconteur and **Jewish Book Month** honoree Aubrey Davis entertain nearly 1600 students from grades 1-6 from 10 Jewish and secular public and private schools with his stories

and songs. He also taught them short yet memorable silly melodies, dances and riddles when they got restless. In fact, for days afterwards, audience members re-enacted Aubrey's "improv routines" for us, verbatim. As his show was sold out (and then some), the Library also deployed our resident story teller and accomplished story time animator, Selina Eisenberg Smith, to equally amaze another 400 children in 7 sessions at 4 different schools with her repertoire.

November heralded two remarkable NBCL events. Firstly, 70 Montreal children and their parents celebrated the **Global Day of Jewish Learning** as part of our regular **Sunday morning story time and art celebration**. Besides reading books on the Shema and the day/night cycle, everyone sang, danced and decorated their own pillow cases.



Then, our **7th Girls' Night Out** was a resounding success. Featuring a favorite Young Adult author, it has become an annual irresistible, anticipated event for adolescent girls and their moms, sisters, grandmothers

and aunts. Over 160 people turned up from as far away as Ottawa to hear this year's invitee, Ally Carter, who easily won the crowd over with her warmth, wisdom and vivaciousness on and off stage. She particularly inspired younger attendees to succeed: "After all," she said, "Look at me – an Oklahoma farm girl who's now a best-selling author!" Ally also advised "It's about who

you want to be, not about who you want to be with - so ignore those outside pressures and push ahead!"



In Winter, we welcomed back award-winning musical artist **Jennifer Gasoi** for our December **Holiday Concert**; over 525 pre-schoolers and their parents danced and sang along with her. For January's **Family**

**Literacy Day**, families made their own paper bag puppets as they listened to wondrous animal stories.

Our ever popular **Mother Daughter Book Club** let participants discuss pertinent issues spotlighted in selected books. For the inaugural session, Montreal's internationally renowned author/illustrator **Marie Louise Gay** shared the inspiration behind her stories and displayed her artwork.

All year long, our staff of experienced, professional librarians and library technicians gladly helped visitors choose suitable items from our superb **Picture Book collection** featuring **board books** for our youngest customers, and our range of **Easy Readers, Fiction, Young Adult, and Non Fiction (Information)** items in **English, French, Hebrew and Yiddish** for older children and adults. They could also linger, mingle and play with our stock of toys and puzzles, or just watch and be watched over by our mascot Shelley the Turtle.




The Children's Librarian also managed our community's **PJ Library**. Funded in Montreal by the Joel and Marlene King Family Foundation, and a Program in memory of Helen and Sam Steinberg, this initiative engages families and Jewish life with a monthly, free mailing of age appropriate books or CDs to registered children. The Library helped to organize and participated in local PJ Library programs that included **Hudson and South Shore (Brossard) home-based Sunday morning classes**, and a very successful **"Purim with Puppets"** show where families munched on hamantaschen while donating pajamas destined for Montreal's underprivileged.



As always, our belief that it's vitally important for children and adults alike to learn how to learn – and enjoy it too - is what underlies all of our collections, services and programs, whether it's personal reading, hearing an inspiring author, or singing a nursery rhyme. Our "balancing act" remains an ongoing, entertaining and educational experience open to any-

one; and we're gratified and delighted that we helped so many children and their families tip their balance towards active participation in the world of learning. Visit us this year - and discover that world for yourself and your children.



*Material in the Aline Gubbay Fonds includes portraits of British theatre and art personalities, taken during her photography career. Pictured here is actress Claire Bloom.*

## The Archives of the Jewish Public Library

### Archives' Greater Accessibility

The growing digital presence of the JPL Archives (JPL-A) played a major roll in a large increase in reference requests and visits by researchers. As seen by the diversity of topics listed here, the JPL-A continues to offer researchers from Quebec, Canada and around the world, a high-level of service. Material from the JPL-A continues to be referenced or featured in academic articles, books and feature-length documentaries.

There was also an increased interest in learning at the JPL-A from graduate and college students. We welcomed our annual practicum students from McGill University and John Abbott College but we also hosted students from Concordia University and Collège Lionel-Groulx.

This year also saw the JPL-A busy with several exhibits, including a permanent tribute wall to the Montefiore Club (visible in the Cummings Building), the Maurice Sendak exhibit from the American Library Association in November/December, and assisting with the Montreal Sephardic exhibit held in March. Work has already begun on the anticipated exhibits for the JPL's centenary in 2014.

