

MATERIAL

INHERITANCE

**CONTEMPORARY WORK BY
NEW JEWISH CULTURE FELLOWS**

MARCH 26 THROUGH JUNE 11, 2023

**EXHIBITION
GUIDE**

A Joint Project of
Jewish Museum of Maryland & New Jewish Culture Fellowship

Material/Inheritance was developed by Leora Fridman, the Jewish Museum of Maryland's Curator-in-Residence, in partnership with staff and leadership of the Jewish Museum of Maryland and the New Jewish Culture Fellowship, and with guidance from our curatorial committee: Gregg Bordowitz, Kendell Pinkney, Rabbi Mónica Gomery, and Heidi Rabben.

Material/Inheritance: Contemporary Work by New Jewish Culture Fellows features 30 artists whose work has been supported by the New Jewish Culture Fellowship (NJCF), a national arts fellowship that advances the work of groundbreaking artists by offering material support, mentorship, peer feedback, and shared cultural investigation.

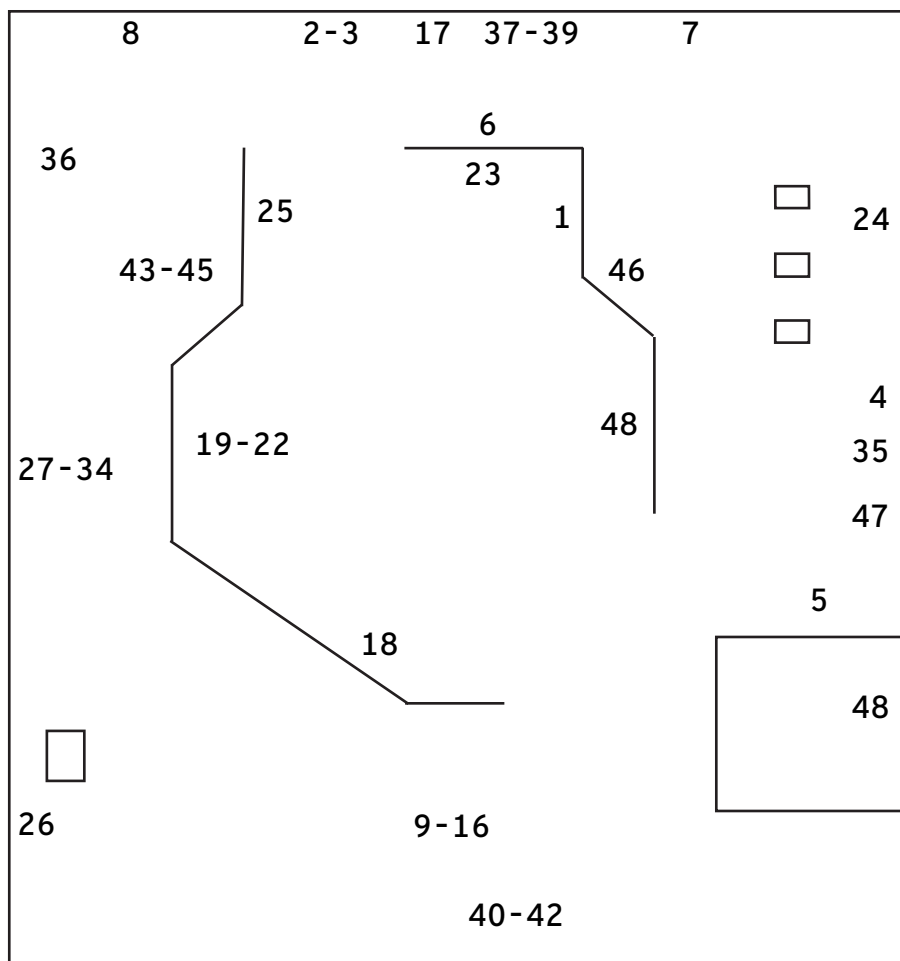
Material/Inheritance centers the artist as inheritor and generator of prophetic traditions, as elaborated by NJCF co-founder Maia Ipp in her widely-shared 2019 essay *Kaddish for an Unborn Avant-Garde*. The artists featured in *Material/Inheritance* ask a variety of boundary-pushing questions about inheritance, celebration, trauma, and resilience, including:

- What does the future hold, and how much of that is in our own hands?
- What do we need to survive, and where can we find it?
- How can we balance the needs of the individual and the collective as we generate new solutions for contemporary and age-old questions?
- What does it look like to celebrate and rejoice alongside continual waves of mourning, discomfort, and despair?

