



THE CAPITAL JEWISH MUSEUM ANNOUNCES THE SPECIAL EXHIBITION IF ITS JEWISH, WE HAVE IT: SELECTIONS FROM THE COLLECTIONS

Washington, D.C. (January 30, 2024) — The Lillian and Albert Small Capital Jewish Museum is pleased to announce the opening of a small, in-house exhibition *If It's Jewish, We Have It: Selections from the Collections*, on view now through Sunday, April 21, 2024. Inspired by a neon sign that introduces our core exhibition *Connect. Reflect. Act.* — the exhibition takes this motto to heart. Celebrating the wide diversity of the national capital region's Jewish community, the exhibition showcases never-before-displayed items from the Museum's collections. From a Victorian-era bimah chair to protest signs used at recent rallies, marches, and vigils, these items remind us that the Jewish community is not one thing—it is many.

In a selection of objects that relate to Yiddish language and culture, we include a Klezmer music record album from the 1970s and a typewriter used by two Jewish Washingtonians—one a leader in organizing Yiddish cultural events in DC and the other a professor of Yiddish at the University of Maryland. This section points to the continuity of Yiddish-speaking communities in the 20th century and suggests that visitors help the Museum build our collections to represent other cultural Jewish groups in the area.

Another section features recently acquired protest signs and materials used by a variety of Jewish individuals and organizations over the past few months in reaction to the conflict between Israel and Hamas. From a large-scale banner, shaped like a Torah scroll, that was used by Rabbis for a Ceasefire for a morning prayer service near the US Capitol to a "Bring Them Home" poster expressing grief at Hamas' violence and hostage-taking, these items illustrate the Jewish community's divergent views about the war and the commitment of the Museum to collect materials relevant to today's issues.

"Like many museums, we only get to show a fraction of our collection in the core exhibition at any given time. We were excited to pull some things from the vault to remind our audiences of the depth and breadth of our collections—including some very recent acquisitions — and of the Jewish communities whose stories we tell," noted **Ivy Barsky, Executive Director**. "We hope visitors to this installation might be inspired to consider what they have that might be appropriate donations to our collections and archives."

Additional highlights include a rusty wheelbarrow from the beloved hardware store Hechinger; a traffic cone used during COVID protocols at the Milton Gottesman Jewish Day School of the Nation's Capital; a selection of prints from graphic designer Avrum Ashery; and a Victorian-era bimah chair in need of conservation from Talmud Torah Congregation. Another section features corporate scrapbooks from Drug Fair and photographs and ephemera from Woodmont Country Club—representing one of the Museums' major new acquisitions. Items from individual Washingtonians include a double-sized Rolodex from the desk of former IRS Commissioner Sheldon Cohen. Phone numbers within include a direct line to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, journalist Carl Bernstein, President Bill Clinton, and journalist, writer, and filmmaker Nora Ephron.

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CapitalJewishMuseum.org

If It's Jewish, We Have It: Selections from the Collections is a great peek into the Museum's eclectic collections, expressing the Museum's mission to reflect the diversity of the Jewish worlds of the capital region.

If It's Jewish, We Have It: Selections from the Collections was curated by Sarah Leavitt, Curator, Jonathan Edelman, Collections Curator, and Lauren Hoffman, Curatorial Assistant.

Hours and Admission

Effective now through Sunday, April 21:
Tuesday—Sunday, 11am–6pm

Admission to *If It's Jewish, We Have It: Selections from the Collections* and the Museum's ongoing exhibitions is free.

To book a Group Tour, please see <https://CapitalJewishMuseum.org/visit> for details.

About the Capital Jewish Museum

The Lillian and Albert Small Capital Jewish Museum opened to the public in June 2023. The new Museum explores the Jewish experience in the national capital region and inspires visitors to connect, reflect, and act: connect personally and collectively, reflect on the relevance of the past to today, and act on behalf of their communities and values. With its experimental spirit, the Museum connects the past to the present through thought provoking exhibitions, dynamic programming, and creative public experiences.

For more information about the Capital Jewish Museum, please visit <https://CapitalJewishMuseum.org>.

For additional information, please contact:

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JANUARY 21—APRIL 21, 2024

PRESS IMAGES



Sheldon Cohen's Rolodex, ca. 1990s. Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Gift of Laura Cohen Apelbaum and Family.



Button, *Si Habla Yiddish*, ca. 1970. Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Gift of Randy Sager.



Avrum Ashery, *Justice Justice You Shall Pursue*, undated. Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Gift of Avrum Ashery.



Bimah Chair, Talmud Torah Congregation, 1890s. Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Gift of Ohev Sholom.



Torah Scroll Banner, *All Human Life is Sacred and Precious*, 2023. Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Gift of Rabbis for Ceasefire.



Poster, *From Generation to Generation (l'dor v'dor) Jewish Strength 4-ever more*, 2023. Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Gift of Debbie Snyder.