The majority of work in the JPL-A was made possible by the continued support of the Azrieli Foundation and by the introduction of support by the Alex Dworkin Foundation for Jewish Archives. The preservation and celebration of community heritage is strengthened by their commitment. A special gift was made to the JPL-A by Peter and Ellen Jacobs. The Peter and Ellen Jacobs' Virtual Archives fund will allow the JPL-A to prepare several virtual exhibits, digitize specialized materials such

as audio-visual recordings and take great leaps in the continued growth of our virtual archival presence.

### Recent Archival Donations & Transfers

Handel Productions Fonds  
Norman Epelbaum/Regent Photo Studios Fonds  
Dan Daniels Fonds  
Aline Gubbay Fonds  
Yavneh Shul/Parnas Family Collection  
Education Resource Centre Collection  
Federation CJA Collection  
YM-YWHA Fonds

### Topics Researched Through the JPL Archives

Saidye Bronfman Centre  
Ethel Stark  
Jewish war brides  
United Jewish People's Order  
Montreal Jews in the labour movement  
Montreal Jews and women's rights  
Jewish business dynasties  
Jewish General Hospital  
Canadian Jewish Chronicle  
United Talmud Torah  
Baron Byng High School  
Joe Baumholz  
The Main/St. Lawrence Blvd.  
Yiddish folk music  
Canadian Zionism  
Yiddish women poets  
Yaakov Zipper  
David Rome  
Kristallnacht  
A.M. Klein



Family histories  
 International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union  
 J.I. Segal  
 Jewish immigration  
 Jewish internees in Canada during World War II  
 Jewish Public Library  
 Jewish schools in Montreal  
 Keneder Adler  
 Léa Roback  
 Louis Rubenstein  
 Reuben Brainin  
 Rochl Korn  
 Sam Gesser  
 Shulamis Yelin  
 Yiddish theatre in Montreal  
 "Y" Beacon  
 Morris Cohen  
 Jewish children during WWII  
 Jewish Junior Welfare League  
 Young Men's-Young Women's Hebrew Association

### Practicum Students

Daniella Ansovini –  
 McGill University School of Information Studies  
 Selina Antonucci –  
 Concordia University, Public History programme  
 Jason Dupuis –  
 John Abbott College, Information and Library  
 Technologies Program  
 Esther Édouard, Sonia Boulanger, Chantal Côté –  
 Collège Lionel-Groulx

### Volunteers

Maurice Amiel  
 Kate Brothers



Collège Lionel-Groulx students interview Mireille Galanti during their stage at JPL Archives. The students helped to digitize older taped interviews as well as collected new interviews.



Yiddish theatre productions of "Crime and Punishment" & "King Solomon" at the Globe Theatre, Montreal, 1926. Poster digitized as part of a developing virtual exhibit on the poster and artwork collections of the JPL; work supported by the Peter and Ellen Jacobs Virtual Archives Fund.

Tatiana de Rosnay,  
Jewish Book Month Keynote Speaker

## Cultural Programmes 2011-2012

Under the aegis of 6 cultural committees, there were a total of **54 events and programmes** in 6 different languages: English, French, Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian and Romanian.

- 3 Theatrical plays and stage readings
- 10 Film presentations
- 6 Lectures
- 4 Book launches
- 4 Canada Council Readings
- 1 "Conversations" event
- 1 Russian event
- 9 Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal lectures
- 8 Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal Sunday Morning Workshops
- 1 Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal – Annual Film Night
- 2 Special events (French exhibit vernissage & lecture)
- 4 Book Review events
- 1 Special exhibit (Maurice Sendak)

Attendance was as follows:

English events:	4,085
French events:	463
Hebrew events:	1,980
Yiddish events:	842
Russian events:	532
With a total attendance of:	<b>7,902</b>

## Cultural Programmes 2011-2012

A cultural hub, The Jewish Public Library offers exceptional adult programming and hosts some of the foremost current authors and thinkers. This year, highlight events included a sold out lecture by psychiatry guru,

**Irvin D. Yalom**, the first ever collaboration with The Segal Centre in presenting the **JPL Hebrew Theatre**, premieres of international feature films, book launches and much, much more.

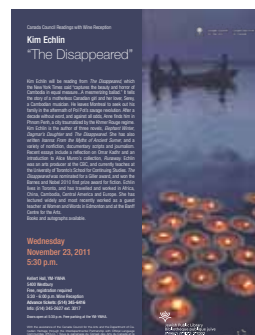
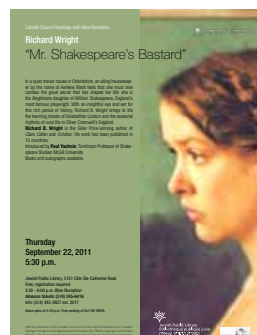
### The Year in review

#### SEPTEMBER

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal Sunday Morning Family Tree Workshops**, held monthly from September to May, were an opportunity for novice genealogists to learn tips and methods in researching their family roots.

