Press Kit

Defiance
Jewish Women and Design
in the Modern Era

Content

Press information
10 July 2025

JMB opens the exhibition
Defiance: Jewish Women and Design in the Modern Era

Portrait of Emmy Roth: Scherl/Süddeutsche Zeitung Photo; card game: Adele Sandler, Jewish Museum Berlin; photo: Jens Ziehe; design: Visual Space Agency | Studio Bens

The exhibition presents the biographies and works of twentieth-century Jewish women designers who are largely forgotten today. The JMB gives new visibility to their artistic and entrepreneurial achievements and their positions within early twentieth-century German society's processes of emancipation and modernization – as women, as Jews, and as artists.

With around four hundred exhibits by more than sixty designers, this is the world's first collective exhibition on the theme. It brings together pioneering women who battled social marginalization to achieve outstanding positions in their own fields, until the Nazi regime destroyed their careers and lives. Some managed to escape Germany and start afresh abroad.

"Almost all, however, were excluded from the history of German art and culture," observes the curator, Michal Friedlander. "Through the exhibition, based on many years of research, the JMB is restoring these women artists to the place that they deserve." Among the better-known names are Anni Albers, Friedl Dicker, Maria Luiko, Emmy Roth, Irene Saltern, and Tom Seidmann-Freud. Visitors will encounter a broad spectrum of design and craft techniques, from goldsmithing and textile art, via ceramics and woodcarving, to fashion design and graphics.

"Most of the artists featured in the exhibition are unknown today," says Hetty Berg, the JMB's Director. "As well as highlighting the aesthetic quality of the exhibits, the show also tells the story of the particular conditions under which they were made and the often abrupt end to their production. In that way, it emphasizes the specificity of German-Jewish women's contribution to the history of the applied arts."

Pioneers in their time: From the turn of the twentieth century to the present day in ten chapters

Around 1900, women in Germany were structurally disadvantaged compared with men even more than today. Their rights in marriage and family life were restricted, and they could not choose their training and profession freely. The examples in the introductory chapter reveal the ***Defiance*** that women needed to overcome these obstacles. The second chapter tells the stories of ***Trailblazers*** who challenged not only conservative values in society as a whole, but also the values that prevailed within their own Jewish environment.

The third chapter, ***Design Education***, focuses on the severe limitations to educational and career opportunities for women in design. Women were not admitted to most art academies in Germany until 1919. Just a few institutions offered vocational courses for young women. Jewish women were disproportionately well represented in these sites of artistic training.

A modern consumer economy was one of the defining features of the Weimar Republic, creating new opportunities for product designers. This is the theme of the next chapter, ***Commodity Cosmos***. As craftswomen and entrepreneurs, Jewish women ran small home businesses, designed for manufacturers, or worked in family firms. They both generated and served the demand for modern everyday products and for Jewish ritual objects.

The advertising industry was growing, and there was work for women designers in the areas of poster design, book design, and typography. As fashion designers, illustrators, and boutique owners, Jewish women and their ideas on female self-representation were instrumental in creating a modern visual culture. The "New Woman" embodied a new kind of femininity: the single, professional, emancipated woman who made daring fashion choices. In the chapter ***Fashioning Identities***, the exhibition shows how Jewish women influenced fashion trends in Germany. But though women aspired to independence, ***Making a Living*** through their crafts alone was rarely possible, as a further chapter reveals. Women had to rely on support from their parents or husbands.

As progressive educational reform began to take hold in Germany, teaching materials were adapted to meet children's needs more closely; this is the topic of the chapter ***The Jewish Playroom***. Jewish communities saw their members drift away from religious life, and came to recognize the important role of educational materials in fostering children's Jewish identification and self-confidence. Women took the lead in this niche market, creating child-friendly teaching materials, illustrating children's books, and marketing their own products.

The situation changed for the worse from 1933, with Jews in Germany facing existential threats of ***Restriction, Marginalization, Upheaval***. Fall 1941 saw the beginning of mass deportations and the mass murder of the European Jews. The chapter ***Into the Dark*** testifies to exclusion and persecution, imprisonment, and death, but also the diverse strategies of resistance pursued by Jewish women in design.

Whether they were living in Germany after the end of the war or had succeeded in settling abroad, Jewish craftswomen faced ***New Realities***. The exhibition's last chapter traces how, emotionally burdened if not deeply traumatized, they had to forge their paths without the benefit of their former

business and social networks and renegotiate their Jewish identity under the changed circumstances. To sidestep the language difficulties they faced in their new countries, refugee women often made their products at home. In most cases, they had to develop a new style, finding that their previous work was not to the taste of the new customers. The pressure to adapt weighed heavily on them from the outset – and is one of the reasons why their names and works found no place in the history of art.

The realization of the exhibition was made possible by funding from the Hauptstadtkulturfonds.
We also thank the David Berg Foundation for its kind support.

Media partners: radio3, Yorck Kinogruppe

Exhibition dates: 11 July–23 November 2025
Location: Jewish Museum Berlin, Old Building, Level 1
Admission: € 10 / reduced € 4
Opening hours: daily 10 am to 6 pm

The exhibition catalog (in German) is published by Hirmer Verlag (304 pages, 250 color illustrations, price € 39.90) and available in the JMB Shop and bookstores.

For the latest information on the exhibition, visit:
https://www.jmberlin.de/en/defiance-jewish-women-and-design-modern-era

Press images are available for download with full acknowledgment at:
https://www.jmberlin.de/en/press-images

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JÜDISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN

Factsheet

Defiance. Jewish Women and Design in the Modern Era

Exhibition dates	11 July to 23 November 2025
Opening hours	Daily from 10 am to 6 pm
Location	Jewish Museum Berlin, Old Building, Level 1
Admission	10 €, reduced 4 €, children and young people under the age of 18 free of charge. Timeslot reservation required: https://tickets.jmberlin.de/en/tickets/
Website	https://www.jmberlin.de/en/defiance
Social media	facebook.com/jmberlin instagram.com/juedischesmuseumberlin linkedin.com/company/juedisches-museum-berlin Youtube.com/jmberlinTube #Defiance
Exhibition space	800 m^2
Exhibition curator	Michal S. Friedlander
Exhibition management and project assistant	Deniz Roth and Julia Dellith
Exhibition design	anschlaege.de with Thilo Albers and Valerie Daude
Promotion campaign design	Julia Volkmar, VISUAL SPACE AGENCY with STUDIO BENS, Jens Ludewig
Number of exhibition chapters	10 Defiance Trailblazers Design Education Commodity Cosmos

