

Public hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe on the Museum of the History of Polish Jews

Materials submitted for the Record by
the Museum of the History of Polish Jews
in Warsaw, Poland

March 13, 2008

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Mission

The Museum of the History of Polish Jews (MHPJ) - a center for education and culture - is dedicated to preserving the lasting legacy of Jewish life in Poland and of the civilization created by Polish Jews over a period of 1,000 years. The Statute of the Museum declares that the Museum's mandate is to exhibit the history of the Jews on the historical territory of the old Republic of Poland, including Warsaw. The Museum will foster respect for Jewish tradition and culture and stimulate dialogue in the spirit of mutual acceptance and tolerance. The founders of the Museum are the City of Warsaw, the Minister of Culture of Poland, the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland as well as an international community of donors and friends.

Vision

The Museum is the first and only museum to focus on the history of Polish Jews. Located on the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews will take its place alongside the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington, D.C.), the Jewish Museum (Berlin), Yad Vashem (Jerusalem), and Beth Hatefutsot, Museum of the Jewish Diaspora (Tel Aviv), as one of the most important institutions of its kind. The Museum of the History of Polish Jews will also provide Poland's capital city with a multifunctional cultural institution that will set a new standard for museums internationally.

Poland was once home to the largest Jewish community in the world and center of the Jewish Diaspora. 80% of the world's Jewry trace their ancestry to Poland, which was one of the largest and most culturally diverse countries in Europe. As a result, the legacy of Polish Jews extends also to areas that are today Lithuania, Belarus, and Latvia, as well as to parts of Ukraine, Estonia, and Western Russia.

The Museum of the History of Polish Jews will be a portal, a place to begin an exploration of the world of Polish Jews. It will be a forum, a place of dialogue and civic engagement. It will be a catalyst that inspires visitors to reflect on the personal and historical significance of the civilization of Polish Jews and take action to recover this legacy for future generations. The Museum of the History of Polish Jews will confront hatred, promote moral responsibility, and democratic values. The Museum will harness the emotional power of this site to animate dialogue about the past in relation to the present and the future.

As an international educational institution, cultural center, and singular meeting place for a diverse public, the Museum will provide a unique learning environment through cutting-edge multimedia narrative exhibitions, lively public programs, a resource center, education programs, and collaborative projects that engage a broad public in Poland and abroad in the recovery and exploration of the legacy of Polish Jews.

The Audience

No visit to Warsaw, indeed to Poland, will be complete without a visit to the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. We expect 450,000 visitors a year, most of them from Poland. Jewish visitors from Israel, United States, Europe and elsewhere are estimated at 150,000-200,000, with international visitors making up the balance. The Museum is prepared to accommodate this diverse, multi-lingual audience and a wide variety of visiting patterns from large organized tour groups to school classes and families to individuals.

While the number of Jews living in Poland today is small, Jewish presence in the public consciousness is large. The Museum will build upon the growing interest in Polish-Jewish history, thereby encouraging discussion and building awareness among opinion leaders, the media, and the general public. The Museum will also inspire and support collaborative projects across Poland and abroad that engage a wide public in recovering and exploring the legacy of Polish Jews.

Polish visitors will see their history and the places where they live today in a new way. They will discover that the history of Poland is not complete without a history of Polish Jews. They will become acutely aware that their towns once had large and lively Jewish communities. They will discover the richness of the civilization that Jews created on Polish soil. For Jews across the globe, 80% of whom have roots in Poland, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews will add depth and resonance to their visit to Poland and to their understanding of the Holocaust by presenting not only how Jews died, but also how they lived. All visitors will discover the vibrant civilization of what was once the largest Jewish community in the world and center of the Jewish Diaspora.

Legal Status and Sources of Funding

Founded in January of 2005, the Museum is the first public-private partnership of its type in Poland, a joint project of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the City of Warsaw and the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute. A crowning example of public-private collaboration in contemporary Europe, the Museum's diverse funding highlights how coexisting agendas among government entities and individual donors can serve a higher purpose in informing new generations of the world's citizens in the name of education, enlightenment, respect, tolerance and commemoration.

