

The background of the entire page is a collage of Christmas lights and a stained glass window. The top half features a close-up of warm white lights with a scalloped glass cover, strung on a copper wire. To the left, a portion of a colorful stained glass window is visible, showing geometric patterns in blue, red, and yellow. The bottom half shows more of the same warm white lights, with a blue and yellow geometric ornament visible on the right side.

# **MUSEUM** **AT** **ELDRIDGE** **STREET** **2021**





Erin Flynn

**MESSAGE**



**FROM  
MICHAEL AND BONNIE**

As an institution that underwent a transformative restoration, the Museum at Eldridge Street is no stranger to rebirth. Little did we know then that we would celebrate another revival in 2021. On June 1, after being closed for over a year, we finally reopened our doors to the public. Rebirth is central to our history, and now it's become a part of our present.

Although 2021 is marked by positive change, it wasn't without its challenges. Our ability to work together as a team—and as a community—carried us through the constant uncertainty and unprecedented obstacles brought on by the pandemic. Throughout the first half of 2021, we continued to grow our virtual offerings—even hosting an online version of our annual *Egg Rolls, Egg Creams, and Empanadas Street Festival*, where we reached over 12,000 people worldwide.

Teamwork was integral to moving the Museum online in 2020, and it was essential to reopening our doors to the public this past summer as a fixture within our Lower East Side neighborhood. Once our doors reopened, it didn't take long before visitors from around the globe returned to the Museum. The excitement of being back in-person was palpable.

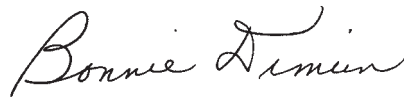
Our staff and docents took the challenges of reopening the Museum in stride. While we couldn't bring our docent tours back right away, our team found new ways to engage our audiences. We launched a self-guided digital tour in English, Chinese, and Spanish so visitors could easily access our tour content while maintaining social distance. Our visitorship steadily grew throughout the year as people became more comfortable returning to in-person activities. Incredibly, we welcomed 129 school groups from around the country and 1,393 international visitors.

One of the most exciting changes from 2021 was the reinstatement of docent-led tours. Little by little we were able to add more tours to the calendar. Visitors were delighted to learn about Eldridge Street's rich history from our passionate volunteers. One visitor wrote on Google that their docent-led tour was "outstanding." Another said of their experience: "Spectacular restoration and knowledgeable docents make this amazing sacred space nothing short of a masterpiece!"

Reopening the Museum was a team effort, and the support of our loyal community was paramount—we couldn't have done it without you. We thank our resilient staff and docents for gracefully adapting to these ever-changing times. Our Board of Directors, Advisory Council, and generous donors have also been invaluable. Last, but certainly not least, we offer our thanks to our dedicated visitors who inspired us to do everything in our power to reopen our doors and to keep them open. What a joy it has been to have you all back at the Museum!



Michael Weinstein, Chairman, Board of Directors



Bonnie Dimun, Executive Director





# PUBLIC



Photos: Scott Brevda

# PROGRAMS

While COVID-19 greatly impacted our public programs and events, our staff, students, and guests have adapted well to new kinds of virtual engagement. From artistic performances, to seminars and tours, the Museum is proud to have transitioned our tried and true formats to the virtual space with great success, allowing guests to join our programming from all over the world. We hosted forty-five programs and streamed into the homes of thousands of people: from Brazil, to New Zealand, to India. We were thrilled to collaborate both with community partners we have worked with before, and with new friends we hope to work with again. For our NEA Big Read 2021: Yu Hua's "To Live," we were lucky to partner with China Institute, Chatham Square Library branch of The New York Public Library, and Museum of the Moving Image to bring this four part lecture series to 2,000 guests on Zoom. In addition to our ongoing programming, such as our ever-popular *Cinema Chats* and *Lower East Side Walking Tours*, we managed to host our signature festival, *Egg Rolls, Egg Creams, and Empanadas*, for the first time ever over Zoom, engaging over 12,000 people worldwide. While the 2021 festival certainly looked very different, it enabled the Museum to think outside of the box and offer four stages of programming over the course of a few weeks, drawing out the festivities and enabling virtual engagement to thousands of participants. Our programming leading up to the festival week included a special seminar entitled *Mahjong: A Chinese Game and the Making of Modern American Culture*, where over 120 people logged on live and over 6,000 streamed over Youtube to learn about how the game informed Jewish and Chinese identities in the United States from Professor Annelise Heinz. The focus moved from celebrating the foods of the Lower East Side, to virtually enjoying the music, street games, and other artistic performances and folk traditions that display the richness of our neighborhood. Subsequent programming included a virtual seminar about the author of our beloved tale, *All-of-a-Kind-Family*, entitled *From Sarah to Sydney: The Story Behind Sydney Taylor's Biography*. This special opportunity to delve into the untold life story of Sydney Taylor and her dramatic influence on American children's literature attracted over 660 attendees, who were delighted by a surprise appearance from Sydney Taylor's daughter, Jo Taylor Marshall!