	Fashioning Identities Making a Living The Jewish Playroom Restriction, Marginalization, Upheaval Into the Dark New Realities
Objects on display	300 exhibits Silverware and Judaica, clothing, jewelry, hats and handbags, textiles and beadwork, toys and playing cards, dolls and puppets, illustrated books for children and adults, posters, ceramics and porcelain, floral art, drawings and prints, illustrations and designs, portrait, object and theater photography
Number of designers exhibited	60 designers Marianne Ahlfeld-Heymann, Anni Albers, Paula Aronsohn, Käte Baer-Freyer, Franziska Baruch, Esther Berli-Joel, Alice Bloch, Nina Brodsky, Franziska Bruck, Charlotte Bud, Livia Cohen, Elsbeth Cohen-Silberschmidt, Ida Dehmel, Emma Dessau-Goitein, Friedl Dicker, Dodo, Rose Eisner, Lotte Engel-Hecker, Elly Frank, Rosa Freudenthal, Elisabeth Friedländer, Marguerite Friedlaender-Wildenhain, Regina Friedlaender, Hedwig Grossmann, Margarete Heymann-Loebenstein, Elli Hirsch, Dorothea Kuttner, Rose Leon, Elisabet Alexandra Levy, Hanna Litten, Maria Luiko, Johanna Marbach, Agnes Meyerhof, Steffie Nathan, Trude Neu, Alice Neumann, Else Oppler-Legband, Lotte Pritzel, Annie Rosenblüth, Emmy Roth, Irene Saltern, Edith Samuel, Eva Samuel, Adele Sandler, Gertrude Sandmann, Franziska Schlopsnies, Paula Schwarz, Tom Seidmann-Freud, Rahel Ruth Sinasohn, Käte Spanier, Hanna E. Stern, Paula Straus, Rahel Szalit, Lilli Szkolny, Elisabeth Tomalin, Emma Trietsch, Pia Turgel, Jenny Westheim, Käte Wolff
Lenders and donors	34 private collections and institutions
Publication	The exhibition catalog (in German) is published by Hirmer Verlag (304 pages, 250 color illustrations, price € 39.90) and available in the JMB Shop and bookstores.
Online feature on the exhibition	The JMB website offers a more detailed insight into the themes and the accompanying program of the exhibition: jmberlin.de/en/defiance; in addition, it offers a gallery of all female

	designers with information on their lives and work in German and English: https://www.jmberlin.de/en/jewish-women-in-design. Videos in German Sign Language (DGS) provide information about the exhibition and its accessibility. Literature and publications by the designers, taken from the JMB's library holdings and specially digitized for the exhibition, can be viewed online via the DFG Viewer (available in German only): https://opac.jmberlin.de (search term: *Widerstände-Ausstellung online*).
Jewish Places	Milestone: Exhibition: "Defiance. Jewish Women and Design in the Modern Era" - Jewish Places, overview of all entries: https://go.jewish-places.de/en/defiance.
With funding from	The realization of the exhibition was made possible by funding from the Haupstadtkulturfonds. We also thank the David Berg Foundation for its kind support.
Media partner	radio3 (a station of Berlin and Brandenburg's regional public broadcaster rbb) and Yorck Kinogruppe

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JÜDISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN

Press Images for the Exhibition
Defiance: Jewish Women and Design in the Modern Era

Runtime: 11 July to 23 November 2025

Current press photos and views of the exhibition can be downloaded at:
https://www.jmberlin.de/en/presse

Images may be used without authorization for current reporting only, with the request to send a copy.

Object images

Image	Caption	Credit
	Paula Straus, necklace, gold, Germany 1921-1939	Jewish Museum Berlin; photo: Roman März
	Käte Wolff, print “Eh' mein Kindchen erwacht, da kommen ganz sacht der Männlein acht”, lithograph, Lübeck 1916	Jewish Museum Berlin; photo: Roman März
	Emma Trietsch, oval beaded bag, wood metal, cotton, Berlin ca. 1909–1933	Jewish Museum Berlin, donation from Allon Haymov; photo: Roman März

	Margarete Heymann-Loebenstein, wall clock, stoneware, cast, glazed, metal, Marwitz near Berlin ca. 1930	Grete Marks © Estate of Margarete Marks. All rights reserved / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025
	Käthe Baer-Freyer, play figures: King Solomon, plywood, sawn, painted, mounted, metals, Berlin ca. 1924	Jewish Museum Berlin, courtesy of Eri Heller; photo: Roman März
	Performances with masks by Marianne Heymann, 1926-1933, photograph, probably Cologne 1926–1933	Jewish Museum Berlin, photo: Roman März
	Emmy Roth, Etrog box, silver, embossed, Berlin ca. 1929-1930	Courtesy *Die Neue Sammlung - The Design Museum, Munich*; photo: Roman März
	Tom Seidmann-Freud, illustration for "Die Fischreise", ink and watercolors on parchment paper, Berlin 1923	The Collection of Tom's Grandchildren

JÜDISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN

	Yva, Elegant hat in black velvet with white bird by Paula Schwarz, Berlin, Photography, Berlin 1925-1938	Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg
	Helen M. Post, Anni Albers in her weaving studio at Black Mountain College, photography, North Carolina 1937	Western Regional Archives, State Archives of North Carolina
	Unknown photographer, Irene Saltern, photograph, Los Angeles 1937	Donation Tom and Lynda Salinger
	Hans Finsler, Marguerite Friedländer-Wildenhain, photograph, Germany ca. 1928	Archiv Burg Giebichenstein – Kunsthochschule Halle
	Tom Seidmann-Freud and her daughter Angela, photograph, probably Berlin, ca. 1928	The Collection of Tom's Grandchildren

	Portrait of Lotte Pritzel with one of her dolls, photograph, probably Vienna 1923	Estate of Madame d'Ora, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg
	From the exhibition *Defiance: Jewish Women and Design in the Modern Era*	Jewish Museum Berlin, photo: Yves Sucksdorff
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Jewish Museum Berlin,
photo: Yves Sucksdorff

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Die Ausstellung zeigt Werke von mehr als sechzig jüdischen Frauen, die zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland im Bereich des Designs tätig waren. Als erste Ausstellung ihrer Art präsentiert sie ein breites Spektrum an künstlerischen Disziplinen, darunter Keramik, Textilien, Goldschmiedekunst, Modedesign und Grafik.

Die Namen fast aller dieser Gestalterinnen sind in Vergessenheit geraten. Als Frauen wurden sie oft ausgegrenzt, als Jüdinnen waren sie Antisemitismus ausgesetzt, bis das nationalsozialistische Regime ihre Karrieren schließlich zerstörte. Einige konnten aus Deutschland fliehen; nur wenigen gelang es, in ihren Berufen andernorts Fuß zu fassen.

Das Jüdische Museum Berlin widmet der Arbeit deutsch-jüdischer Designerinnen einen besonderen Schwerpunkt seiner Sammlung. Er ist nun erstmals – ergänzt von nationalen und internationalen Leihgaben – umfänglich zu sehen. Wir hoffen, dass die enorme Kreativität, der Unternehmergeist und die Beharrlichkeit der Gestalterinnen Anlass für vielfache Inspiration geben.

The exhibition showcases the work of more than sixty Jewish women working as designers in Germany, from the early twentieth century onwards. The first exhibition of its kind, it presents a wide range of artistic disciplines, including ceramics, textiles, goldsmithing, fashion design, and graphic arts.