Material/Inheritance is accompanied by public performances on the opening (March 26, 2023) and closing (June 11, 2023) days. Details of performances and artwork in the exhibition are available below. For additional information about the artists and curatorial framing, please see materialinheritance.com or scan the QR code below.



MAP



EXHIBITION

JETT ALLEN

1. *Yentl Meltdown* [2023], Risograph Print

Yentl Meltdown is a comic within the artist's series *Trans Classic Movies*, visual essays that analyze film through the lens of lived experiences of being trans. This comic engages with Barbara Streisand's *Yentl* [1983] as it relates to enoughness, troubling what it means to not be Jewish enough or trans enough, reaching for hybridity in the search for belonging.

ZOË AQUA

2. *Welcome to the Welcome (Bulgars)* [2022], Video

3. *A Kukave Fun Vald (Doina)* [2023], Video

Aqua's two videos, *Welcome to the Welcome (Bulgars)* and *A Kukave Fun Vald (Doina)*, feature songs from *In Vald Arayn*, her album of original musical compositions recorded in collaboration with Eastern European musicians. *In Vald Arayn* means "into the forest" in Yiddish, a play on the literal meaning of the word Transylvania ("beyond the forest" in Latin). Aqua is currently in Romania studying Transylvanian folk music and the conversations between Jewish and non-Jewish Eastern European music.

LIAT BERDUGO AND
B'TSELEM VIDEO PROJECT

4. *Shooting Back at Shooting Back* (2017), Video

5. *Shooting Back at Shooting Back* (2017), Digital Inkjet Prints

Shooting Back at Shooting Back is a single-channel video screening and series of photographic stills drawn from the video archives of B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights NGO that distributes cameras to Palestinians living in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Whereas guns and cameras face off in many zones of conflict, this work examines face-offs between cameras themselves.

DANIELLE DURCHSLAG

6. *Forgive Us* (2020), Antique Silver Platter Originally Depicting Marie Antoinette and King Louis XVI, the Artist's Late Grandmother's Melted Gold Teeth, Additional 18k Gold

Forgive Us is a sculpture exploring the nightmarish inclusion of prominent, wealthy Jews at the highest levels of contemporary Republican politics. When Durschlag's grandmother died, the artist inherited an antique silver platter depicting Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI that the artist's family used to hold matzo. Utilizing both 18k gold and her grandmother's melted gold teeth, the artist has refashioned the original platter as a portrait of Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, to examine the complexities of American

Jewish wealth, specifically its presentation as a form of WASP drag.

DANIELLE DURCHSLAG

7. *Anatevka* (2022), 4-minute Film with Additional Installed Elements

Anatevka is a short film in which a group of school children perform for their parents a darkly comedic version of the song *Anatevka* from *Fiddler on the Roof*. Durschlag's new lyrics to this classic explore the propensity to teach Jewishness to children as a narrative of victimhood, despite there being many other sources of meaning in Jewish tradition.

JAY EDDY

8. *The Other Death of Arthur* (2023), Sound Installation

The Other Death of Arthur is a theatrical sound installation with three simultaneous script fragments in which we share in the grief of three generations of mourners: The Wife, The Children, and The Grandchildren. Drawing upon the artist's own experience of sitting shiva for their grandfather during the COVID pandemic, this installation offers forking experiences of what it means to grieve and how we seek to reach our loved ones after they have passed.