Cinema Chats

**Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story** January 18

**Love and Courtship Virtual Walking Tour** February 8

**Restoring Stories: Decorative Paint** February 11

Cinema Chats

**Under Known Jewish Heroes** February 17

**NEA Big Read 2021: Yu Hua's "To Live"** March 8

Bilingual Book Discussion March 10

China's Literary Giants: The Legacy of Yu Hua March 16

Bidding Farewell in Zhang Yimou's *To Live* March 18

**Passover Poetry Reading with Marge Piercy** March 23

Cinema Chats

**Barry Levinson's *Avalon*** March 24

Film Screening & Talk About  
the Iconic Soda Drink

**Egg Cream** April 8

**The Lost World of African-American Cantors 1915-1953** April 13

**Lower East Side Walking Tour** April 18

Cinema Chats

**Jewish Women on TV** April 28

Virtual Walking Tour

**Mamas with Chutzpah** May 5

**Mahjong: A Chinese Game  
and the Making of Modern  
American Culture** May 11

**Activism, Athletics & Advice:  
Immigrant Newspapers in NYC** May 20

**Lower East Side Walking Tour** May 23

Cinema Chats

**Colette** May 26

Egg Rolls, Egg Creams,  
and Empanadas Festival 2021

**Celebrating Food** June 6

**Music and Performance** June 13

**LES's Street Games** June 20

**Folk Arts** June 27



Cinema Chats

**Minari** June 15

**Lower East Side Walking Tour** June 18

**From Sarah to Sydney:**

**The Story Behind Sydney Taylor's  
Biography** July 8

**Lower East Side Walking Tour** July 11

**Lower East Side**

**Walking Tour** September 19

Film Screening & Discussion

**The Forward: From Immigrants  
to Americans** September 30

**Kol Isha: Pioneering Women Cantors  
1923–1972** October 5

Exhibition Preview

**Meet the Artist:**

**Debra Olin: Every Protection** October 14

Walking Tour

**Synagogues of the Lower East Side**

November 7

Cinema Chats: **Shtisel** November 17

**Lower East Side Walking Tour**

November 21, 28

**Restoring Stories:**

**Lights in the Sanctuary** December 9

Walking Tour

**Synagogues of the Lower East Side**

December 12, 19

Cinema Chats

**Ferenc Török's 1945** December 15

**Lower East Side**

**Walking Tour** December 26

# EXHIBITIONS



Debra Olin, *Eyelet With Apron*, 2009

Haunting and provocative questions such as, "Is it considered a charm for a pregnant woman to wear an apron?" are paired in Olin's large, mixed-media works with her own symbolic language, where a sonogram image becomes the modern equivalent of a traditional amulet, a token of protection and safety.

When the Museum reopened in June 2021, our exhibition *Pressed: Images from the Jewish Daily Forward*, was still hanging on our gallery walls. It had been slated to come down in April 2020, but remained on view until October 2022, much to the delight of our visitors. The show focused on vintage printing plates that were used to produce photographs and illustrations in the pre-digital newspaper during the first half of the 20th century.