The names of most of these designers have been forgotten. As women, they were often marginalized; as Jews, they faced antisemitism until the Nazi regime finally destroyed their careers. Some were able to flee Germany, but few were able to rebuild their careers elsewhere.

The Jewish Museum Berlin's collection includes a special focus on the work of German-Jewish women designers. This collection is on view for the first time, supplemented by national and international loans. We hope that the enormous creativity, entrepreneurial spirit, and perseverance of these women will inspire you.

Zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts sahen sich Frauen in Deutschland mit Gesetzen und gesellschaftlichen Strukturen konfrontiert, die die männliche Autorität untermauerten. Für Frauen waren Ausbildungs- und Berufswahl ebenso eingeschränkt wie ihre Rechte in Ehe und Familienleben. Jüdische Frauen hatten zusätzlich zu kämpfen: Sie waren zunehmendem Antisemitismus und Diskriminierung ausgesetzt, ihre beruflichen wie sozialen Optionen schwanden. Jüdische Designerinnen stellten oft auch konservative Werte innerhalb der jüdischen Lebenswelt in Frage. Ihr Einsatz für Veränderung, berufliche Chancen und Sichtbarkeit diente allen Frauen.

At the turn of the twentieth century, German women faced legal and social restrictions that reinforced male authority and limited women's rights to marry, work, and study. Jewish women encountered additional struggles: they were subjected to rising antisemitism and discrimination, which reduced their opportunities both professionally and socially. Jewish women designers often challenged conservative attitudes within Jewish cultural circles, and fought for change, representation, and professional opportunities for all women.

Nach der Märzrevolution 1848/49 kämpften deutsche Frauen zunehmend gegen die sozialen, ideologischen und rechtlichen Widerstände, die Gleichberechtigung verhinderten. Viele Geschichten von Frauen, die, lange bevor sie das Wahlrecht oder das Recht auf Eigentum hatten, mit gesellschaftlichen Konventionen brachen, wurden nie erzählt. Frauen bestritten dank ihres Einfallsreichtums und ihrer Widerstandskraft den Lebensunterhalt ihrer Familien oder führten ein unabhängiges Leben als Alleinstehende. Emma Trietsch und Franziska Bruck waren zwei solcher Frauen. Jüdisch und aus Osteuropa stammend, ließen sie sich um die Jahrhundertwende in Berlin nieder.

After the revolts of 1848, German women increasingly challenged social, ideological, and legal barriers to women's equality. There are many untold stories of women breaking social conventions long before they had the right to vote or to own property. These show how individual women became the sole breadwinners for their families, or lived independent single lives, thanks to their ingenuity and resilience. Emma Trietsch and Franziska Bruck were two such Jewish women from Eastern Europe, who settled in Berlin at the turn of the twentieth century.

Die Weimarer Republik war eine Zeit des raschen Wandels. Die moderne Konsumwirtschaft wurde zu einem ihrer prägenden Merkmale. Das wachsende Interesse an Innenarchitektur und modernen Haushaltswaren eröffnete Produktdesignerinnen neue Möglichkeiten. Jüdische Frauen stand an der Spitze dieses Trends: Als Kunsthandwerkerinnen und Unternehmerinnen führten sie kleine Haushaltsgeschäfte, lieferten Entwürfe für Hersteller oder arbeiteten in Familienbetrieben. Sie reagierten auf die Nachfrage sowohl nach modernen Alltagsprodukten als auch nach jüdischen Ritualgegenständen. Jene Frauen, die von zu Hause aus arbeiteten, verkauften ihre Waren oft auch von dort.

The Weimar Republic was a period of rapid change, and a modern consumer economy became one of its defining features. A growing interest in interior design and modern housewares created more opportunities for product designers. A number of Jewish women were at the forefront of this new wave of design, running small home businesses, designing for manufacturers, or working in family firms. They responded to the demand for both modern secular products and Jewish ritual items. Those who worked from home often sold from home as well.

Als Modedesignerinnen, Illustratorinnen und Inhaberinnen von Boutiquen waren jüdische Frauen mit ihren gewagten Ideen zur weiblichen Selbstdarstellung maßgebend für die Entwicklung einer modernen visuellen Kultur. Die „Neue Frau“ als populäre Idealvorstellung repräsentierte eine neue Weiblichkeit. In einer Zeit, in der der Markt der Printmedien rasant wuchs, tauchte sie in Zeitschriften und Anzeigen auf und wurde zum erstrebenswerten Vorbild: die alleinstehende, berufstätige, emanzipierte Frau, die mutige Modeentscheidungen traf. Über vielfältige Kommunikationskanäle setzten jüdische Frauen in Deutschland Modetrends.

As fashion designers, illustrators, and boutique owners, Jewish women were instrumental in creating a modern visual culture with bold ideas about female self-representation. The “New Woman” was a figure of the popular imagination, representing a changing idea of femininity. Featured in magazines and advertisements at a time when print culture was growing rapidly, she was an aspirational role model: a single, professional, emancipated woman who made daring fashion choices. By communicating fashion in a variety of ways, Jewish women became German tastemakers.

Allein durch ihr Handwerk war es Frauen selten möglich, ihren Lebensunterhalt zu bestreiten. Sie waren auf die Unterstützung der Eltern oder des Ehemannes angewiesen. Dennoch arbeiteten viele jüdische Frauen an einer beruflichen Karriere, um unabhängig leben zu können. Die Werbebranche wuchs und bot neue Möglichkeiten. Auch in den Bereichen Plakatgestaltung, Buchdesign und Typografie gab es Arbeit für Designerinnen. Frauen, die sich in erster Linie als nicht-kommerzielle, bildende Künstlerinnen verstanden, machten die Erfahrung, dass sie ihr Einkommen mit Grafikdesign aufbessern konnten.

It was difficult for a woman to earn a sustainable living from her craft without the additional financial support of a parent or husband. Nevertheless, many Jewish women took steps to build professional careers and were able to support themselves modestly and live independently. The expanding world of advertising offered new possibilities, and work for graphic designers could also be found in poster design, book design, and typography. Women who were primarily non-commercial, fine artists found that they could supplement their income with graphic design work.

Als die Reformpädagogik mit ihren neuen Ideen in Deutschland Fuß fasste, wurden Lehrmaterialien stärker an kindliche Bedürfnisse angepasst. Jüdische Gemeinden erlebten, wie sich ihre Mitglieder vom religiösen Leben abwandten, und erkannten, wie wichtig Mittel zur Förderung eines starken jüdischen Selbstbewusstseins bei Kindern waren. Diese Marktnische bedienten vor allem Frauen: Sie entwickelten kindgerechte Unterrichtsmaterialien und illustrierten Kinderbücher. Zudem wurden sie unternehmerisch aktiv und nutzten die jüdische Presse, Frauenvereine und Ausstellungen, um ihre Produkte zu bewerben und zu verkaufen.

As progressive educational reform began to take hold in Germany, teaching materials were adapted to meet children's needs more closely. Jewish communities saw their members drift away from religious life and came to recognize the importance of developing a children's culture that fostered Jewish identification and self-confidence. Jewish women took a leading role in this niche market, creating child-friendly educational materials and illustrating children's books. They also became entrepreneurs, marketing and selling their products through the Jewish press, women's organizations, and exhibitions.