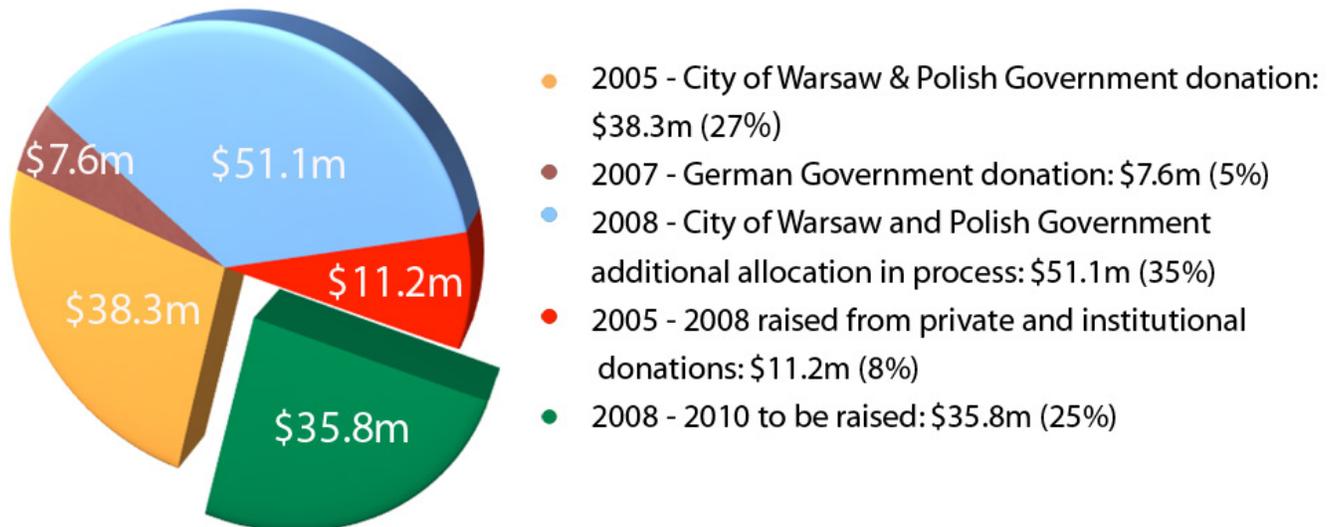
According to the Trilateral Agreement signed on January 25, 2005, the City of Warsaw and the Polish Government represented by the Ministry of Culture are each mandated to provide public funds needed to cover the cost of the construction of the building. The City additionally donated the land on which it will stand. A worldwide fundraising campaign led by the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute and administered in the United States and Canada by the North American Council of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews is focused on covering the costs of designing and installing the core exhibit and the educational programs.

The Museum already enjoys the support of a growing number of corporate and foundation partners, as well as individuals and institutions in the United States, France, Germany, Israel, Poland, and other European countries. A group of private philanthropists from Europe and the United States have each donated a million or more dollars to the Association. The German government has also provided funding to help reach the fund raising goals set by the Association. Several other governments have also either committed funds or indicated their intention to support the museum, and plans are in development to step up current fundraising efforts.

Museum Estimated Cost 2008-2010



Sources of Funding 2005-2010



Museum Origins and Location

The idea for the Museum first came about in 1996 by a team led by a visionary Jeshayahu Weinberg - the founding director of the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv and director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from 1988 to 1994. Before his death in 2000, Weinberg moved to Warsaw and assembled a team dedicated to the establishment of the Warsaw museum. He also chose present director of the Museum, Jerzy Halbersztadt to lead this new project. Mr. Weinberg's ideas de-emphasized the traditional focus on the display of objects and artifacts in most museums, and instead insisted that the Museum present a narrative through interactive activities and experiential exhibitions.

The Museum is located in what was once the heart of the Warsaw Jewish Quarter, where from the 19th century through 1939, between 70 and 90% of its inhabitants were Jewish. Beginning in 1940, the German Nazis began concentrating Poland's population of over three million Jews into a number of extremely overcrowded ghettos in various Polish cities. The Warsaw Jewish Quarter became the Warsaw Ghetto, holding an estimated 440,000 people in a densely-populated area surrounded by a wall. Even before the Nazis began their massive deportation of Jews from the ghetto to extermination camps, thousands of Warsaw Ghetto Jews died due to rampant disease or starvation. The ghetto was also the site of the largest Jewish revolt against the Nazis in occupied Europe: the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. This month-long struggle led by members of organized groups attempted to prevent further deportation of ghetto residents to concentration camps. The Nazis brutally ended the fighting by burning the ghetto and killing or deporting any surviving Jews.

In 1998, the Warsaw City Council donated 3.2 acres (13,000 square meters) within the former Prewar Jewish Quarter and Warsaw Ghetto to the future home of the Museum. In 1999, archaeological excavations of the museum land uncovered documents buried during the war years. These documents have entered into the permanent collection of the Museum. In 1948, a monument designed by Natan Rappaport was dedicated to the resistance fighters. This monument is located directly across the plaza from the future museum. The significance of this site, its historical weight and the power with which it speaks to visitors is one of the building blocks of the future Museum.

Architecture & Design

The Finnish architectural team of Rainer Mahlamäki and Ilmari Lahdelma was selected to design the Museum in 2005 after winning an international competition conducted by a jury of 13 architectural scholars, museum directors and cultural affairs professionals from around the world. This competition was the first of its kind in Poland. 117 architects submitted proposals to Phase One of the competition, and the winning design prevailed over 10 other shortlisted entries, including those by Studio Daniel Libeskind, Peter Eisenman Architects, Kengo Kuma and Zvi Hecker.

The museum exterior is square in plan to echo the shape of the plaza on which it is situated but the transparent glass walls reveal an interior of organic, undulating forms. The design alludes to the Old Testament's miraculous parting of the Red Sea through which the prophet Moses led the Jews to escape captivity in Egypt to life in the Promised Land. The curved walls and ceiling are faced in limestone and lit from above, providing a dramatic sight from both interior and exterior viewpoints. In this way, the museum's design foregrounds the life of the Jewish people over any particular catastrophic events in history, and its transparency reflects the desire for an open reckoning with the past.