**Hebrew Theatrical Performance of *An Israeli Love Story***, a Monodrama recounting the love story between a Kibbutznick and a soldier in the dangerous times of pre-state Israel. Based on the life story of the playwright and director, Pnina Gary and performed by Adi Bielski.

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *The Jews of Old Toronto – mid-1800's to 1950: From Ward to Spadina Avenue*, with **Bill Gladstone**.



**Canada Council Readings** with **Richard B. Wright**, the Giller Prize-winning author, who read from his novel *Mr. Shakespeare's Bastard*.

## OCTOBER

**The Galkin Family Annual Lecture Endowment of the JPL** presented **Jonathan Kay**, discussing his fascinating findings about the world of conspiracy theorists, in his book *Among the Truthers*.

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *Struggle: A Quest for Life, Love and a New World*, with Dr. Marvin Blauer.



**Film Screening of *Elle s'appelait Sarah* (*Sarah's Key*)**, a feature film in French with English subtitles. A powerful film based on the novel by Tatiana de Rosnay, the screening was followed by a discussion led by Audrey Licop, coordinatrice des événements et communications du Centre commémoratif de l'Holocauste à Montréal.

**The Norman Berman Memorial Lecture** with **Lucette Lagnado**, award winning author of *The Arrogant Years: One Girl's Search for Her Lost Youth, from Cairo to Brooklyn*. Lagnado spoke in depth about her life story and her battle with cancer as both a teenager and a new immigrant to the United States. Lagnado was introduced by Maurice Elia.

## JEWISH BOOK MONTH – OCTOBER 29TH THROUGH NOVEMBER 20TH

*In a Nutshell: The Worlds of Maurice Sendak*. **Special JBM exhibit about Maurice Sendak**, popular children's author of *Where the Wild Things Are* and *In the Night Kitchen*, among many other beloved books. The exhibit, which was on display until December, highlighted how Sendak's work was influenced by his childhood in New York in the 1930s and how his artistic journey led him deeper into his family's history and his Jewish identity.

**Film Premiere of *Eichman's End: Love, Betrayal, Death***, a film in German, Spanish and Hebrew with English subtitles which tells the incredible story of how the love affair between Eichmann's son and the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, led to his eventual capture. Sponsored by Adriana and Haim Kotler.

**An Evening with Deborah Lipstadt**. Lecture and book launch of *Eichmann's Trial*. The trial of SS Lieutenant Colonel Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem by an Israeli court electrified the world. The public debate sparked on where, how, and by whom Nazi war criminals should be brought to justice.

## NOVEMBER

**The Marvin A. Drimer Foundation's Jewish Book Month Keynote Address "A Writer's Journey Through Fact and Fiction"** with **Tatiana de Rosnay**, bestselling author, who shared with the audience her powerful journey while creating her novels, *Sarah's Key* and *A Secret Kept*.

**Staged Play Reading in Hebrew of *Makolet***, an emotional play that depicts the immigrant Israeli-Jewish experience with humour, pathos, and sympathy. Written and directed by Aviva Ravel.

**Double Book Launch of Norman Ravvin's *The Joyful Child***, a darkly funny novel that follows a father and son on a cross-Canada road trip, and **Sarah Ferdman Tauben's *Traces of the Past: Montreal's Early Synagogues***, a research book that documents the development of Montreal's Jewish community from the 1880's until 1945.

**Triangle Fire Centenary Memorial**. A commemoration in Yiddish and English in memory of the victims of the fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York on March 25, 1911. Sponsored by the Nathan Igelfeld Foundation.

**Tribute to the life and works of Chava Rosenfarb**. Presented by Goldie Morgentaler in memory of the life and works of her mother, the great Yiddish novelist Chava Rosenfarb. Sponsored by the Yentl Fishman fund.

**An Evening of Russian Culture – "Fall in Love Again"** featured brilliant and stylish performances of Russian song, dance and theatre. Sponsored by Barbara and Ronny Kay.

**Book Launch in French** with author **André Aciman**, who discussed his journey in writing his book, *Alibi – Vive ailleurs: exile et parallaxe*.



**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *Brick Wall Session* with Michael Goldstein.

**Canada Council Readings** with **Kim Echlin**, former arts reporter, teacher and author of three novels including *The Disappeared*.