**Debra Olin: Every Protection, Folk Culture and Motherhood in the Jewish Pale of Settlement** opened on October 24, 2021. While it was not possible to have a traditional opening with speeches and refreshments, we welcomed the artist and 75 visitors eager to see the exhibition. For the first time, we offered an audio guide, in which the artist discussed her inspiration, iconography, and process.

At the heart of Olin's *Every Protection* series is an exhaustive survey developed in 1912–14 by Russian ethnographer S. An-sky, who sought to document a traditional way of life he saw disappearing in Jewish Eastern Europe.



*From the Oral Torah*, made specifically for this exhibition, and was hung in the synagogue's Women's Balcony, the very place where generations of immigrant women had once come to pray. Like whispered chants or prayers, printed questions were draped over the shoulders of women evoked by the ethereal garments the artist created. Multiple feet emerging from their hems suggest a community and with it, a sense of universal belief. The installation spanned the divide between the everyday and sacred. For what could be at once so commonplace and so miraculous as giving birth?

The artist's work suggests her fascination with superstition, folk belief, and her connection to the women of a vanished place and time. The exhibition gave viewers a window into the minds and memories of the immigrant women who prayed at Eldridge Street in the years following its founding in 1887. Did they find that their traditional customs had meaning in a new, unknown world, or would these beliefs be replaced by new ones, as women continue to ask for protection at a time of great vulnerability and hope?

Also in 2021, just in time for Hanukkah, we offered a new digital guide for the ongoing show ***Lighting the World: Menorahs Around the Globe***. The show presents 89 Hanukkah lamps from the collection of Dr. Aharon Ben Zalman, and spans five continents and more than five centuries.



Photos: Scott Brevda





# EDUCATION AND FAMILY PROGRAMS





## ADULT EDUCATION



Our adult education courses were perhaps our best-suited programming when it comes to this transition to online engagement. While there were some challenges in adjusting to this new medium, Zoom also opened up participation to a much wider audience than we could have ever imagined pre-pandemic. We have students “Zooming” in from all over the state, the country, and the world! Our scholar-in-residence, Dr. Regina Stein’s knowledge and teaching style brings in folks from varying backgrounds, who all gather to learn weekly during our course blocks. Adult Education courses with Dr. Stein, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Reading*, *From the Zohar to Modern Hasidism I*, and *Deuteronomy: One God, One People, One Sanctuary, One Land I* served over 50 students in 2021. We are always expanding our course offerings; this year we added a biblical Hebrew language course, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Reading*, to our selections, and we have plans to add more!

**Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Reading** February 4, 11, 18

**From the Zohar to Modern Hasidism I** October 5–December 31

**Deuteronomy: One God, One People, One Sanctuary, One Land I** October 7–December 23

## FAMILY PROGRAMMING

Family-friendly walking tours are a great way to bring generations together outside in the neighborhood, and have been especially valuable during the pandemic as a way to engage in-person. In 2021, we offered a variety of options to families with children of all ages. Children have been learning from home for a while now, and being able to engage them out and about at Lower East Side sites was a success for all involved. While outdoor walking tours were successful, we offered both in-person and virtual options to accommodate all interested parties. Our most popular family tour, *All-of-a-Kind-Family*, reached over 100 guests, while our other family programs this year, *Time-Travel Storytime: Frances Perkins, Champion of Workers’ Rights*, and *Architecture Walking Tour for Families* (presented in partnership with Archtober) attracted almost fifty! Attendees learned how the legendary Frances Perkins, moved by the horrors of factory work in the early twentieth century, advocated for labor laws that would keep children in school and out of the factory, and how historic buildings on the Lower East Side can tell their own stories about the past if you only know how to read them!