Many of the complex architectural details of the five-story cultural center are without precedent in Poland and Europe. The soaring entrance hall reaches from ground level to the roof, measuring over 52 feet high and stretches across the length of the building, providing sightlines to the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes, situated across the plaza from the Museum. The chasm that divides the 16,000-square-foot main lobby underscores the contrast between the building's minimalist exterior and multifaceted interior program.



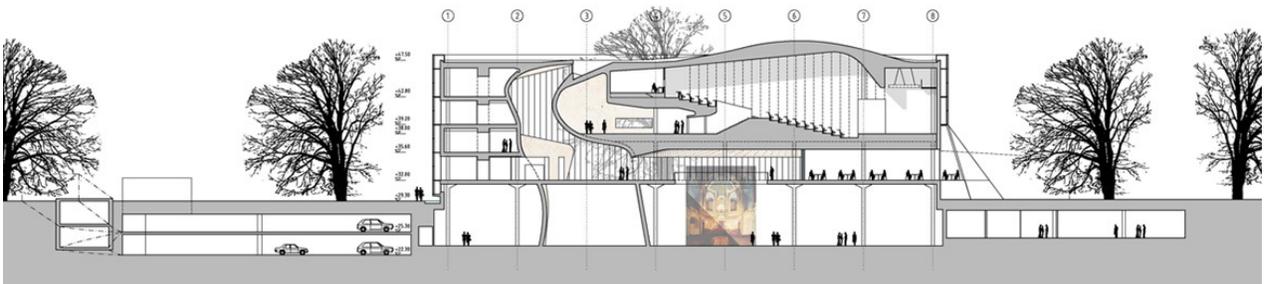
In the words of architect Rainer Mahlamäki: “The counterpoint for the new building is Monument to the Ghetto Heroes and the square in the front of the monument. This monument has a great historical and symbolic value which should not be obscured by the Museum building. Thus our goal was to combine the building and the square into one symmetrical entity. The square basis of the Museum is mirrored by the square whose center is marked by the monument. Thus even during the designing period a dialogue was initiated between the monument and the Museum building: a dialogue rooted in their geometrical analogy.”

“The dramatically curved walls and their limestone or sandstone texture should not only cause a viewer to contemplate Polish Jewish history but also the vibrant history of all Jews. The Hebrew name for our design was Yum Suf (Parting of the Red Sea) and it was adopted during the modeling of this interior. A ramp completes the multifaceted symbolism of the main hall. It is like a bridge spanning the depths of time reaching to the future, symbolizing an Israeli hillside landscape and the passage of the Red Sea.”

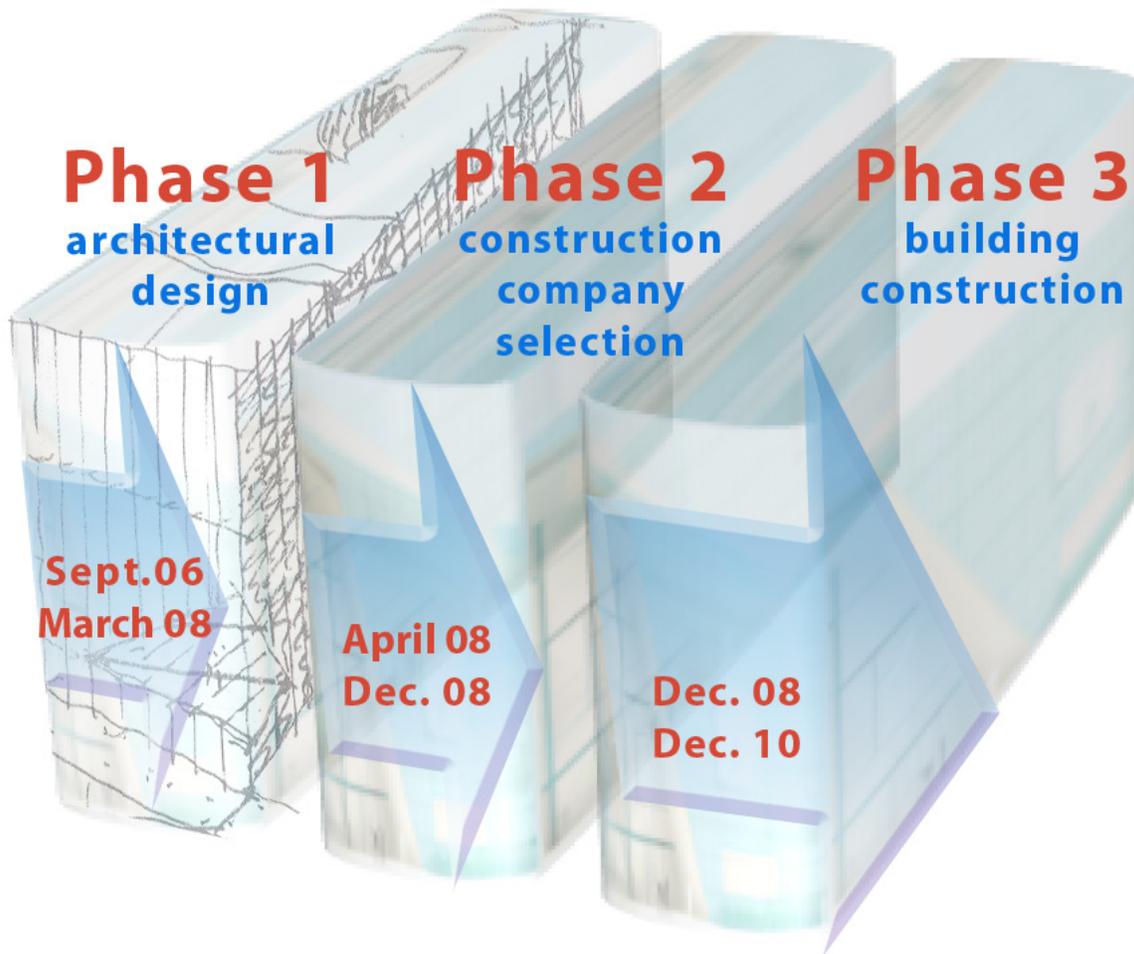
With the permanent exhibition at its core, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews will serve as a center for cultural, educational and social activities. It will include facilities for conferences, seminars, lectures, gatherings of various size and character, film festivals, concerts, and other events.