JULIA ELSAS

Ugav Nights

9. *Ugav/Nose Flute* (2019), White Porcelain and Plastic
10. *Tongue Horn* (2019), Blue and White Porcelain, Underglaze
11. *Galaxy Rain Machine* (2019), Porcelain, Underglaze and Finishing Nails
12. *Double Head Udu* (2019), Glazed Ceramic
13. *Blue Horn with Stand* (2019), Blue and White Porcelain, Underglaze

DAN FISHBACK

14. *Teeth Shaker* (2023),
Glazed Porcelain,
Caning, Thread,
Washi Tape, Gold
Luster, Rope, Gaffer
Tape

15. *Five Blows* (2023),
Porcelain, Glaze,
Gold Luster

16. *Bumpy Shaker*
(2020), Porcelain,
Gaffer Tape

Ugav Nights is a series of ceramic sculptural instruments interpreting the Biblical instrument referred to as the *Ugav*. Contemporary interpretations of the *Ugav* describe it either as a reed or stringed instrument, while others interpret it as a pipe, end-blown flute, water organ, harp, or simply a love charm.

17. *Hope Hurts* (2020),
Music Video

In the music video for *Hope Hurts*, Fishback opens a display case of his grandmother's political buttons and armbands from her time in the Young People's Socialist League in the 1920s and early 1930s. Using stop-motion animation, the objects are brought to life in a celebration of both existing and past possibilities of anti-fascist organizing within Jewish lineages.

BEN GASSMAN AND
BRANDON WOOLF

18. *Between the Bread* (2023),
Audio Installation
Duration: 10
minutes

Between the Bread is a participatory installation composed of visual totems and audio tracks. The work uses the sandwich as a site of conflict and coming together, a way to think about neighborhood composition, change, and the joys and tensions generated by a density of difference.

SHTERNA GOLDBLOOM

Shabbos

19. *Eli with Becher*
(2022), Photograph
20. *Chana Raizel* (2022),
Photograph

Feygeles

21. *Anonymous Scroll*
(2022), Paper
22. *Dedication Scroll*
(2022), Paper

Two photographs from *Shabbos* offer an invitation toward the spirit of rest, with visitors invited to sit at the couch provided and engage with the work at their own speed. The images draw on the artist's childhood experience of Shabbos and their desire to connect inherited experiences of this holiday with the queers, rabbis, artists, and heretics with whom they've now chosen to make family.

Feygeles is a series of handmade Torah scrolls aiming to make visible the experiences of LGBTQIA Jews whose voices and experiences have historically been hidden and considering how they seek to integrate their history and traditions with gender and sexuality. *Feygele* is a Yiddish word meaning “little bird” which is also a homophobic slur that has been reclaimed by many contemporary LGBTQIA Jews.

JAKE GOLDWASSER

23. *15 Cartoons (2022-2023), Ink on Paper*

Cartoons – especially the single-panel cartoons found in the *New Yorker* – have a long Jewish history, from pioneering cartoonists Saul Steinberg and William Steig to contemporary artists like Liana Finck and Roz Chast. In this selection of his work, Goldwasser explores the possibilities of the contemporary Jewish cartoon, and how this form subverts language through humor, shifting context, surreal composition, and the interplay between word and image.

ADAM GOLFER

24. *Kaddish* [2020-Ongoing], 3 Channel Slide Projection, 240 35 mm slides, 3 Kodak Slide Projectors

Kaddish is a multi-channel slide projection reckoning with loss and incompleteness. This living archive documents Golfer's continuous process of sifting through pictures both made and collected throughout the past two decades. Golfer overlays multiple streams of photographs, screengrabs and stills from various forms of moving images. Nazi reenactments, Holocaust histories, and scenes from Israel and the Occupied West Bank sit alongside everyday documents of family events and daily life. Some images are subtitled with personal annotations,

while others leave the narrative untold. Shards of loss, birth, and renewal mix with broader notions of collective mourning and state violence.

TOM HAVIV

25. *Hamsa Flag* (2023),
Textile

Hamsa Flag was first developed in 2015 as a glyphic symbol intended to unify two peoples, challenging the violent binaries that underlie the crisis in Israel/Palestine and seeking to unblock political imagination. Allies have engaged with the *Flag* as an art object, a symbol, and a catalyst for conversation in settings that range from Jewish rituals to street protests.