1933 lebten in Deutschland bei einer Gesamtbevölkerung von 65 Millionen Menschen mehr als 500 000 Jüdinnen und Juden. Ab 1933 waren sie mit den restriktiven Maßnahmen der Nazis konfrontiert; viele verloren ihre Arbeit und gerieten in wirtschaftlich prekäre Lagen. Jüdinnen und Juden wurden ausgegrenzt und aus dem kulturellen Leben verdrängt, jüdische Künstlerinnen und Künstler hatten keine Einnahmequelle mehr. Einige gründeten daraufhin einen unabhängigen jüdischen Kultursektor und organisierten Ausbildungen im Handwerk und in der Krankenpflege, um denjenigen, die auf eine Auswanderung hofften, praktische Fertigkeiten zu vermitteln.

When the Nazis came to power in 1933, there were over 500,000 Jews living in Germany, out of the total population of 65 million. Jews now faced restrictive laws and job losses, leading to precarious economic conditions. They were segregated and ousted from cultural life. Jewish artists of all kinds were left without a source of income. Some Jews responded by creating an independent Jewish cultural sector, or by organizing vocational courses, such as handicrafts and nursing, to provide practical skills for those who hoped to emigrate.

Das Naziregime setzte Gewalt und wirtschaftlichen Druck ein, um Jüdinnen und Juden zur Auswanderung aus Deutschland zu bewegen. Nicht alle hatten die Mittel dazu. Einige wollten lieber bleiben, um sich um hilfsbedürftige Verwandte zu kümmern, andere schickten ihre Kinder ins sichere Ausland. Manche gingen in den Untergrund. Viele nahmen sich das Leben. Im Oktober 1941 wurde die Auswanderung offiziell verboten. Kurz darauf begannen die Massendeportationen in Konzentrationslager, und die große Mehrheit der in Deutschland verbliebenen Jüdinnen und Juden wurde ermordet.

The Nazi regime used violence and economic pressure to encourage Jews to leave Germany, but not everyone had the means to do so. Some chose to stay in order to care for vulnerable relatives, others sent their children to safety overseas. Some went underground. Many committed suicide. In October 1941, Jewish emigration from Germany was officially prohibited. Mass deportations to concentration camps began shortly afterwards, and the vast majority of Jews who remained in Germany were murdered.

Jüdinnen und Juden bemühten sich verzweifelt um Visa für Länder, die bereit waren, sie aufzunehmen. Dazu gehörten die USA, Großbritannien und das britische Mandatsgebiet Palästina, deren zunehmend restriktive Einwanderungspolitik eine Flucht erschwerte. Unabhängig von ihrem Zielland sahen sich alle Geflohenen mit ähnlichen Schwierigkeiten und der enormen Herausforderung eines Neuanfangs konfrontiert: Ihre Familien, Sprache, finanzielle Sicherheit und ihren Status hatten sie ebenso zurücklassen müssen wie geschäftliche und soziale Netzwerke. Tatkräftig setzten Frauen ihr handwerkliches Geschick auch im neuen Land ein und konnten so einen, meist bescheidenen, Lebensunterhalt verdienen.

Jews desperately sought visas from any country that would accept them, including the United States, Britain, and British Mandate Palestine—with the added pressure of increasingly restrictive immigration policies. Whatever their destination was, refugees faced common difficulties, and starting over was a huge struggle. They left behind family, language, financial stability, status, and their business and social networks. Yet, determined women with transferable design skills had a chance of earning a living, however modest.

German-Jewish Women in Design

Why does one artist's work survive while another's is lost? Why does one person receive recognition while others are ignored? The reason an artist is remembered is presumed to reside in the undeniable quality of their work, yet there are many other, complex reasons why an artist's work survives or not. The interests of art historians at a particular time, changing public taste, and even simple chance are all important factors in determining whose work will endure as a legacy and whose will be unceremoniously consigned – often literally – to the trash heap? Often, it is the intervention by a partisan champion which brings the artist attention.

Defiance: Jewish Women and Design in the Modern Era examines objects designed by German-Jewish women. We start from the premise that aesthetic quality is not the only way to ascribe value to an object: its importance as historical evidence or as a carrier of narrative are also valid ways to attribute meaning. Research for this book and exhibition was not driven by a search for individual, "exceptional" female Jewish artisans (although no one was rejected for being too talented). Instead, the project considers a broad range of women designers, exploring their gendered social contexts, their professional networks, and the cultural processes in which they engaged.

A fundamental question when considering the work of German-Jewish female craftswomen is whether a product designed by a Jewish woman – say, a teapot – actually differs intrinsically in any way from a teapot designed by a non-Jewish woman. The answer is No: the objects are indistinguishable. The essential difference, which is at the core of *Defiance: German-Jewish Women Designers in Modernity*, is that Jewish cultural production originated under specific cultural conditions and can be considered in light of the circumstances of both German and German-Jewish histories.[1]

Why have Jewish women designers been overlooked?

Although it is now recognized that the history of women working as fine artists has been neglected and marginalized, there is little or no comment on the absence of scholarship on women working in the applied arts.

All women have been underrepresented or overlooked in the canon of art history, which is dominated by male narratives. Moreover, Western art history has historically followed a hierarchical value system in which the fine arts (drawing, painting, and sculpture) have an elevated status vis-à-vis the applied arts – any form of artwork created to serve a practical purpose, such as embroidery or pottery. The applied arts were historically referred to as "minor" arts and associated with an inferior cultural sphere of amateur, women's pursuits. Even today, terms such as "arts and crafts," "handicrafts," or "craft" conjure up visions of a church ladies' knitting circle. In the early twentieth century, women were considered innately unsuited for the fields of art and design. In his book *Die Frau und die Kunst* (Woman and Art) of 1908, the noted art critic and journalist Karl Scheffler quoted Goethe's statement that women were "incapable of any idea," claiming that women had no spirit of invention and could only ornament something that already exists.[2] According to Scheffler, and he was surely not alone in his evaluation, women do not have access to "high intellectual values of art, of course, but only the decorative, inferior ornamental, handicraft-based values of taste," which they use to make things pretty, such as when dressing themselves, laying the table, or arranging a living room.[3] By addressing this entrenched hostility and opposition from male voices of authority in the art world, one can begin to understand how difficult it was for women to be taken seriously as they tried to pursue careers in design.

This introduction looks at German-Jewish women working professionally in the applied arts from the early twentieth century onwards, when, in addition to being sidelined and devalued as women and as female designers, they were further disparaged and ostracized through antisemitism. During the Nazi regime, German-Jewish women were systematically excluded from mainstream society and their achievements erased. Some of these women were murdered, while others managed to escape to countries beyond Nazi reach. In a new

country, they faced the immense challenges of trying to start a career from scratch in a foreign environment.