Museum Main Spaces

Core exhibition	4,331 sq. meters / 46,618 square feet
Temporary exhibition space	991 sq. meters / 10,667 square feet
Education center	500 sq. meters / 5,400 square feet
Library - mediatheque	428 sq. meters / 4,606 square feet
Auditorium with movie-theatre and concert hall	2,140 sq. meters / 23,034 sq. feet
Restaurant	400 sq. meters/ 4,305 square feet



The Building Construction Schedule



The Core Exhibition

The MHPJ is a 140,000 square-foot interactive, narrative museum where exhibitions are designed to tell the story of historical events rather than focus on the presentation of objects, artworks or artifacts. The eight galleries that house the museum's core exhibition provide 46,618 square-feet of space and will be equipped with the latest technological capacities to showcase a variety of multimedia techniques. Videos, films, computer-generated holograms, as well as traditional three-dimensional scale models, will together enable visitors to experience first-hand the presentation of 1,000 years of life in Poland.

Since 2006, a team of scholars, historians and museum experts and designers from Poland, Great Britain, Israel and the United States have been developing the core exhibition. Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett of New York University heads the Core Exhibition Planning Team. The daughter of Polish Jews who emigrated from Poland before the Holocaust, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is trained as a cultural anthropologist and has written seven books and countless articles on the subject of museums and Jewish culture.

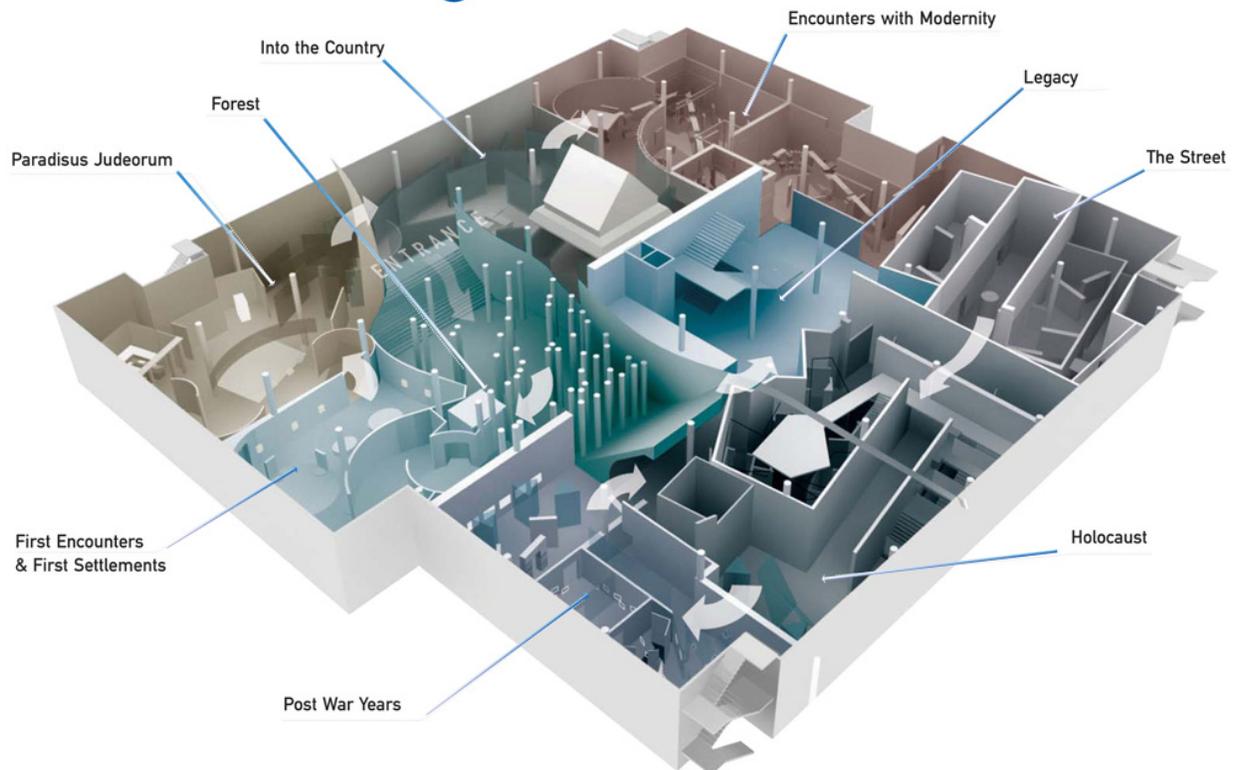
Using a wide variety of primary sources, media, and cutting-edge technology we will create evocative environments, engrossing narratives, and interactive installations that encourage visitors to explore subjects in depth.