**7th Annual Girl's Night Out** with **Ally Carter**, author of the spy series *Gallagher Girls*.





The JBM Closing event – **(More than a) Book Launch: Jewish Roots, Canadian Soil: Yiddish Culture in Montreal, 1905-1945.** A presentation by Rebecca Margolis on Montreal's Yiddish community during the first half of the twentieth century. Sponsored by University of Ottawa's Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program.

## DECEMBER

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *DNA for Genealogy* with Jay Sage.

## JANUARY

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented its annual feature film night.

**Film screening: Mame-Loshn, Kinder-Loshn.** A film in Hebrew and Yiddish, with English subtitles. A look into the story of the writers, poets, editors and Yiddish lovers who are trying to revive the Yiddish language in Israel.

**Chaim and Clara Spilberg Endowment Fund** presented the **5th JPL Israeli Film Festival (December and January.)** Four feature films were presented including *Je t'aime, I love you Terminal*, an award winning film in English and Hebrew with English subtitles; *Brothers*, an eye-opening film about the clash between secular and religious Israeli Jews in Hebrew with English subtitles; *Restoration*, about the complex relationship between a father, son and daughter-in-law and a mysterious apprentice in Hebrew with English subtitles; and *Dusk*, four separate stories that come together one evening at dusk in Hebrew and Spanish with English subtitles.

## FEBRUARY

**Yiddish Café** presented *Love Café*, an evening of Yiddish love songs and poems. Sponsored by the Augenfeld Family Endowment.

## MARCH

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *How to use the new Canadian Jewish Heritage Network website and what this new resource contains*

for researchers with Janice Rosen and Shannon Hodge.

**Movie Premiere** of *Sholem Aleichem: Laughing in the Darkness*, a fascinating documentary on the life of Sholem Aleichem, followed by a Q&A period with writer, producer and

director, **Joseph Dorman**. Sponsored by the Miriam Blacher Glasrot and Josef Glasrot Endowment, the Mary Heimlich Cultural Endowment Fund and the Rebecca & Jacob Grossman Foundation of the JPL.

**Montreal Movie Premiere** of the Israeli film *Viva Espana: A Tale in Four Octaves*, in Hebrew and English with English subtitles, about the life and musical career of singer **Hanna Ahroni**, followed by a Q&A period with Ahroni.

**S. An-sky and the Dybbuk: Art, Revolution, Destruction.** Gabriella Safran gave a presentation on the life and best known literary work of Shloyme Zanvl Rappoport, known by his pseudonym S. An-sky, and author of *The Dybbuk*, the most famous Yiddish play. Gabriella Safran wrote the first biography ever published on An-Sky. Sponsored by the Lashinsky Epstein Endowment Fund.

**French Exhibit and Conference** entitled *Juifs sépharades au Québec, entre histoire et mémoire*, a month-long exhibit in the lobby of the Cummings building about the history of Sephardic Jews in Quebec. A vernissage was held to open the exhibit and later that month, a panel discussion was held with several experts in the field discussing their research. In collaboration with the "Histoire de vies Montréal" project of Concordia University et le Centre consultatif des relations juives et israéliennes.

**The Afternoon Book Review Series** launched its first event of the season where **Joel Yanofsky** reviewed *House Rules*, a novel by Jodi Picoult. The main character of *House Rules* is a teenage boy who has Asperger's syndrome, and the novel looks at what it means to be different in our society, how autism affects a family, and how the legal system works well for people who communicate a certain way, and fails for those who don't.

## APRIL

**The Joseph Kagedan Kage Cultural Endowment Fund of the JPL** presented a **Screening** of *The Gift to Stalin*, a powerful Russian film with English subtitles, about a young boy who prepares a birthday gift for Stalin in the hopes of being reunited with his parents. Introduced by Delores Rosen, JPL English Cultural Committee member and cinema aficionado.

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *Out of Uman: A Tale of Family Reconnection, Discovery, and Sharing* with Bill Saslow.



**Canada Council Reading** with **Glen Rotchin**, noted Montreal author and essayist who read from his second novel, *Halbman Steals Home*. Introduced by writer and reviewer Joel Yanofsky.

**Legacy for Learning Series, in cooperation with the Hadassah Brandeis Institute** presented *Conversations – A Jewish Woman's Literary Circle* with **Alyson Richman**, who used the intimate setting to discuss her book, *The Lost Wife*. A public lecture with Richman followed, with an introduction by Monique Polak. Sponsored by the Helen Bassel Endowment.