A particular difficulty in attempting to trace these designers is the fact that many women altered their names over the course of their lives. They may have changed their last names on marriage, adopted a pseudonym to conceal their identity during a period of persecution, or adapted their names to fit a new location as refugees. Thus, Anneliese Fleischman married Josef and became Anni Albers; in Paris, Käte Wolff initially called herself Lalouve ("the she-wolf"); Käte Spanier married Dr. Lehfeldt and later, in England, chose to be known as Kate Lefelt.

Given all these circumstances, it is not surprising that women's works and names have been lost to history. Yet the research for this project has revealed that there were hundreds of German-Jewish women who worked as designers. Over the past two decades, we have worked to identify relevant protagonists, from whom we selected a group to study in more depth.[4] We included women who may not have been born in Germany, but who studied or practiced there in their respective fields. This history of design offers a window into the history of German-Jewish women, while also showcasing their creativity. Our intention is to give this group of women visibility and recognition, and to revise the historical record where they have been excluded.

The sociodemographic situation of Jewish women in Germany in the early twentieth century

The Jewish minority in Germany in the early twentieth century was very small, at about 564,000 people in 1925, and made up around one percent of the total population. Importantly, they were not a culturally or economically homogeneous group. Of the Jewish population, only 15 percent, or 80,000–90,000 people, maintained a high level of religious observance. From the late nineteenth century, Jews had relocated from the countryside to modern German metropoles such as Hamburg and Berlin, which offered enticing financial opportunities. A significant demographic component of the Jewish community in Germany were East European Jews ("Ostjuden") who fled local pogroms and immigrated to Western Europe between 1880 and the beginning of the First World War, numbering around 85,000 people in 1920s Germany. Thus, Jewish communities in Germany had diverse cultural origins and ritual traditions. There were distinct streams of religious observance, from neo-Orthodox, to Reform, to the oppositional secularists. Political orientation was another significant social determinant: some Jews identified as staunch German nationalists, others as socialists or as Zionists. At a time of social upheaval, when women were fighting for the vote and other rights, Jewish women also had to negotiate the complex expectations of their own communities and families when forging new professional paths for themselves.

Historical studies of the processes of Jewish emancipation and acculturation into the majority society often speak of assimilation. One way in which Jews sought to become part of the dominant Protestant culture was to convert to Christianity as adults or baptize their children at birth, although that did not automatically lead to their social acceptance – they were widely regarded as "converted Jews" rather than as Christians.[5] Another historical approach suggests a German-Jewish symbiosis, implying that Jews were able to blend into the majority society and that fruitful cultural exchange and harmonious coexistence were the norm. However, in light of the later mass murder of Jews under the Nazi regime, it would be important to reconsider whether Jews were ever truly integrated and accepted by their non-Jewish fellow citizens, even if many Jews believed at the time that this was the case.

The majority of Jewish women working as designers in early twentieth-century Germany came from bourgeois, middle-class homes. Jewish women from such privileged backgrounds played leading roles as advocates for women's suffrage, women's rights, social welfare, and in German cultural life in general. An example is the involvement of Jewish women in the groundbreaking exhibition *Women at Home and at Work*, held in Berlin in 1912. The exhibition was intended to be, and was perceived as, a confident self-representation of the working woman.[6] Dr. Alice Salomon, a highly esteemed Jewish feminist and president of the national German Women's Congress, co-chaired the exhibition's executive committee and oversaw the "Women at Work" section. Other Jewish women had major roles in the exhibition planning, including Thekla Friedländer, chair of the committee for the welfare of women prisoners, and Henriette May, chair of the committee for combating the trafficking of girls. Another driving force behind the exhibition project was the designer Else Oppler-Legband: she designed certain sections and her own work was on display. A dynamic agitator for change for all women, Oppler-Legband also strove for recognition and visibility for herself as an artist. Jewish artisans were well represented in the exhibition in the areas of artistic embroidery, graphic design and art, jewelry, goldsmithing, fashion design, and lace and textile fabrication. Their names were listed in the Jewish press,[7] and it was a matter of great pride for them to be included and acknowledged nationally in their fields.

Despite this apparent integration, though, it is evident that Jews were not readily accepted as Germans by non-Jews; their "Germanness" and loyalty to the Empire were questioned. The women's advocate, art promoter, and bead artist Ida Dehmel wrote to her sister Alice Bensheimer, a leading women's rights activist, that she had received an anonymous postcard with the message "A Jewish woman should not be advocating for German women."[8] Jewish women were regularly subjected to what would today be called micro-aggressions, indicating a pervasive anti-Jewish prejudice that limited their professional opportunities and potential for success. Prejudicial attitudes that diminished Jewish women professionally also had the power to impact their confidence and self-esteem. Articles by women in the Jewish press of the period sometimes take a defensive tone, insisting that the work of Jewish women is equal to that of non-Jews,[9] and include the occasional biting

response to evidently prevalent antisemitic barbs. For example, when the 1908 exhibition *The Lady in Art and Fashion* featured the work of Jewish hat designers including Regina Friedländer, a highly influential modiste, a reviewer in the *Israelitisches Familienblatt* made some pointed remarks:

> Looking more closely, one sees that the circles represented by the most opulent luxury items – the most exaggerated measure of feminine finery – are not the circles of our Jewish ladies. In other words, the antisemitic accusation that Jewish women are leading the trend toward exaggerated and ostentatious luxury is a myth. In reality, it is not Jewish women but our non-Jewish compatriots who are setting the tone in that respect.[10]

Entrepreneurship and self-employment

It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that German women were gradually allowed to enroll in universities, and the dearth of academic opportunities at the turn of the century was one factor leading many women to turn to artistic professions. There was no singular path to becoming a designer. Many Jewish women found training opportunities in Germany, where women were accepted to a few vocational schools, such as Munich's Debschitz School, where Käte Baer-Freyer trained, or the Folkwang School in Essen, Eva Samuel's alma mater. Some women spent periods of study in different cities, including Paris (Rahel Szalit-Markus) or London (Tom Seidmann-Freud).

As well as the shortage of vocational courses, religiously observant Jewish women encountered an even greater challenge in that they could not attend a school which held classes on Saturdays. The essential rule for Shabbat is that the act of creation, in any form, is forbidden. This obviously includes drawing, painting, or making three-dimensional forms, and highly detailed rules preclude making permanent marks or completing knots. As they were unable to attend schools with the six-day week that was standard at the time, one might assume that Orthodox women had no opportunity to work in the applied arts – but this was not the case. While it is difficult to assess the level of religious observance for

individual women, there are enough documented examples to prove that Orthodox women did work as designers. In those cases, the women may have received private instruction or simply relied on their natural artistic abilities. Their artistic pursuits were made possible by family members, whether parents or husbands, who supported their aspirations and entrepreneurial spirit. By setting up their own businesses, religious women could work flexible hours and did not have to be concerned with societal pressure to work on Jewish holidays.