More a “theatre of history” and unique learning environment than a conventional exhibition of objects and labels, our exhibition will creatively engage the minds and hearts of diverse visitors of all ages. Visitors to the Museum will have a sense of actually “being there” as they immerse themselves in the world of a culturally diverse Polish Republic. They will discover the vibrant civilization of what was once the largest Jewish community in the world and center of the Jewish Diaspora.

The main exhibition entitled “The 1000 year-history of Jews in Poland” will provide a key educational tool for visitors and a frame of reference for all other museum activities. Based on a narrative experience the exhibition will consist of eight main galleries:

- **The First Encounters: 10th to 15th centuries**
- **Paradisus Judeorum: 16th to mid-17th centuries**
- **Into the Country: mid- 17th century - end of the 18th century**
- **Under the Three Empires; Encounters with Modernity: 1795 – 1914**
- **The Street: 1918 - 1939**
- **The Holocaust: 1939-1945**
- **The Post War Years: 1946 to the Present**
- **Legacy**

Plan of the core exhibition galleries



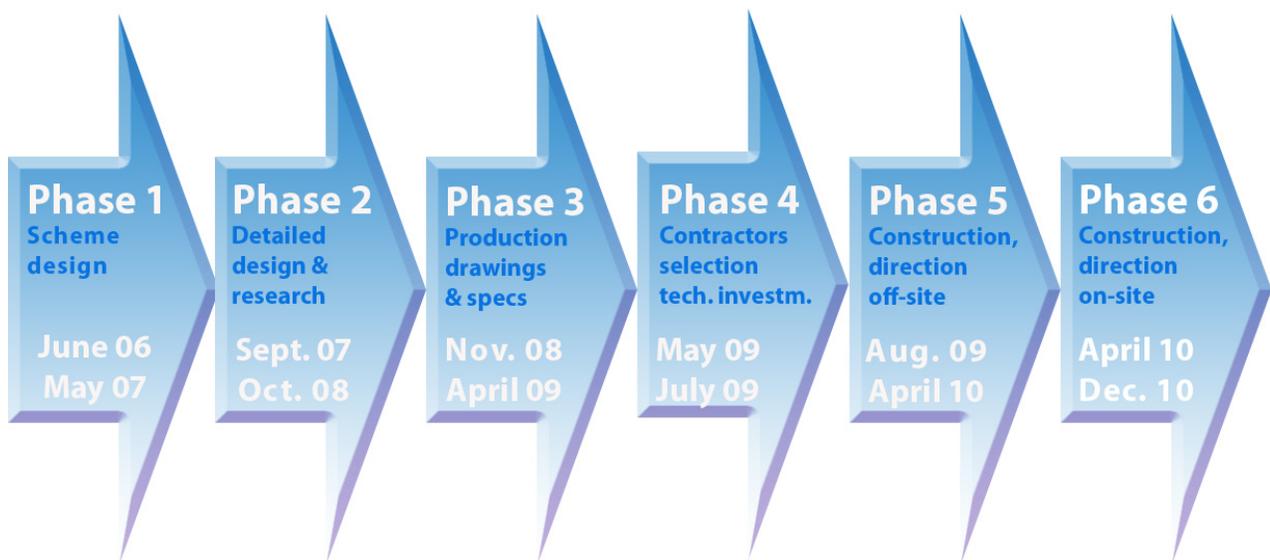
In June of 2007 the Core Exhibition Planning Team completed a 250 page document outlining the scheme design of the future exhibition. The project is now in the detailed design phase. This phase includes an intensive process of research, historical programming, design, production and installation. It will be conducted simultaneously with the construction of the Building and it is expected to conclude six months after the opening of the building in early 2011.

Below are some of the names of prominent academics involved with the creation of the core exhibition and their affiliations.

Professor Hanna Zaremska, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences; Adam Teller Ph.D., Haifa University; Professor David Assaf, Tel Aviv University; Marcin Wodziński Ph.D, University of Wrocław; Professor Samuel Kassow, Trinity College Hartford; Michael Steinlauf Ph.D, Gratz College Philadelphia; Associate Professor Barbara Engelking-Boni, Polish Center of the Holocaust, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences; Jacek Leociak Ph.D, Institute of Literary Research, Polish Academy of Sciences; Havi Ben Sasson Ph.D, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Helena Datner, Jewish Historical Research Institute in Poland and Professor Stanisław Krajewski, Warsaw University.



The Core Exhibition Project Schedule



Education and Research

As an international educational institution, cultural center and meeting place, the Museum will provide a unique learning environment through:

- a cutting-edge multimedia narrative exhibition,
- lively public programs (films, performances, conferences, symposia, meetings, commemorations)
- a resource center and educational programs for school and youth groups, as well as international student exchanges
- collaborative projects that engage a broad public in Poland and abroad in the recovery and exploration of the legacy of Polish Jews.