**Time-Travel Storytime: Frances Perkins, Champion of Workers’ Rights** March 14

**Secrets of All-of-a-Kind Family (WT and Virtual)** May 23

**All-of-a-Kind Family Walking Tour** August 29

**Architecture Walking Tour for Families** October 24

**All-of-a-Kind Family Walking Tour** December 12



Photos: Scott Brevda





Photos: Scott Brevda



# EDUCATION

In 2021, the Museum's Education program proved resilient in the face of positivity rates and variants, serving students from our local community and countrywide. From January to May, our programs remained entirely virtual. This success was only possible due to the quick adaptation of our entire line of existing Education programs to a virtual format. The programs include: "Immigration," "Ways We Worship," "Architecture Building Tour," neighborhood walking tours, and our Hanukkah and Passover Holiday programs. We also introduced two new programs: "Shapes and Colors: Stained Glass" and a virtual Lower East Side walking tour, which was met with great enthusiasm by both our teachers and students.

While we are proud of these accomplishments, we gained the most satisfaction helping teachers educate, and students learn while still dealing with the lingering effects of the pandemic. Programs during this period were often complicated by technical and logistical challenges faced when trying to conduct a program over Zoom to a classroom full of students or to individual students attending from their homes. Even in some cases, a hybrid of the two. Despite all of this, our students were eager to dig into the content. In these trying times, it was particularly meaningful for us to help our teachers educate and bring our students—from wherever they were—into the past of New York, our historic synagogue, and the Jewish Community of the Lower East Side.

We introduced in-person education programs the same day we reopened to the public, June 1st, 2021. These programs were modified to be consistent with CDC recommendations and prioritized the health of our students. Our local schools within walking distance were our most frequent visitors during this period.

As to the success of the Education department, the facts speak for themselves. We welcomed 1,875 virtual and 858 in-person PreK-12 grade students over 131 programs in 2021. We additionally welcomed 21 in-person college students. These groups came from New York, New Jersey, Texas, California, Delaware, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland, Louisiana, and the District of Columbia. As has been the case in other departments, our virtual offerings allowed us to reach students who, because of distance, would not have been able to visit us in person.

Ultimately, our success lies in the fact that despite the vagaries of the pandemic throughout 2021, students and teachers alike chose the Museum at Eldridge Street as a place to learn and grow.

## K-12 SCHOOLS

B'nai Israel Religious School  
Bethlehem Central High School  
Brooklyn Latin School  
Capitol Hill Day School  
Charles E Smith Jewish Day School  
Columbia Grammar and Prep School  
Center for Jewish Learning at  
Community Synagogue of Rye  
Erie School  
Fig Tree  
Hebrew Academy of the Five Towns  
Jewish Community Project Downtown  
Jewish Community Youth Foundation  
Jewish Community of Amherst  
Kaplan Learning Center  
Manhattan Country School  
Mazel Day School  
Mt. Zion Temple  
New Orleans Jewish Community Day School  
New York City Museum School  
OurSpace Los Angeles  
P.S. 1 Mf  
P.S. 170 M  
P.S. 175Q  
P.S. 2 M  
P.S. 20 M  
P.S. 20 M (SUMMER RISING Program)  
P.S. 305 Academy of Arts and Letters  
P.S. 42 M  
Stuyvesant High School  
Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester  
The Peck Slip School  
The Pinewood School  
Westchester Reform Temple Jewish Learning Lab

## UNIVERSITY & COLLEGES

New York University  
Winterthur Program in American Material Culture  
Baylor University  
Tikvah Program at the Jewish Theological Seminary  
New York University Ruderman Program/  
Taub Center for Israel Studies  
Fordham University  
Molloy College



# VISITOR SERVICES

Since we reopened to the public, we have seen visitors from almost all 50 states and over 60 countries and territories, including:

Afghanistan	Ecuador	Kazakhstan	Spain
Argentina	Egypt	Kuwait	Sweden
Australia	El Salvador	Kyrgyzstan	Switzerland
Austria	Estonia	Lithuania	Taiwan
Azerbaijan	Finland	Luxembourg	Thailand
Belgium	France	Malta	The Netherlands
Brazil	Germany	Mexico	Turkey
Canada	Greece	New Zealand	Turks and Caicos
The Cayman Islands	Honduras	Pakistan	Ukraine
Chile	Hong Kong	Poland	United Arab Emirates
China	Hungary	Portugal	The United Kingdom
Colombia	Iceland	Romania	Uruguay
Croatia	India	Russia	Venezuela
Czech Republic	Ireland	Singapore	Yemen
Denmark	Isle of Man	Slovakia	
Dominican Republic	Israel	Saudi Arabia	
	Italy	South Africa	
	Japan	South Korea	