Max Mordechai Sinasohn, principal of the Adass Yisroel congregation's school in Berlin, wrote an adulatory memoir of his wife, Rahel Ruth Sinasohn, that offers insight into the couple's lives and shows how Rahel Ruth pursued her successful career making and selling Jewish ceremonial objects.[11] Rahel Ruth Sinasohn's business catered to the Jewish community, where the Sinasohns had an extensive network, enabling her to develop a customer base quickly. She advanced her own unique design vision for Jewish ceremonial objects, creating innovative forms and integrating motifs that were influenced by other cultures. It is hard to overstate what a huge step it was for a woman so deeply rooted in a very traditional Jewish environment to break away from the historicized silver Judaica designs that had been popular since the late nineteenth century. A 1924 article in the *Israelitisches Familienblatt* honors her pathbreaking contribution: "in Mrs. Sinasohn, we have an excellent pioneer and trailblazer."[12]

Adele Sandler was another self-employed Orthodox woman whose design projects brought change to the visual landscape of German-Jewish culture. As an illustrator and founder of a publishing house, her political commitment to the Zionist cause and her dedication to creating Jewish educational products for children are reflected in the materials she designed. Few examples of these ephemeral games have survived, but her invisibility is also partly because her works were made for use within the Jewish community.

The idea of women creating modern ritual objects and educational resources for Jewish children was not limited to Berlin. In Breslau (today's Wrocław), after the death of her husband and raising her two sons, Rosa Freudenthal set up shop from home. She designed, commissioned, exhibited, and sold contemporary works at affordable prices, reaching a

broad Jewish public. Jenny Westheim did the same in Frankfurt, and there is evidence to show that Westheim sold Freudenthal's products,[13] indicating the development of a network of Jewish women active in the same field.

The lives of Emma Trietsch (born 1876) and Franziska Bruck (born 1866) demonstrate early alternative professional models for Jewish women. Both charted their own professional course outside the Jewish community, apparently without institutional training. Emma Trietsch was the primary earner for her family through her many creative handwork initiatives. A socialist and advocate for women's rights, she was particularly excited by the arrival of the vacuum cleaner in Germany, which she felt could revolutionize home life. Trietsch also advocated for humanitarian handicrafts [14] – artisanal projects aimed to address social and economic challenges for girls and women.[15] Franziska Bruck never married or had children and was an inventive entrepreneur. Rejecting popular notions of floristry, she went from selling flowers next to a Berlin hospital to raising floristry to a recognized art form in Germany. One admirer of her work joked: "Franziska Bruck is the most famous personality in Berlin, because she made it acceptable for fine society to display weeds in the drawing room!"[16] The floristry school that she founded created new professional opportunities for another generation of women.

The independent paths pursued by Jewish women, often out of financial need, met with resistance in some quarters of the Jewish community. As in some other parts of German society at the time, it was expected for a woman to give up her profession after marriage. One Franz Sachs decried the women's emancipation movement in a newspaper article of 1917. He took umbrage at the fact that more Jewish women were entering professional roles in the workforce, arguing that intellectual and professional development alienated them from their femininity and Jewishness:

> Religion or a Jewish community is no longer important to them. They usually know very little about it. [...] It is these Jewish women who all have some kind of job, who are secretaries, clerks, businesswomen, artisans, and students. They are the ones who are following the precarious path of women's emancipation; yesterday they

> were the girls of their people, and they will be workhorses and "female citizens" tomorrow.[17]

Sachs's newspaper article prompted many outraged responses from women readers, including one from Johanna Simon-Friedberg, who observed that going to work was an economic necessity for many Jewish women:

> Would these girls be more feminine, or even more Jewish, if they did not have a profession? No, Mr. Sachs: the source of their un-Jewishness and unfemininity does not lie in their professional training. Does the author really not know that before the war there was a far from decorative surplus of women, and that later there will be an even greater surplus, who will simply have to work?[18]

The state Bauhaus School and the private Reimann School

The end of the First World War and the founding of the Weimar Republic in 1919 brought enormous social change for German women as they were granted suffrage and access to educational institutions. The newly founded "State Bauhaus" school in Weimar was one of the most influential of these.

In 1963, Hans Maria Wingler, founder of the Bauhaus Archives, initiated a research project about the Jewish members of the Bauhaus, which was never completed. In his project outline, Wingler estimated that about 200 Bauhaus members, out of more than 1,250, were of Jewish origin – about 16–18 percent.[19] Recent research shows that, from 1919 to 1933, over half of the Bauhaus students were women.[20] It is hard to determine how many of these women identified as Jewish. That information was not documented at enrollment, although Weimar matriculation records show that character references and birth certificates were submitted, which sometimes included information about religious affiliation. Even without precise numbers, it seems likely that about one-third of the female Bauhaus students were Jewish, originating from Germany, Austria, and Eastern Europe, and it is safe to conclude that Jewish women were disproportionately well-represented as students at the Bauhaus School. One might wonder why Jewish women were so prominent both at the Bauhaus and,

more broadly, in the various fields of the applied arts as a whole. The most likely explanation is that these young women came from families where education, the arts, and economic independence were valued and supported. At a Jewish education conference held in Berlin in 1923, Susie Lemm noted:

> It is the responsibility of parents to allow their daughters to learn a trade (tailoring, handicrafts), even if this means a financial sacrifice, because that offers much greater opportunities for independence than commercial occupations do. The intellectual professions (economist, doctor, librarian), apart from economics, are not very promising.[21]

A second tremendously significant school for students of the applied arts, yet one that has been largely forgotten and overlooked, was the private Reimann School in Berlin, founded and run by the Jewish artisan couple Albert and Klara Reimann. The school was established in 1902 and was considerably larger in terms of scope and student numbers than the Bauhaus. The Reimann School developed organically and continually enlarged its range of courses, which included fashion, metalwork, and poster design, later expanding to photography, interior design, and window display. By 1912, 800 students had received training at the school,[22] and it is estimated that a total of 20,000 students studied there. As the school was under Jewish ownership, Jewish students did not have to fear antisemitic prejudice, and many Jewish women attended, including Natasha Kroll, Dodo, Erna Rosenberg, and Elisabeth Tomalin. In 1943, the Reimann School premises were bombed out and it was effectively erased from Germany's cultural memory.[23]

The “New (Jewish) Woman” in the modern world

After finishing their studies, women found a wide range of employment opportunities in fields that included fashion design, illustration and advertising, book design, and typography. As wage earners, they had purchasing power and were attracted to an independent lifestyle. The flourishing media and print world meant that fine artists such as Julie Wolfthorn, Lotte Laserstein, or Agnes Meyerhof sometimes crossed over into the applied arts, supplementing their income with illustrative work for magazines or posters. Opportunities expanded as Jewish women – journalists, authors, photographers, illustrators, and designers – formed networks of creative and professional exchange. Marie Böhm, for example, was the primary photographer for the renowned Berlin photo studio Becker & Maas from at least 1896 to 1933. Her clients included leading Jewish fashion designers, as well as the “flower artist” Franziska Bruck.[24] During the Weimar Republic, contemporary fashion, often spearheaded by Jewish designers and fashion illustrators, changed the dress code for the modern, professional, German woman. The societal shift became a source of conflict and dilemmas within the Jewish community, as the lifestyle of the “New Woman” challenged the expectation that Jewish women should lead their lives as demure wives and mothers:

> But then to make these young people understand that their dazzling modernity, their fundamental lack of respect, is by no means as admirable as they think it is. For they do not even suspect what a wealth of genuine poetry, what warmth and richness they are losing by destroying what has been the foundation and support of our people for centuries: Jewish family life.[25]

Well aware of the ambivalence within Jewish communities about the changing role of the Jewish woman in the modern world, many Jewish women nevertheless chose to leave its warm embrace and reached the top of their respective fields of design. In the world of ceramics, Margarete Heymann-Löbenstein ran her own factory selling the tableware and vases she designed, and Marguerite Friedlaender-Wildenhain designed new ranges of porcelain for the Royal Porcelain Factory (KPM). Emmy Roth’s inclusion in a

groundbreaking exhibition of ceremonial objects, *Ritual and Form*, which opened in Berlin in 1930, established her at the forefront of innovative, elegant, and modern Judaica design. Meanwhile, Paula Straus's prolific output as an employee of the silver manufacturer P. Bruckmann und Söhne in Heilbronn confirmed her status as a top industrial designer. These designers saw their work shown alongside their male peers in major exhibitions and even attracted international attention.

Persecution and the loss of livelihoods

For Jewish women, the freedom to live, work, and dress as they pleased did not last long. With the ascent of the Nazi party to power came the state legitimization of antisemitism. The professional advancement that Jewish women had achieved as designers was over, and they were banned from practicing their professions.

Jewish communities across Germany rallied together to help artists and craftspeople who had lost their livelihoods. They created Jewish spaces where artists could show or sell their work, as well as employment opportunities. In the 1930s, annual Hanukkah fairs – organized by Jewish women – became places where works by women artisans of the highest ranks, including silversmith Emmy Roth and clothing designer Clara Böhm, could exhibit and sell their work.[26] The organizers appealed to other Jewish women to support the exhibitors:

> Dear Jewish sisters, if you are still in the fortunate position to be able to give gifts to your loved ones, please consider creative Jewish women when you are shopping. Because the art and objects they offer are not designed for dull everyday life, they are in financial difficulties as the circle of people who can still afford the beautiful things in life becomes smaller and smaller.[27]

The association for the support of artists in Berlin's Jewish Community, Künstlerhilfe der Jüdischen Gemeinde, run by Fritz and Dorothea Segall, tried to advise and assist artists of all kinds. For example, they produced an art calendar in a run of 4,000 copies, sharing the profits with the artists whose work was featured in it and appealing to the community to

support Jewish artists. Edith Samuel's dolls were included in the 1934–35 calendar. The Jewish cultural federation Kulturbund Deutscher Juden, founded in 1933, also supported artists, especially in the fields of performance art. As the Kulturbund was not eligible for government subsidies, it used membership fees to finance performance venues and artists' salaries. The Kulturbund's productions provided an income for female costume and set designers such as Hanna Litten and Käte Friedheim, until it was forced to close in 1941.

As Jews came to realize that they had no future in Germany, they began to look for ways to leave the country. For many, it became necessary to retrain for emigration in order to improve their marketable skills. Katharina Feige-Strassburger supported this retraining process in Berlin through her fashion illustration school for Jewish students, which offered courses in a wide range of skills. The students were Jewish men and women of all ages and backgrounds who wanted to enhance their future employment prospects.[28] From 1934 onwards, the Jewish press contained an increasing number of articles offering career advice to women, with specific recommendations of occupations for new immigrants. Tailoring, millinery, and seamstressing were suggested as livelihoods for those headed to South Africa and South America, while fashion design and poster art were seen as a better choice for those hoping to relocate to North America.[29]

The Shoah and beyond

Being Jewish was a factor in the lives of all German-Jewish women designers, whether they wanted it to be or not. According to Jewish religious law (*halachah*), a person who has a Jewish mother is Jewish. However, in the 1920s as now, people self-identified as Jewish in dfferent ways. Many of the women presented in this exhibition were raised in a period of social integration and, though not religious, they were socialized as Jewish even if they only had a Jewish father. Some women chose to design products for use in the Jewish community; others distanced themselves from any association with the community, yet felt culturally Jewish. There were also women who were Jewish by birth but for whom that had no meaning. Ultimately, however they self-identified, women were labeled as Jewish by the system of categorization developed in Nazi ideology, which stigmatized and scorned Jewish

ancestry. Looking back at the Nazi period, Marianne Ahlfeld-Heymann reflected on her own sense of self-identification:

> My parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents were Jewish, but they felt first and foremost German. They were freethinkers and not religious, although they had never denied their Jewishness. I knew I was Jewish, but I didn't think it was particularly important. But that changed very suddenly when the Nazis swept in. Then I became Jewish with all my heart.[30]

The Nazi persecution of women designers as Jews ended their careers in Germany and, in some cases, their lives. Some of the most promising Bauhaus students, such as Otti Berger or Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, were murdered in concentration camps. After being deported to Theresienstadt, Dicker-Brandeis taught art to some 600 children who were imprisoned there, until she and the children were deported together, in October 1944, to their deaths in Auschwitz. Others, such as Anni Albers, Trude Guermonprez, Marli Ehrmann, and Marguerite Friedlaender-Wildenhain, were able to flee the country and bring their talents to the United States as exiles. Irene Saltern was another designer who immigrated to the United States, establishing herself as a costume designer for Hollywood films and as a clothing designer in the fashion industry. The relocation of many skilled women artisans to British Mandate Palestine would strongly influence the trajectory of modern craft in the new State of Israel. Wherever they found themselves, however, all these women designers had to start anew, carrying with them trauma and an enormous emotional burden, and very few were able to reestablish themselves in their fields with significant financial success. Given these historical circumstances, the survival of products designed by German-Jewish women, or even documentary photographs of their work, is quite remarkable.

The challenges faced by Jewish women and their active defiance of the status quo are the focus of the book and exhibition *Defiance: Jewish Women and Design in the Modern Era*. On the one hand, German-Jewish women faced many obstacles and forms of resistance to their professional ambitions. On the other, they showed the strength and resilience that was necessary to confront and, if possible, overcome those obstacles. It is our hope that this project will engage new audiences to discover and be inspired by a missing generation of

Jewish women designers, bringing them back into the collective cultural memory where they belong.

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[1] Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 13.

[2] Karl Scheffler, *Die Frau und die Kunst. Eine Studie* (Berlin: Bard, 1908), 42.

[3] Ibid., 63.

[4] Due to limits of capacity, architects and photographers were not part of this study.

[5] Without their personal testimonies, it is not possible to know how converted Jews identified. All converted Jews who are included in our study were persecuted as Jews after 1933 and chose to participate in exhibitions organized by Jewish communities. See Susannah Heschel, "Sacrament versus Racism: Converted Jews in Nazi Germany," in: *On Being Adjacent to Historical Violence*, ed. Irene Kacandes (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 136–72.