ROSZA DANIEL LANG/
LEVITSKY

26. *keler un koyln*
(2023), Cantastoria
Banner (Reclaimed
Cloth & House
Paint), Soundscape
(Voice and Analog
Synths), and
Broadsheets (paper)

keler un koyln celebrates centuries of Yiddish song making and Yiddishland's vernacular, secular culture, one that desires liberation in this world (not a deferred *oylem ha-bo*, or world to come), and rejoices in freely-chosen, unsanctified love. The contemporary Yiddish songs referenced on the painted banner address the full scope of Jewish diasporic life through the extravagantly ornamental visual language of southern Yiddishland and its dual emphasis on the utilitarian as well as the decorative, rejecting the contradiction

between the two. For the audio component of Lang/Levitsky's installation, visit materialinheritance.com/rosza-daniel-lang-levitsky or scan this QR code.



ELLIE LOBOVITS

In the Garden There Was Morning and There Was Dark, and It Was Good

27. *IVF in Silver Birkenstocks* (2021), C-print
28. *Holding It, Did You Know It's A Dream* (2021), C-print
29. *Matryoshka Dolls, or Summoning with the Remnants* (2021), C-print
30. *In the Garden There Was Morning and There Was Dark, and It Was Good* (2021), C-print
31. *My Grandmother Helen in the Sukkah* (2017), C-print
32. *Night Flowers: Magnolia and Blue Sky* (2021), C-print
33. *Night Flowers: Hot Pink Rose* (2021), C-print

MICHAEL MCCANNE AND
JAMIE WEISS

34. *Night Flowers:
Goldenrod* [2022],
C-print

The photographs gathered for *In the Garden There Was Morning and There Was Dark, and It Was Good* explore reproduction, mortality, and grief through self-portrait diptychs portraying the actual and performed process of in-vitro fertilization alongside symbols of the artist's Russian Jewish ancestry and elements of the natural world. The images raise questions that mainstream Jewish cultural production often ignores, including: What rituals can be enacted to mark life cycle events outside of the Jewish ritual canon? And: What role can the more-than-human world play in expanding our relationship with fertility and death?

35. *A Minor Figure*
[2021], Film

A Minor Figure is an experimental short film using the real story of a Japanese man arrested in New Jersey in 1988 with three homemade bombs to explore the afterimages of historical upheaval and people left in its wake. Mixing elements of documentary and noir, the film follows a semi-fictionalized protagonist confronted by the complex banality of his supposed enemy and the memories of a revolution that never arrived. *A Minor Figure* explores how strains of Marxism rippled through the 20th century and how they relate to historical and messianic time.

TYLER RAI

36. *Neshome Likht for Ecological Relatives* (2023), Installation with Video, Candles, Driftwood, and Notebook

Neshome Likht for Ecological Relatives applies the Ashkenazi practice of grave-measuring to what Rai terms “ecological relatives” in peril due to climate change. Grave-measuring or *feldmestn* was a practice carried out by Jewish Eastern European women known as *feldmesterin* [grave measurers], who measured the graves of their ancestors with cotton threads while reciting Yiddish prayers known as *tkhines*. The threads would then become wicks for hand-dipped *neshome likht* [soul candles]. Here candles and video documentation demonstrate Rai’s offering

of *neshome likht* for a portion of the shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay, alongside an opportunity for visitors to write their own *tkhines*.

NORA RODRIGUEZ

37. *Angels Going to Work* (2020), 16 mm Cut Paper Animation
38. *Knot* (2016), Hand-Drawn Watercolor Animation
39. *Call to Aunt Cynthia* (2023), 16 mm Cut Paper Animation

Rodriguez's three animations, *Angels Going to Work*, *Knot*, and *Call to Aunt Cynthia*, draw on audio interviews with both Jewish [*Angels Going to Work* and *Knot*], and non-Jewish [*Call to Aunt Cynthia*] family members of the artist as a strategy to explore storytelling passed on, and written between, generations, especially as inflected by assimilation. These works are about the slippage of mundane conversation into poetry, absurdity, and abstraction,

using animation as an allusion to children's media to play with didacticism, and the ways that fear and loss shift as their contours are told and retold, becoming unfamiliar, odd, and funny.