The Museum will be filled with programs for schools, families, young people and teachers. International youth exchange programs will provide an interchange of ideas and perspectives, while ongoing community outreach and public programs, currently held at the museum's temporary outpost, "The Ohel," will focus on Jewish traditions and culture, as well as civic education.

Even before the Museum opens, its educational Mission has begun. Its public programs, such as film screenings, school partnerships, academic panels, concerts and visual art projects seek to inspire questions and stimulate exploration and learning. The Museum's Educational Center opened in Spring of 2007 and is supported by the creation of the sophisticated, ever-growing database of over 60,000 records of visual images collected from archives, libraries, galleries, museums and private collections in Eastern Europe and around the world.

Web-Based Learning

Technology will provide remote access to the Museum resources for those who cannot visit. Among the web-based projects in development with the support of Polish and foreign foundations is the Virtual Shtetl web project, which supports the work of a dispersed community of local keepers of Jewish heritage, many of them young Polish amateur researchers who document remaining Jewish material culture and memory in the most remote towns and villages. The Museum provides a platform where cutting-edge technology and professional services (i.e. translations) augment human passion, thereby enabling the virtual community to share work and discoveries within the country and all over the world.

Current Research, Educational and Public Outreach Programs

Memorabilia Collection Program

Objects of interest include: personal and family mementos, paintings, photographs, official documents, everyday articles, letters or memoirs, which tell the history of Polish Jews. The donated memorabilia are recorded and then returned to their owners.





Recording Polish Roots in Israel - an Oral History Project

This will provide many answers to the questions about how to create an engaging historical display. Fragments of personal accounts, pictures and audio records will be included into the galleries. Plans to extend the Polish roots program to the United States, Canada, Western Europe and Australia are under way.

Polish Righteous – Recalling Forgotten Memory

Exploring the life-stories of Poles who rescued Jews during the Holocaust, this project aims to create a comprehensive Internet data base related to the Polish Righteous among Nations. The multimedia resources on the web will be fully accessible for everyone interested in this subject - schools, universities, scholars, educational institutions and individuals.

The Poland-Israel Student Exchange

This program will provide Polish university students with the opportunity to study at Tel Aviv University and live with Israeli families. Israeli students then reciprocate by taking part in study tours, fostering cross-cultural dialogue and breaking down stereotypes.

One-Day Youth Encounters

Thousands of young Israelis will have the chance to travel to Poland on educational tours in order to meet and interact with their Polish peers for a day. Friendships will develop as they work on historical sites, explore common history and participate in fun activities.

The PIYE Blog Project

Utilizing the latest in internet technologies, this interactive and multimedia program brings together young Israelis and Poles in the exploration of common history and rewards the most creative blog authors with study tours in the partnering country.

The Muranów Outreach Project

This program, based in the former Jewish neighborhood of Muranów where the museum will stand partners with neighborhood schools in the pursuit of maintaining and sharing the unique history and lasting legacies of this part of Warsaw.



VIP Presentations about the Museum - These are offered to a variety of international and Jewish groups, individuals,

researchers, students and opinion leaders not only in the future premises but also in "the Ohel," the museum's temporary site.
(below: Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, V-President, Global Corporate Citizenship, The Boeing Company and Rudi Giuliani – former Mayor of NYC)



“The Ohel”

Since its inauguration on September 21, 2006 the Museum’s team has managed to establish “the Ohel” as an important spot in the cultural landscape of Warsaw through various public projects conveying knowledge about the history of Polish Jews, the richness of their culture and the Jewish contribution to the culture of Poland.



The Museum’s Musical Scene

On September 1st and 2nd, The Mizrach project brought avant-garde and jazz music to “the Ohel,” inaugurating the first of many musical programs the Museum hopes to host. There are plans to bring the Mizrach project back in 2008 not only to Warsaw but also other cities.



The Night of Museums

With a screenings of two pre-war films: ‘Cult of the body’ (silent film, 1927) and ‘Jidn mitn fidl’ (with a live musical score) the Museum took part in an annual Warsaw event The Night of the Museums.



Rethinking Commemorations

In a commemorative project named Urban Playground: Postcards from a Non-Existent City, young participants had an opportunity to rediscover places altered by history. This was done with the help of game sets, each containing a special map, on which today’s street plan overlaps the pre-war city plan of the pre-war Jewish quarter and in the Ghetto. The task was to find 12 locations of special historical significance. More than 400 Warsaw youth participated.



Storytelling and the Jewish Holidays

Workshops for neighborhood children include storytelling and a play based on the traditional themes of the Jewish Holidays, introducing a lost tradition and largely unknown history to the younger generations.

Leaders Who Support the Museum

Since 2002, the Museum has been developed first, with the support and then under the auspices of the Presidents of Poland. It also enjoys the influential support from abroad such as President of the State of Israel, Shimon Peres (photo below), from 2002 – present, Chairman of the International Honorary Committee.

