


פרץ פאפירן Peretz Papers

January - February 2005



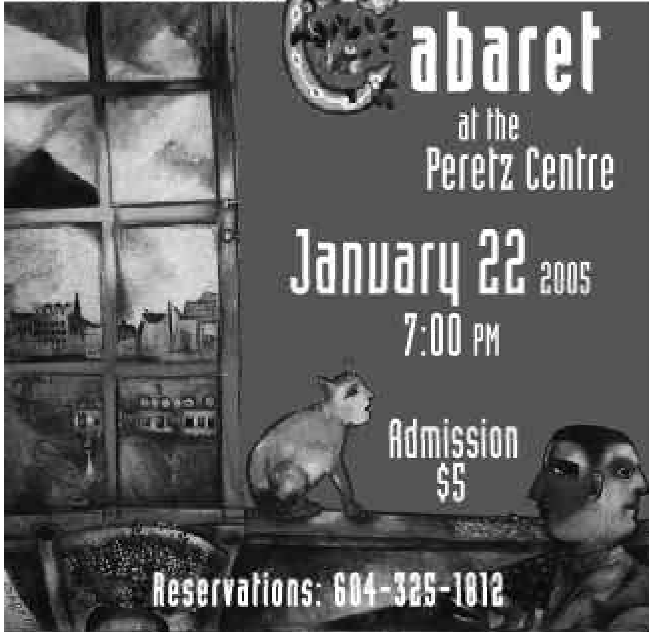
I.L. Peretz

Russian  **cabaret**
at the
Peretz Centre

January 22 2005
7:00 PM

Admission
\$5

Reservations: 604-325-1812



Dancing ✦ Entertainment by Russian chanteuse
Food, beverages for sale Elena Steele

This is the first of a series of cabarets celebrating the many cultures in which Jews have made their home. Everyone is welcome. Come hungry, thirsty, and ready to party!

Our featured guest artist, Elena Steele, writes of her life and career:

“Everyone of us has our own perception of music. I am lucky that my perception became my fate and in turn became my life. I was 14 years old when I first stepped out onto the “real” stage. At 15, I became the soloist for the ensemble “Yunost” at the University of

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Fraytik Tsu Nakht

Please join us for our popular monthly secular shabbos observation: Candle lighting, wine, challah, a fabulous potluck meal, and a talk by a guest speaker.

January 14, 6:30 PM: Rabbi Joseph Saltoun, *Kabala for Everyone*.

February date and speaker TBA

To attend, you may bring a dish (couples please bring double-sized dish or two dishes) **or** pay \$10/person.

Please RSVP to Gallia, 604-322-6077.

Welcome to the Board of Directors for 2004-05



Front (l-r): Harold Berson, Richard Rosenberg (President), Sylvia Friedman (Vice President), Al Stein (Treasurer). Back (l-r): Paul Meyer (Corresponding Secretary), Gallia Chud (Ex Officio), Karen Coulter, Claire Osipov (Alternate), Victor Neuman (Recording Secretary).



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Dnepropetrovsk. By 19, I had my first professional tour with the ensemble "Vodograi." "At 23, I worked on the movie, *Dear Boy* by Mosfilm along with composer David Tuchmanov and producer

Alexander Stefanovich.

"As much as I love to sing and to be on the stage, after almost 5 years of touring I felt something missing in my life. And although everyone was telling me of stardom, I decided to quit the professional life and start a family.

"After two sons, I went back to university to teach. And I found teaching very fascinating. All those years of teaching, I continued to sing and performed in many concerts on various stages in countries of former Soviet Union as well as in the US and Canada.

"Since coming to Canada, I created a voice studio for children and adults. The studio has expanded successfully and I now coach more than 40 private voice students. To honor their achievements we perform [annually] at Richmond's Gateway Theatre.... Last June I had a solo concert at the Vancouver Playhouse called "That's the Story of.... It was a retrospective of my singing career and I introduced six of my top students. The evening was a wonderful celebration of a life devoted to music.

"I love to sing, I love to teach, I love to live in the best country in the world. And I am thankful for the opportunity to sing, to teach, to live."

Music at the Peretz Centre

Vancouver's only concert series showcasing Jewish music and musicians

Sara Davis Buechner:
March 5, 8:00 PM

We are very proud to host the return engagement of Sara Davis Buechner. After Ms Buechner's triumphant performance as guest artist at the Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir's Spring Concert last June, the audience was so insistent that we bring her back, that we called her. Fortunately, she found a space in her very full performance and teaching schedule for our venue.

On March 5, Ms Buechner will apply her powerful and passionate style to a program of Pauline Alpert, Dana Suesse and George Gershwin, in a musical salute to 1930s New York.