**The Afternoon Book Review Series** presented its second event of the season. **Eva Raby** reviewed *In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin*, by Erik Larson. The author documented the efforts of first American ambassador to Hitler's Germany, William E. Dodd, to acclimate to a residence in an increasingly violent city.

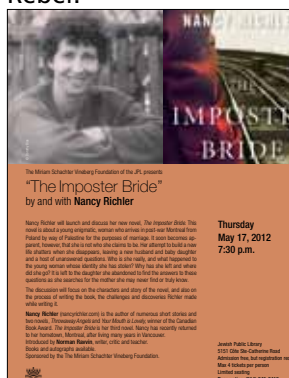
## MAY

**Film screening** of *Le père fantôme*, a Romanian film with French subtitles, about an American Professor's sabbatical year spent researching his past. Followed by a debate led by Maurice Elia.

**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *Reading Hebrew and Yiddish Tombstones* with Hymie Reichstein and John Diener.

**Yiddish Café** presented **An Evening in Honour of Sholem Aleichem**, a popular annual event to commemorate the life of the great Yiddish writer in stories and songs. Sponsored by the Chana Gonshor and the Etta Michtom Miransky Endowments.

**Canada Council Reading** with **Roberta Rich**, who spoke of her creative process in writing her novel, *The Midwife of Venice*. Introduced by Dr. Trudis Goldsmith-Reber.



**The Miriam Schachter Vineberg Foundation of the JPL** presented **Nancy Richler** lecturing on her newest novel *The Imposter Bride*, about a woman's quest to discover the secrets of the mother that abandoned her as a child. Introduced by Norman Ravvin, writer, critic and teacher.

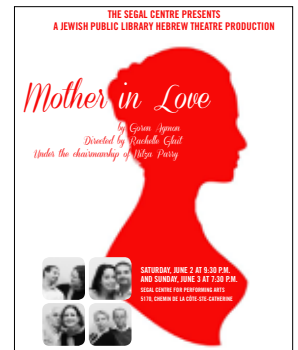
**Max Margles Fund of the JPL** presented **Irvin D. Yalom**, renowned psychiatrist and author discussing his latest book *The Spinoza Problem*, that touches on the thin psychological line separating Spinoza and Nazi

Alfred Rosenberg. The lecture was a sold-out success that attracted a diverse crowd. Introduced by Sarah Reingewirz.

**The Afternoon Book Review Series** continued its successful presentations with **Elaine Kalman Naves** reviewing *The Finkler Question* by Howard Jacobson. The novel was the winner of the prestigious Man Booker Prize in 2010.

## JUNE

**The Hebrew Theatre of the Jewish Public Library** under the chairmanship of Nitza Parry for the first time in collaboration with The Segal Centre for Performing Arts, presented two sold-out performances of *Mother in Love*. Written by Goren Agmon and directed by **Rachelle Glait** and presented in Hebrew with English supertitles, this play raises the question: how far must a parent go for his or her grown child?



**The Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented *Three Presenters Program* with Jo Ann Goldwater, David Kimmel and David Reich.

**The Afternoon Book Review Series** had its closing event of the season where **Vivianne M. Silver** reviewed *The Arrogant Years: One Girl's Search for her Lost Youth, from Cairo to Brooklyn*, by Lucette Lagnado. This book was the much anticipated follow-up memoir of the award-winning *The Man in the White Sharkskin Suit*.

## AUGUST

**Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal** presented Lecture meeting: Research Resources in Montreal, Quebec and Canada with Alan Greenberg.



#### **Gala Committee 2012:**

*Front l-t-r: Pearl Lighter, Mia Swartzman Barsheshat, Freda Browns. Back l-t-r: Cindy Davis, Helen Segal, Susan Schiffman, Marnie Dresher, Michael Crelinsten, Delores Rosen.*

*Absent: Ronit Amsel Jacobson, Roxana Brauns, Joanne Garfinkle, Rosalind Goodman, Robin Mader, Alain Murad, Gerald Soiferman, Stephanie Steinman, Liane Taran.*

## **Fundraising**

The Library enjoyed another fruitful year of fundraising and stewardship activities. Preparations for the 100th Anniversary Capital Endowment Campaign gained momentum throughout the year. The JPL staff and board members are now well positioned to launch a major capital campaign.

In November, the Norman Berman Children's Library hosted its 7th annual Girls' Night Out event. Popular young adult novelist Ally Carter, author of the *Gallagher Girls* and *Heist Society* series spoke to a sold-out audience of mothers, daughters, aspiring authors and avid readers. Proceeds from Girls' Night Out admissions will be used to enhance the Library's Young Adult Collection.