[6] See Henny Henschel vom Hain, "Jüdische Frauenarbeit auf der Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,'" *Israelitisches Familienblatt* 12 (March 21, 1912), 14.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ida Dehmel, letter to Alice Bensheimer, undated, ca. 1914–1918 (SUB Hamburg, DA: Briefwechsel Ida Dehmel-Alice Bensheimer).

[9] This retrospective reference to the exhibition *Woman at Home and at Work* (*Die Frau in Haus und Beruf*) of 1912 is a good example: "We Jewish women could also walk through this exhibition with modest pride. Our work was not inferior to that of our sisters of other faiths." Ella Seligmann, "Unser Schwesternverband – Zur zwanzigsten Wiederkehr seiner Gründung," *Die Logenschwester – Mitteilungsblatt des Schwestern Verbandes der U.O.B.B. Logen* 5 (January 15, 1932), 1.

[10] A. Jacoby, "Die Dame in Kunst und Mode. Aperçus vom Standpunkt des Judentums," *Israelitisches Familienblatt* 10 (March 11, 1908), 12.

[11] Max M. Sinasohn, *Rahel Ruth Sinasohn – Das Leben einer talentierten, charmanten, gläubigen Jüdin* (Jerusalem: privately published, 1969).

[12] *Israelitisches Familienblatt* 26 (October 23, 1924), 3.

[13] Erna Selten-Schreier designed a paper model of a sukkah for self-assembly for the Kunstgewerbestube Rosa Freudenthal in Breslau. The William A. Rosenthall Judaica Collection at the College of Charleston has two examples of this product in its holdings. The collection includes a brown envelope for an unassembled set that is marked in ink with the stamp of the Kunstgewerbestube Jenny Westheim, indicating that she sold Rosa Freudenthal's products.

[14] My thanks to Prof. David M. Hopkin, historian at the University of Oxford, for mentioning this terminology and pointing out its origin. See Bertrand Taithe et al., *Humanitarian Handicraft: History, Materiality and Trade* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, forthcoming).

[15] Emma Trietsch, "Produktions-Waisenheime," *Jüdische Rundschau* 26 (March 23, 1921), 182.

[16] Dr. A. von Oertzen, "Sie hat Unkraut salonfähig gemacht: Franziska Bruck, eine Künstlerin in 'Blumenschmuck,'" *Berliner Leben* 30 (1927), 20.

[17] Franz Sachs, "Von deutschen Jüdinnen," *Der Jude*, no. 10 (January 1917), 664.

[18] Johanna Simon-Friedberg, "Bemerkungen," *Der Jude*, no. 12 (March 1917), 851.

[19] I am grateful to Dr. Corinna Rader, provenance researcher at the Bauhaus Archive in Berlin, for sharing this information with me.

[20] Anke S. Blümm and Patrick Rössler, *Vergessene Bauhaus-Frauen. Lebensschicksale in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren* (Weimar: Klassik-Stiftung, 2021), 10.

[21] Susie Lemm, "Berufsberatung für die weibliche Jugend," in: *Jüdische Erziehungskonferenz* (Berlin: Jüdisches Frauenbund, 1924), 16–17.

[22] Swantje Kuhfuss-Wickenheiser, *Die Reimann-Schule in Berlin und London 1902–1943* (Aachen: Shaker, 2009), 40.

[23] The Reimann School's successor school in London was the Reimann School and Studios, founded in 1937. It was the first commercial art school in Britain, but was also destroyed by bombing in 1944.

[24] Marie Böhm, Franziska Brück, and silversmith Emmy Roth even exhibited together in the Berlin show *Im Wohnraum*, 1925. See *Gemeindeblatt der Stadt Berlin* 44 (November 1, 1925), 511.

[25] Klara Mautner, "Die Umgruppierung in der Familie," *Menorah* 1 (1923), 15.

[26] For example *Woman Creating Art* (*Die kunstschaffende Frau*), held in the foyer of the Berlin Theater, Berlin, in 1934, organized by the Künstlerhilfe der jüdischen Gemeinde.

[27] F. V., "Die schöpferische Frau – Chanukkamesse des Jüdischen Frauenbundes," *Jüdische allgemeine Zeitung* 15 (December 11, 1935), 3.

[28] "Frauen wandern – wohin?," *Israelitisches Familienblatt* 40 (April 21, 1938), 10.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Marianne Ahlfeld-Heymann, *Und trotzdem überlebt*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 1994), 22.

Hetty Berg
Director of the Jewish Museum Berlin

Hetty Berg has been director of the Jewish Museum Berlin since April 2020. For more than thirty years, she served in various capacities at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam.

She began her work there as a curator in 1989. In the course of her career at the museum, she curated more than thirty temporary exhibitions and was responsible for the conceptual development and production of five permanent exhibitions. In 2002, she was appointed manager and chief curator at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam, which expanded in 2012 and became part of the Jewish Cultural Quarter. In addition to the Jewish Historical Museum, the quarter includes the Children's Museum, the Portuguese Synagogue, the National Holocaust Museum, and the Hollandsche Schouwburg Memorial.

Hetty Berg was born in The Hague in 1961. After training as a dancer for four years in London and Amsterdam, she studied theater in Amsterdam. While pursuing her career, she earned a master's degree in management of nonprofit organizations in Utrecht. A Dutch national, she is a member of numerous academic advisory boards and committees. For example, from 2016 to 2020, she served on the Dutch National Ethics Committee for Museums, and from 2007 to 2013, on the board of the Association of European Jewish Museums. Since 2020, she has been a member of the board of trustees of the following organizations: the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe Foundation, the House of One, and the Ernst Reuter Foundation for Advanced Study. She has also been a member of the Dutch "Commissie Verweesde Joodse Roofkunst" ("committee on orphaned Jewish looting art") since 2024.

Her work and research interests focus on museum studies, Jewish cultural history, and Jews in the Netherlands. She has published numerous books and scholarly essays on these subjects and is coeditor *of Site of Deportation, Site of Memory: The Amsterdam Hollandsche Schouwburg and the Holocaust* (2017), *Waterlooplein: De buurt binnenstebuiten* (2020), and *Reappraising the History of the Jews in the Netherlands* (2021).

JÜDISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN

Michal S. Friedlander
Exhibition Curator, Jewish Museum Berlin

Michal S. Friedlander has been Curator of Judaica and Applied Arts at the Jewish Museum Berlin since 2001 and has built a unique applied arts collection featuring works by German-Jewish craftspeople.

She has curated numerous exhibitions, including *10 + 5 = God: The Power of Signs and Numbers* (2004), *Tonalities: Jewish Women Ceramicists from Germany after 1933* and *The Whole Truth... Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Jews* (both 2013), as well as sections of the new core exhibition at the Jewish Museum Berlin (2020). In numerous publications, she discusses the history and culture of German Jews, focusing on the relationship between material culture and identity, and on "the Jewish object."

From 2021 to 2022, Friedlander was a visiting scholar at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies at the University of Oxford. She is the curator of *Defiance: Jewish Women and Design* in the Modern Era.