Tickets: Adults, \$18, Seniors, students \$12. Call to reserve tickets. Reserved tickets must be picked up ½ hour before concert. Tickets will be available at the door.

Please note: this is the final concert in the 2004-05 series.



Peretz Member Rikki Hoffer wins 2004 City of Vancouver Cultural Harmony Award

Rikki, a.k.a. Roz Davidson the Granny Rapper, was the recipient in the individual category for her work against bullying. On November 30th, the City held a ceremony and reception honouring Rikki, along with the winner in the organization category.

Rikki and husband Howard Hoffer have worked very hard over the last few years, composing and performing, producing and distributing a CD of original music, and their efforts have borne fruit. Rikki has been invited to perform in many Lower Mainland schools, and recently her songs were included on the playlist on the children's channel on Delta airlines.

Keep up the great work, Rikki!



The Granny Rapper and Peretz Centre friends and supporters



The Granny Rapper and Mayor Campbell

Three generations were represented as Bluma Field, Sylvia Friedman, Judith Vosko, Beatrice Scott, Samantha Scott and Donna MacDermot (taking the picture) made and tasted latkes for the Chanukah party December 12th, 4:00.



The final report from our delegates to the CSJO youth conference last May.

Chronology

We woke up early and drove to the airport at 4:30 in the morning. We arrived in Toronto 6 hours later and caught another plane to Philadelphia (arrived at 7ish). We then took a train closer to the campus and then we were picked up and dropped off at the Acadia University.

The campus was large, had many fields, a tower and many buildings. We stayed in student dormitory rooms that had two beds.

We ate a bag lunch and went to a session where we learned everybody's names and got to know each other. After meeting everyone we went out and ran through the sprinklers until they turned off so we could play Frisbee for a few hours. After that we watched a movie until 5 in the morning or bed time for anyone who wanted to go to bed. (Ben didn't) Those who stayed up chatted with their new friends until morning.

Next day we finally got out of bed around 12 noon. Surprisingly, we were too late for breakfast.

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That morning we had the “key-note” address, where both the adult and teen representatives gave a speech about being Jewish, and what it meant to them. To them it meant taking pride in their heritage and doing the right thing...in other words being a mentsh.

Later in the afternoon we had our first seminar. It was about Faux Mitzvas. These are Bar Mitzva parties celebrated by non-Jewish people without any of the work that usually goes into the Jewish version. We felt that these people were in some ways mocking the Jewish version because they had the party without the labour.

After a short 15 minute break we went back for a second seminar. This time we had fun doing our own Improv performances

That night most of us went out and played Frisbee at 1 in the morning again. This lasted about 3 hours, and then watched a DVD cartoon comedy called Aqua Team, Hunger Force. Unfortunately, none of the characters were Jewish. At 5 to 6 in the morning we finally fell asleep

Mark got out of bed at 7 in the morning after only an hour and a half of sleep. He was determined not to miss breakfast this time

around.

That afternoon we went to our third and final seminar which was called “Responding to Hate.” The discussion was about an American Math teacher who was a Holocaust denier. This was his personal belief but he did not teach it in the classroom. The question was if it was right to attend his classes anyway. We felt that we needed to make a stand and show we did not agree with his attitude by boycotting his class. Some people thought it was fine to go to his class because he didn’t teach anything to do with the Holocaust. We believed that it was not right to go to his class and you must respond to this racism, or it will continue.

At lunch Mark and Ben were asked to co-host the Talent Show after the banquet which was that same day. We spent about an hour making up the play with three other boys, Jake, Mikah, and Matt. After that we went out to another building and had a casino night where we got chips to make bets on black jack, dice, roulette, and so on. Prizes included wireless phones, and a CD player.

We came back and ate a banquet dinner, and had the talent contest where both adults and youths performed dances, songs, and

comedy routines. We returned to our dorms and played Frisbee again until 3 in the morning. We did some last day talking because we all knew we would be leaving the next day.

After not sleeping the entire night we watched the sunrise, said our goodbyes to anybody who was conscious, took e-mail addresses, and flew home to Vancouver.

Overall impressions

Ben was struck by the different opinions about faux mitzvahs. They seemed to differ depending on what part of the continent you were from. Kids from the United States seemed to think of this as unreasonable behavior and that the tradition was supposed to be observed by Jews only. People from Canada seemed to believe that people may do whatever they want on their birthday but avoid calling it a Bar Mitzva or Bat Mitzva because they were only taking the fun parts of the ceremony and not the character building, work related activities.

We very much want to go back and do this again next year. It was a lot of fun and we learned a lot about secular Jewish issues and culture.