The theme of this year's Annual Gala Fundraiser, held in June, was "Celebrating Our Children, Building our Future." The event featured talented young singers, performing "Shake-spirited Songs" as well as a theatrical production of "Oh What a Piece of Work -- Shakespeare at Work" by Paul Hopkins, Artistic Director of Repercussion Theatre and Paul Yachnin, McGill's Tomlinson Professor of Shakespeare Studies. This year's Fall/Winter Programme book will include an advertising insert, in



support of the Gala. Though the Gala faced a number of challenges this year, the event was nonetheless successful in raising substantial funding for the NBCL and other Library operations.

The Friends of the JPL continue to be among our most vital supporters. As volunteers, they work tirelessly on

our key events and programmes. They donate generously to these events and attend enthusiastically. Through their membership contributions, Friends provide funds for the purchase of Judaic materials, as well as funds for technology to support research and reference services. We deeply appreciate our Friends.

We were fortunate, this year, to receive gifts from the Marvin A. Drimer Foundation, the Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation, Barbara and Ronny Kay, Adriana and Haim Kotler, Assaf Drori, and the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre in support of Jewish Book Month and other cultural programming initiatives.

We are grateful to the Borough of Côte-des-Neiges – Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, for its grant in support of collections and services; Service Canada Centre for two summer student grants; the EJLB Foundation for a grant in support of additional books and supplies for the Norman Berman Children's Library and to the Azrieli Foundation, the Alex Dworkin Foundation for Jewish Archives, and Peter and Ellen Jacobs for gifts in support of the JPL Archives. We extend a special thanks to Alvin Segal for his generous gift in support of technology improvements at the JPL. Our sincerest thanks, also, to the Trottier Family Foundation for its generous gift in support of Library operations.

Again this year, the JPL was fortunate to have many, many loyal supporters, who remembered us on important occasions – both sad and joyful – making donations to purchase books, name bookshelves and endow programs in the names of friends and loved ones. Our special thanks to those families who made bequests and planned gifts to ensure the future of the Library.