NAOMI SAFRAN-HON

40. *The Curves in My Wall* (2017), Acrylic, Gouache, Lace, Archival Inkjet Print and Cement on Canvas

41. *WS: Double Wall in Four Layers* (2017), Acrylic, Archival Inkjet Print, Lace, Fabric, Pigment, Gouache, Pins and Cement on Canvas

42. *WS: Three Windows and Port* (2017), Acrylic, Cement, Lace, and Archival Inkjet Print on Canvas

desolation. Haunted by the violence of forced removal and deeply engaged with the historical narratives and contemporary political climates of her native Israel, Safran-Hon's multi-media paintings draw attention to the human narratives embedded in physical space and attempt to construct alternative histories of space and home.

The Curves in My Wall, *WS: Double Wall in Four Layers*, and *WS: Three Windows and Port* depict neglected architectural spaces with traces of both their former human inhabitants and the external forces that brought about their

ARIELLE STEIN

- 43. *Seam* (2023), Ink on Yupo Paper
- 44. *Double Seam* (2023), Ink on Yupo Paper
- 45. *Untitled* (2023), Ink on Yupo Paper

These three paintings from the artists' *Seam* series focus on the pomegranate as a symbol deeply embedded within Jewish material culture and tradition, recycled into contemporary investigations of sexuality, the body, and fertility.

NAT SUFRIN

- 46. *How to See the Shoah: Google Images Translation of Celan and Reznikoff* (2020), Inkjet Prints on Paper

These two visual "translations" employ Google Images to illustrate a new way of reading famously hermetic poems, expanding our consideration of what sits behind each individual word. The images translate Paul Celan's *Ashglory*, originally translated by Pierre Joris, and an excerpt of Charles Reznikoff's *Holocaust*, which uses testimony from the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials. Here poets attempt to represent the unrepresentable facts of the Shoah, and Sufrin attempts to re-present the imagery and associations behind these attempts.

KATZ TEPPER WITH
HAIM TEPPER

47. 🎵 *War is Everywhere* 🎵 [*the farmer father & the seedling*] (2022-2023), Digital Video with Color and Sound

🎵 *War is Everywhere* 🎵 [*the farmer father & the seedling*] centers an experimental portrait of an immigrant father and trans adult child relationship mediated through technology. The artist's father, Haim, was born in Ukraine. When the invasion of Ukraine began, the artist asked their father to begin recording daily cell phone videos documenting his consumption of national and global catastrophic news. The project combines the father's low-quality cellphone footage with the artist's desktop screen recordings to blur thresholds between

everyday media exchange and the supposedly single authorship of high art. The predominance of text via captions, text messages, Google Docs, and AI transcription recalls the Jewish textual tradition using hyper contemporary means. Humor temporarily undercuts despair in this micro-scale interpersonal negotiation of technology, family, gender, and nation, entangled in the ebbs and flows of fascism.

DANIEL TERNA

48. *Not Yet Titled
(Verso)* (2023),
Video Installation

Verso honors the artist's late father, Fred Terna, a Holocaust survivor and painter. The work consists first of two slideshows: hundreds of still images of nearly 500 of the artist's father's canvases pictured from the back. Between these slideshows are short videos the artist made in his father's studio following his death. Having been deeply intertwined with his father's creative production, the artist here witnesses the packaging of his father's work and the emotional and physical complexities of carrying on his memory.

MARIYA ZILBERMAN AND
JAY EDDY

49. *Threshold (Shvel)*
(2023), Installation

Threshold (Shvel) is a collaborative multimedia installation exploring the fluidity and fragmentation of home; home as boundary and threshold, sacred and quotidian space, haven and site of potential loss. Audiences are invited to participate in the building and finding of home by opening matchbook-doors in sculptural houses and reading poems in the process of being drafted with magnifying glasses intended to mimic the close attention required to read Jewish texts. The accompanying sound installation speaks to the ongoingness of conversation, including Zilberman's poetic conversation with the work *S. Ansky*, conversations

between Zilberman
and Eddy, and the oral
traditions of poetry and
prayer.