—Ben Neuman and
Mark Neuman

Two ways to support our youth

- ☞ Buy a book. Check it out: the Youth Fund Pulp Fiction Bookshelf, located in the lobby, contains lots of mysteries, science fiction, and some literature, fiction and non-fiction; mostly paperbacks. \$2 each. (And to make room on your shelves for your new books, we'll be happy to accept your donation of some of your old ones.)
- ☞ Participate in the Tu b'Shvat seder Sunday, January 23, 11:00. The seder, honouring the New Year of the Trees, is led by our B'nai Mitsva classes and features the traditional fruits and nuts. It will be followed by a pot luck lunch.

And while we're on the topic of trees ...



Make our Tree of Life Grow: buy a leaf or a brick

Our beautiful and unique Tree of Life, created by Adam Berson, has lots of branches but not a lot of leaves.

You can help make our Tree grow. For a \$200 tax-deductible donation, you can add a leaf, inscribed with your message. \$500 adds a small brick, while a large brick costs \$1,000. As an added bonus, a free one-year membership is included for all donations over \$500—in addition to the mitsva of supporting Vancouver's secular Jewish organization.

He's back! I am now starting my second term as president and I want to thank all of you who voted for me. As usual, there is a lot of work to be done and I hope you will be prepared to help. First let me thank David Skulski for the contributions he has made over the past two years. I know you will join me in wishing him well in his future endeavours.

Now what does the future hold? Major efforts continue to put the Peretz Centre on a firm financial foundation. Nothing follows unless we can operate the Centre in a responsible and productive way. Much depends on local and community support for all our programs and events. As such I am calling on all our members and supporters to attend our events and even more to introduce your friends and possible supporters to these events. All of us have important roles to play and the future clearly depends on all our efforts.

However, it seems to me that one issue demands our immediate attention. Where are the children? This organization has a dim future if the average age of members continues to rise. We need young families with children to invigorate our community and to continue to spread our message of secular Jewish humanism. We seem unable to reach communities that should be receptive to our goals. Possible, natural allies either don't know about us or don't seem to think that we have much in common. We have to renew our efforts to develop productive contacts in such communities as Israeli, Russian, Latin American, gay and lesbian, families involved in mixed marriages, and others.

As such, early next year I want to have a brainstorming session with our members and with representatives of the communities mentioned above to explore a variety of issues including joint programs, new programs to attract young families, and to establish workable, long-term relationships. Much needs to be done and we must start now.

Let me wish you all a happy (secular) New Year. All the best for the coming year. And let us all renew our efforts to make the Peretz Centre an important part of the Vancouver Jewish Community.

— Richard Rosenberg

Peretz Centre Schedule, January - February '05

School reopens January 9

Youth

B'nai Mitsva '05: Jan. 16, 30, Feb. 13, 27
B'nai Mitsva '06: Jan. 9, 23, Feb. 6, 20
Sunday School: every Sunday, 10:30-12:30
JYPT: Jan. 16, 30, Feb. 13, 27, 10:30-12:30

Adults and Seniors

Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir rehearsal: Tuesdays,
7:30-9:45 PM.
Yiddish Class: Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 PM.
Fraytik Tsu Nakht (Friday night Secular-Humanist
Shabbes celebration): Jan. 14: Rabbi Joseph
Saltoun, *Kabala: for Everyone*. Feb. TBA
Sholem Aleichem Seniors: Fridays, 10:30 AM.
Speakers and topics TBA

Special Events

Dec. 18, 8:00 PM Music at the Peretz Centre:
Tzimmes
Jan. 22, 7:00 PM Russian Cabaret
Jan. 23, 11:00 AM Tu b'Shvat Seder
Mar. 5, 8:00 PM: Music at the Peretz Centre: Sara
Davis Buechner
Apr. 30, time TBA: Community Third Seder
Jun. 5, time TBA: Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir
Spring Concert
Jun. 18: Closing Sunday

Get Well Soon

Jenny Phillips

Gersh Winrob

A Sheynem Dank!

To everyone—volunteers and participants— who made both the Festival Judío and the Annual Banquet so successful.

To Victor Neuman, for making our new big, sturdy parking signs.

To Rose Harrod, for her work on behalf of the Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir.

To Katherine Headrick, who is always so willing to contribute her excellent musicianship.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS, YOU MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE!

—Donna Becker MacDermot
Program Coordinator



We extend our condolences to:
the Zlotnik family on the loss of
Jessie Marshall

Karen Coulter on the loss of
brother-in-law George McCurdy

Irvin Rivkin on the loss of sister Esther Pollock

Mazel Tovs and In Memoriams

Send us your Mazel Tovs (births, milestone birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, etc.) and In Memoriams, and we will publish them in the Peretz Papers. If you make a donation in honour or in memory of someone, we will send a card on your behalf.