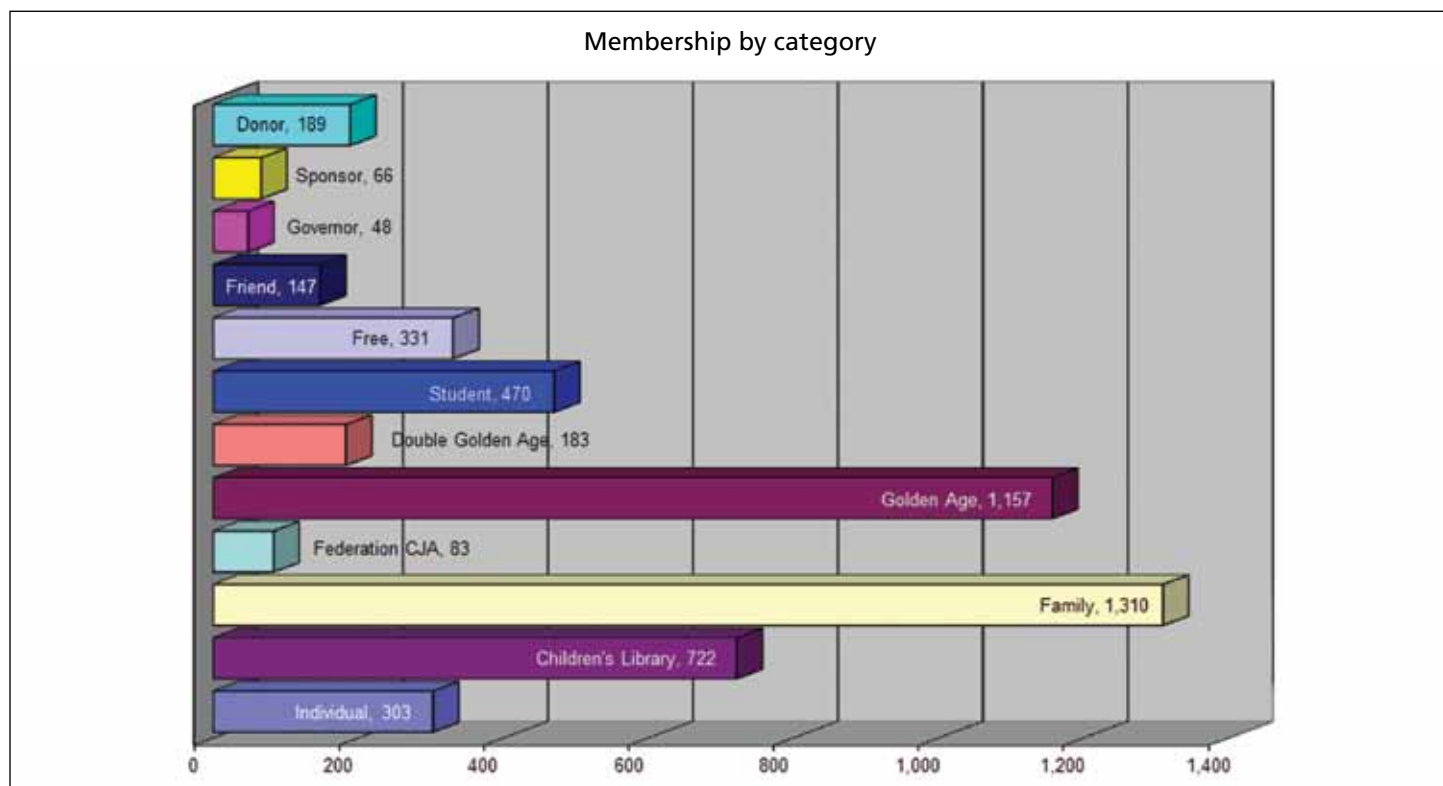




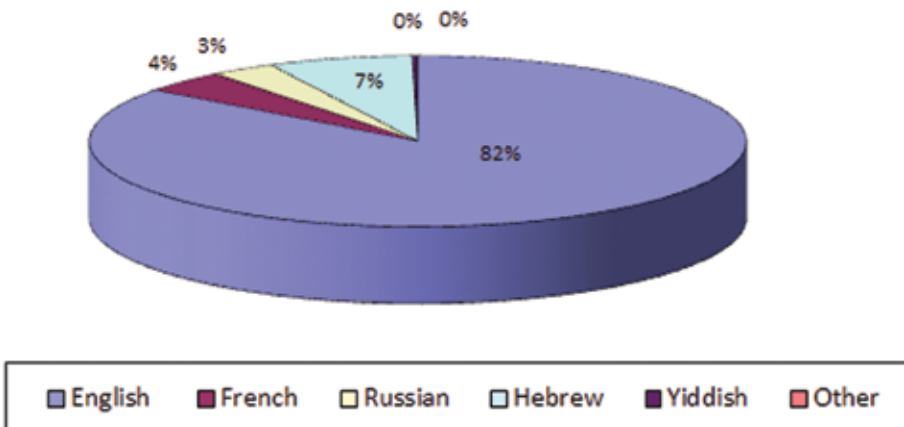
## Statistics

In 2011 the Library counted 5,009 members that were composed of the following membership categories.

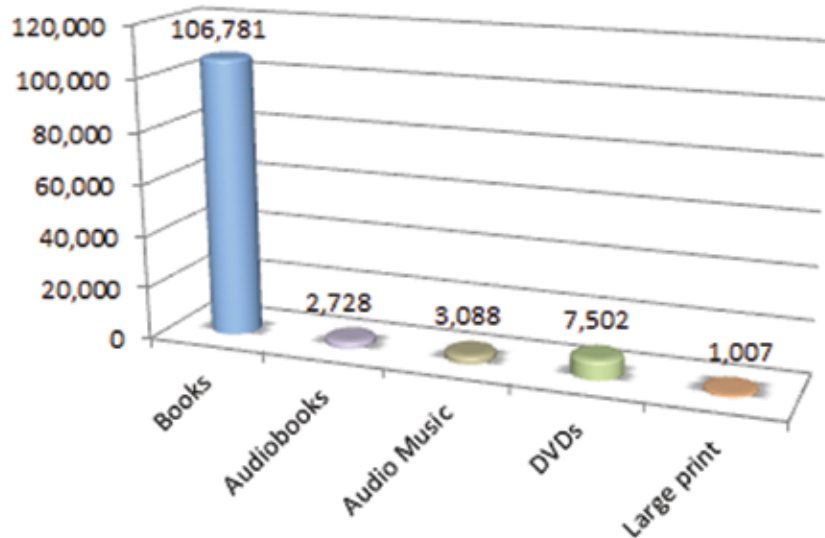
The following charts represent the division of these by format, language and genre and circulated items.