A short list of today's honorary leaders includes: The President of the Republic of Poland, Prof. Lech Kaczyński, Former President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Mayor of Warsaw Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz and the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, Bogdan Zdrojewski (photos below)



Government Support from Germany and Other Countries of Europe

On November 12, 2007, German Ambassador to Poland, Mr. Michael H. Gerdts, and the Chairman of the Jewish Historical Institute Association, Mr. Marian Turski, signed the agreement regarding the German government's donation for the Museum. Five million Euros, from the financial resources of the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs will support the design and production of the Museum core exhibition and information technology (IT) infrastructure of the new building.

In the words of Ambassador, Michael H. Gerdts, Germany's donation will "support this one-of-a-kind design of the Museum. A museum which, with the use of high-end technology to introduce, particularly to young people, a thousand-year long history of Jewish contribution to the history and culture of Poland."

Five million Euros from the Germans was the first government grant received from abroad. Negotiations on the possibility of receiving support from other governments are in progress. Most recently, during the annual meeting of the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France (CRIF), Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France declared the support of France for the museum in the following words: "The Museum of the History of Polish Jews will be built opposite the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes. It will commemorate 1000 years of Jewish history and culture in Poland and will be a reminder of how quickly hatred can doom an entire community to extermination. France supports this project -- one that is very important for European memory -- and will help in its realization."

Committees of Support and the North American Council of the Museum

Committees of support now exist in Poland, The United States, Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, The Netherlands and Israel. These committees rally friends of the Museum within their respective communities. They also work to promote the Museum, organizing fundraising and awareness campaigns, and recruit new supporters.

The North American Council of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, a 501 3 (C) organization based in New York, is the most active of these organizations with a devoted board of American philanthropists, including Sigmund Rolat, Victor Markowicz and Tad Taube and a professional staff headed by Stephen Solender.

To date the North American Council has raised approximately 10 million dollars and mounted dozens of successful educational events. It is aided by a community of Polish-American and Jewish-American volunteers who have been active in promoting the Museum on both coasts.

The North American Council's fundraising goal for 2008-2010 is 34,8 million dollars. The funds will be earmarked for the creation of the galleries, supporting educational and public programs as well as current operations. Discussions about creating a 40 million dollar endowment is under way. An endowment of this sort would be another "first" in Poland's culture institutions. It would serve to introduce new ways of financial management in the field of preservation of cultural heritage in Eastern and Central Europe.

Individual, Corporate and Foundation Support

The Museum, with its boldness of vision, modernity and originality, as well as the fact that it seems to go against some of the deepest held stereotypes, and touches history in a very personal, dramatic way seems to appeal to true visionaries. The Museum even has the power to engage an entirely new group of philanthropists who understand the importance of its mission and share its vision.

The below list of names – individual, foundation and corporate - lead the list of the Museum benefactors. We are grateful to all who have lent and who continue to lend their support to the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

BENEFACTORS:

Monica and Victor Markowicz, Maurice Bidermann, Corinne Evens, Janette and Aleksander Goldberg, Koret Foundation, Ryszard Krauze Foundation and Prokom Investments S.A., Jeanette and Joseph Neubauer and The Neubauer Family Foundation, Carmit and Ygal Ozechov, Sigmund Rolat, Tad Taube and Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, Tomek Ulatowski. The Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation, The Przeworność Foundation on behalf of Prudential plc., The Rothschild Foundation Europe, Yaron Bruckner, The German Committee for the Support of the Museum, The British Committee for the Support of the Museum, TP Group Foundation, Polonia Aid Foundation Trust in the United Kingdom, PKN Orlen, Weil, Gotshal & Manges, Bank BPH, American International Group Inc., Boeing International, KPMG, Bank BISE, Eurozet, Deutsche Bank PBC S.A., AIG Polska, WestLB Bank Polska S.A., Ronson Development Group, Kraft Foods, Axel Springer Polska, Polish Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan, Robinski & Associates Sp. z o.o., The GESSEL law firm.

In 2006 an initiative was started to encourage the corporate world in Poland to aid in the creation of the Museum. A Corporate Committee was formed to lead and advise on a program of sponsorship and support for the Museum. The committee membership includes representatives from AIG Polska, Polish Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan, Eurozet, KPMG (Poland), McDermott Will & Emery LLP, and Weil, Gotshal & Manges (Poland), each of which has lent support to the Museum.

Former Polish foreign minister and a “Righteous Among the Nations” **Wladyslaw Bartoszewski** helped elucidate the role of Museum support at a meeting of Polish corporate leaders: “Your participation in the creation of this Museum speaks volumes about your openness and the respect you have for people of other countries, cultures, religions and races. This is the type of person, the type of attitude that Europe, America and the entire world need so much. Those who help build this Museum automatically gain the right to call on that fact and use it as a passport to the world.”

Why Should the American People Support the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, Poland?

80% of today's world Jewry traces its roots to Poland and to life that was destroyed during the Holocaust. The Museum will not only maintain and disseminate the innumerable accomplishments and vast history of the Polish Jews, but it will also work tirelessly to build bridges between individuals, communities, and cultures.

To rekindle the spirit of one thousand years of Polish Jewry, our Museum will be more than a repository for historical data. Rather, it will instill a considerable measure of pride in the Jewish story of Poland and Eastern Europe.