EVENTS

MARCH 26, 2023
OPENING DAY

1PM Julie Elsas and three collaborators (Kenny Wollesen, Kirk Knuffke, and Madeleine Ventrice-Knuffke) will perform *SONIC MUD: Ugav Nights*, activating Elsas' sonic sculptures and bringing to life these reimaginings of the Biblical instrument referred to as the *Ugav*.

2PM Liat Berdugo will deliver the performative lecture *Seeing it for the Trees*, which critically engages with photographs in the archives of Keren Kayemeth Le'Yisrael/Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) to question the formation (and ongoing maintenance) of Zionism, especially as it relates to land, territory, and place, and what it means to unpack the framework of an ethnonational project of statehood.

3PM Rosza Daniel Lang/Levitsky will activate their installation *keler un kolyn* with an intimate collective performance, drawing on audience prompting and participation as well as the communal and cultural history of Yiddish song.

4PM Ira Khonen Temple and collaborators Rachel Leader (violin), Eleonore Oppenheim (bass), and David Licht (drums), will perform a live concert version of the artist's forthcoming EP *Covenant of Blood*, a title drawn from Rabbi Elyse Goldstein's prayer for menstruating people. Engaging the power of Yiddish text alongside contemporary concerns, this work tracks the artist's own gender transition, end of menstruation, and adoption of their own trans framework for Jewish adulthood.

MAY 24, 2023

7PM On May 24, 2023, Levyosn (Adah Hetko, Lysander Jaffe, and Kaia Berman-Peters) will present *Levyosn's Lullaby*, a performance that reinvents ritual as a musical community celebration and explores original and traditional Yiddish, Hebrew, and Sephardic songs, presenting these songs along with their cultural context and opportunities for participatory singing and Yiddish dance. The Boston-area trio takes its name from the Ashkenazi Hebrew for the Leviathan, a mythical sea creature traveling the world's oceans collecting songs, krill, and dreams.

JUNE 11, 2023

CLOSING DAY

2PM Tyler Rai will activate their installation *Neshome Likht for Ecological Relatives* with a ritual candle burning and reading of viewer-contributed *tkhines* accumulated throughout the exhibition's run.

3PM Hadar Ahuvia and Tatyana Tenenbaum will perform *Long tones in bewilderment*, a concert for the late days of spring that runs concurrent with the reading of *B'Midbar*, or the Book of Numbers, in the Torah, a book of journeying but not arriving through the wilderness of *midbar*, or the desert, and the utterances of *dibur*, the Hebrew word for speech. The piece's title references writer Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg's *Bewilderments: Reflections on the Book of Numbers*. The performance will

integrate mystical traditions of chanting with Hasidic *nign*, fragments of musical theater, original songs, and the artists' collaborative vocal research.

4PM Laura Elkeslassy and collaborators will perform *Ya Ghorbati: Divas in Exile*, in which Elkeslassy musically excavates her family's history in Morocco, France, and Israel, coming face-to-face with forgotten ancestors and reclaiming a lost family name. Developed in collaboration with music director Ira Khonen Temple, this concert weaves together the stories of Judeo-Arab divas from the last century with folk and sacred music. *Ya Ghorbati* looks across time and space to tell a tale of political upheaval, exile, and displacement—ultimately questioning the supposed binary of Arab and Jew.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVATIONS

On June 9, 2023, *Disloyal*, the JMM's podcast, will release a collaboration with Ariel Goldberg, an episode developing themes from *Images on which to build, 1970s-1990s*, an exhibition Goldberg curated exploring the role of photography in six grassroots trans and queer educational projects. Engaging intergenerational queer histories and cultures, the episode will focus particularly on the role of Jewish lesbians involved in Brooklyn's Lesbian Herstory Archives. The podcast will also be featured on the *Material/Inheritance* website.

During the latter half of the exhibition's run, Fancy Feast and collaborator Zoe Ziegfeld will perform *The Fuck You Revue presents: JEWTOPIA*, a subversive, intersectional, highbrow-meets-lowbrow burlesque and variety extravaganza. This performance will take place in New York City. For date, location and registration info, please see www.materialinheritance.com/events.

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