### Circulation by Language 2011

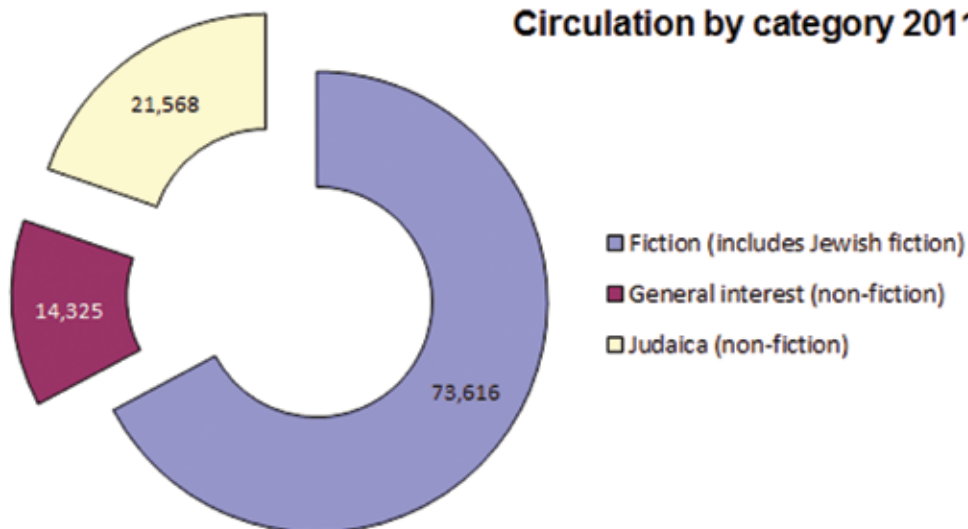


119,741 items were circulated in 2011. The chart shows the split by language.



This chart demonstrates the circulating items by medium in 2011.

### Circulation by category 2011



The items circulated in 2011 by category (does not include music or DVDs).



### Top 25 borrowed books of 2011

1. *The girl who kicked the hornet's nest* by Stieg Larsson
2. *Secret daughter* by Shilpi Somaya Gowda
3. *The Finkler question* by Howard Jacobsen
4. *The help* by Kathryn Stockett
5. *The tenth song* by Naomi Ragen
6. *Sing you home* by Jodi Picoult
7. *Harry Potter and the order of the Phoenix*  
by J.k. Rowling
8. *The confession* by John Grisham
9. *Zelenyi Shater* by Liudmila Ulitskaya
10. *Lichnye motive* by Alexandra Marinina
11. *The sixth man* by David Baldacci
12. *Cutting for stone* by Abraham verghese
13. *The Jewish husband* by Liana Levi
14. *Little bee* by Chris Cleave
15. *Shikufitzky 5* by Shifra Glick
16. *Fall of giants* by Ken Follett
17. *Room* by Emma Donoghue
18. *Chasing fire* by Nora Roberts
19. *44 Charles Street* by Danielle Steel
20. *Oasis* by Sarah Kisner
21. *The glass room* by Simon Mawer
22. *Freedom* by Jonathan Franzen
23. *Let's go to the farm* by Rikki Benenfield
24. *The Paris wife* by Paula McLean
25. *Foreign bodies* by Cynthia Ozick

### Top 5 borrowed DVDs of 2011

1. *Uncle Moishy and the Mitzvah men*
2. *Mrs. Doubtfire*
3. *The king's speech*
4. *Despicable me*
5. *Mao's last dancer*



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Archivist

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Head of Bibliographic and Information Services

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Head of Circulation

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### **Leo Hubermann**

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### **Jennifer Solomon** (until February 2012)

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### **Susan Schiffman** (as of March 2012)

Director of Development

### **Cindy Davis**

Public Relations Coordinator

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### **Debby Mayman**

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### **Janice Cohen**

Cataloging Assistant; Programs & Technical Services

### **Sonia Silva**

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### **Angelina Spilberg**

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### **Sheilah Rovniak**

Accounting-Membership

# Thank you to our Volunteers

The Jewish Public Library exists only with the support of the community and the hard work and determination of its many volunteers and layperson committee members. In addition to the many exceptional individuals who work on our library committees, we have an army of volunteers who bring their skills and dedication to support library services and programmes in all sorts of ways. Some of these tasks include shelving, delivery of books to our frail elderly, data entry, and book processing. They contribute hours and hours of their time each week. This contribution is greatly appreciated

We would like to thank the following:

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Connie Abramovitch  
Sid Abramovitch  
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Haim Derai  
Roslyn Dorenfeld  
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Mireille Gallanti  
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Miri Flakowicz  
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Ian Levitt  
Carlo Pinotti

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Amber Laude

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