Nine separate and engaging galleries and on-going, dynamic programs showcasing how Jewish life coalesced with Polish life from the beginning of both civilizations to the present day will leave visitors better informed and changed in their perspectives.

The world today is much better prepared to understand the lessons of intolerance and bigotry. Poland of the 21st century, especially, is taking bold steps necessary to move ahead. Yet regardless of one's genetic makeup, a gift to create funding for the permanent exhibits for the Museum or to establish a \$40 million endowment housed in the United States makes a statement for peace and unity in a world that is still marred by war and ethnic and religious strife.

More than 400,000 visitors from around the world will participate each year in the Museum's numerous cultural and educational programs, will see firsthand the thought-provoking exhibits and learn from provocative presentations, and attend various educational and cultural programs.

Attachments

Attachment no. 1 - Milestones in the History of the Museum

1996 – The Museum project is initiated by a group of dedicated individuals from the Jewish Historical Institute Association in Warsaw, led by Jeshayahu Weinberg, the founding director of the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv and director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from 1988 to 1994.

1997 – The Warsaw City Council donates 145,000 square feet of land for the Museum in front of the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes, already the primary locus of Polish and international Jewish commemorations of the uprising and the Holocaust.

1998 – A Judaica database is initiated that will ultimately document more than 60,000 objects from more than a thousand repositories in Eastern Europe, Israel, and the United States. Excavations at the site of the Museum uncover documents and artifacts from the Warsaw Ghetto.

2000-03 – International support committees organized around the Museum's mission and goals are established in Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States

2001 - Event Communications, the London-based, award-winning designers of exhibitions at the Memorial Museum Passchendaele in Belgium and the Imperial War Museum in Manchester, starts work on the museum's content and interior design.

April 18 2002 - Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Shimon Peres (now the president of Israel) and many other leading members of the international community approve the concept of the Museum and the plans for the permanent exhibition at an international conference convened for this purpose by Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz

2003 - The Master Plan of the museum is completed. Each of the eight major sections in its core exhibition is devoted to a different time period in the history of Polish Jews. The storyline starts from the "First Encounters" and ends with a final section about contemporary "Revival of Jewish life in Poland"

January 2005 – The Polish government and the Municipality of Warsaw sign a binding agreement with the Jewish Historical Institute Association to contribute the first \$26 million towards the Museum's construction and to cover 97% of its subsequent operating costs.

2005 - The International Architectural Competition for the Museum building is held and the winners selected by the international jury. The design by Rainer Mahlamäki and Ilmari Lahdelma, architects from Finland is chosen as the future home of the Museum.

July 2005 – An initial group of seven private philanthropists commit \$7 million to the Museum.

2006 - The first meeting of the international core exhibition planning team. Based on the original terms of reference, the experts decide on the final shape of the exhibition. Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, a cultural anthropologist at New York University leads the team.

September 2006 – Michal Borowski, Warsaw’s Chief Architect, signs the agreement with Rainer Mahlamäki on the final building design. “The Ohel”, a temporary on-site artistic installation, is opened for Museum activities.

April 2007 – The Education Center of the Museum opens. A group of 10 high-school students from Poland, and 10 from Israel are the first participants in the PIYE high-school exchange program.

May 2007 - After four years of intense work, the core exhibition planning team and the Event Communications designers complete the Scheme Design, another important phase in the exhibition development.

June 2007 - the official groundbreaking ceremony in Warsaw with the presence of the President Lech Kaczyński, The Minister of Culture and National Heritage Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski, Warsaw Mayor Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, President of Germany 1984-1994, Richard von Weizsäcker; private donors and Museum’s friends represented by Victor Markowicz, Sigmund Rolat and Tad Taube.

November 2007 – The German Government signs an agreement to provide 5 million Euros for the construction of the Museum.

January 2008 - The technical documentation of the building is approved by the investors in opening the way for a public tender for construction of the Museum building.

Attachment no. 2 - The Museum Leadership Team

According to Polish law, the Museum is led by its Director and a team of deputies:

Jerzy Halbersztadt – Museum Director, historian, former director of the Museum of the History of the University of Warsaw, in the years 1992-2003 project director for Poland of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C.

Ewa Wierzyńska – Deputy Director and supervisor of the newly created Educational Center of the Museum.

Robert Supel – Deputy Director for Finance and Operations.

Agnieszka Rudzińska – Deputy Director in charge of communication, public programs and cooperation with the Museum partners in Europe.

Renata Piątkowska, PhD. – Coordinator of the Core Exhibition Planning Team.

The Museum Executive Team works in close collaboration with the Board of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute - the parent organization of the Museum.

The Association of the Jewish Historical Institute is a non-profit, public interest entity, responsible for the raising of funds, as well as overseeing the use of these funds for expenses not directly related to the construction of the building, such as the design and the production of the core exhibition, the educational and public programs.

The Board of the Association comprised of 10 members, is chaired by **Marian Turski** – Chairman of the Board, historian and co-editor of the weekly Polityka, Lodz Ghetto survivor, member of the International Auschwitz Council.

Attachment no. 3 - Selected articles in English language media

1. The Chicago Jewish News, February 2008
2. The New York Sun, June 2007
3. The New York Jewish Week, June 2007
4. The Jewish Exponent, March 2007
5. The New York Times, January 2003