After the Museum doors shuttered for 15 months due to the pandemic, we finally reopened to the public for in-person visitation and tours in June 2021. By the end of December, we had welcomed almost 6,000 walk-in visitors from 46 different states and 42 different countries. Visitors had the option of enjoying our new digital self-guided tour, available in English, Chinese, and Spanish, or attending a guided tour led by one of our dedicated docents. Visitation grew stronger month by month as the world opened its doors to travel once more, and we were delighted to welcome all with open arms.

***“A true gem and well worth a visit... This is a monument to the spiritual and social life of a vibrant immigrant community. An amazing American story with connections to the past and the “old country.”***

***“Spectacular restoration and knowledgeable docents make this amazing sacred space nothing short of a masterpiece!”***

***“...It is seriously one of the most inspiring and beautiful spaces in the city with a story of hope and rebirth....”***

—Google Reviews



**IT TRULY TAKES A VILLAGE...** And the Museum at Eldridge Street’s village—our Board of Directors, individual, foundation, and government supporters—once again rose to the occasion to sustain and maintain the historic synagogue and to support the robust educational and cultural programming of the Museum.

Our donors, acknowledging the tremendous financial strain the Museum faced, stepped-up their support in an unprecedented time. 1,686 individuals either made their first gift, increased their previous year’s gift, or made multiple donations in 2021. Donations totalling \*\$1,314,140, represented 93% of the institution’s overall income. The remaining 7% came from earned income which includes building tours, educational and cultural program admissions revenue, gift shop sales, and investment income.

# SUPPORTERS



Scott Brevda

It is important to note that the Museum derives a substantial portion of its contributed income from our fall Gala.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we did not hold our annual event, but rather asked our donors to contribute directly to the Museum. We were delighted that our “non-Gala” Gala campaign raised \$362,318 in support of the Museum’s programs and operations. As COVID-19 restrictions ease, we look forward to gathering together in-person again, at the magnificent Bryant Park Grill in November 2022.

As stewards of this magnificent historic site, we are deeply grateful to those who remembered the Museum in their wills. Estate gifts are used to continue our restoration efforts and support the urgent needs of our building. In 2021, we

received bequests from the estate of long-time docent, John Heller and the estate of generous donors Miriam and Raymond Freedman. Their names have been added to our 1887 Society roster.

Heartfelt thanks to Mark Wenger and DUGGAL Visual Solutions for their donation of time and materials for our Tribute Wall, ensuring that all Tribute Wall donations directly support the Museum’s programs and general operations. We hope you will consider memorializing or celebrating loved ones, special family occasions, and other milestones by placing your dedication on the Museum’s Tribute Wall.



# ANNUAL FUND CONTRIBUTIONS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT



# ANNUAL FUND CONTRIBUTIONS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT

January 1 through December 31, 2021

On behalf of everyone at the Museum at Eldridge Street, we thank all of our donors for your generosity.

## LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

### GIFTS OF \$50,000 AND ABOVE

City of New York Dept of Cultural Affairs  
in Partnership with the City Council  
Paula and Jeffrey Gural  
The Marc Haas Foundation  
The Alice Lawrence Foundation Inc.  
Michael Weinstein/The Weinstein Foundation

## PLATINUM CIRCLE

### GIFTS OF \$25,000 AND ABOVE

Anonymous (2)  
New York State Council on the Arts with  
the support of the Office of the Governor  
and the New York State Legislature  
The Lucius N. Littauer Foundation, Inc.  
Leo Rosner Foundation  
Helene and Steven Walsey

## GOLD CIRCLE

### GIFTS OF \$10,000 AND ABOVE

Atran Foundation Inc.  
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### GIFTS OF \$5,000 AND ABOVE

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 Betsy Broder and David Wentworth  
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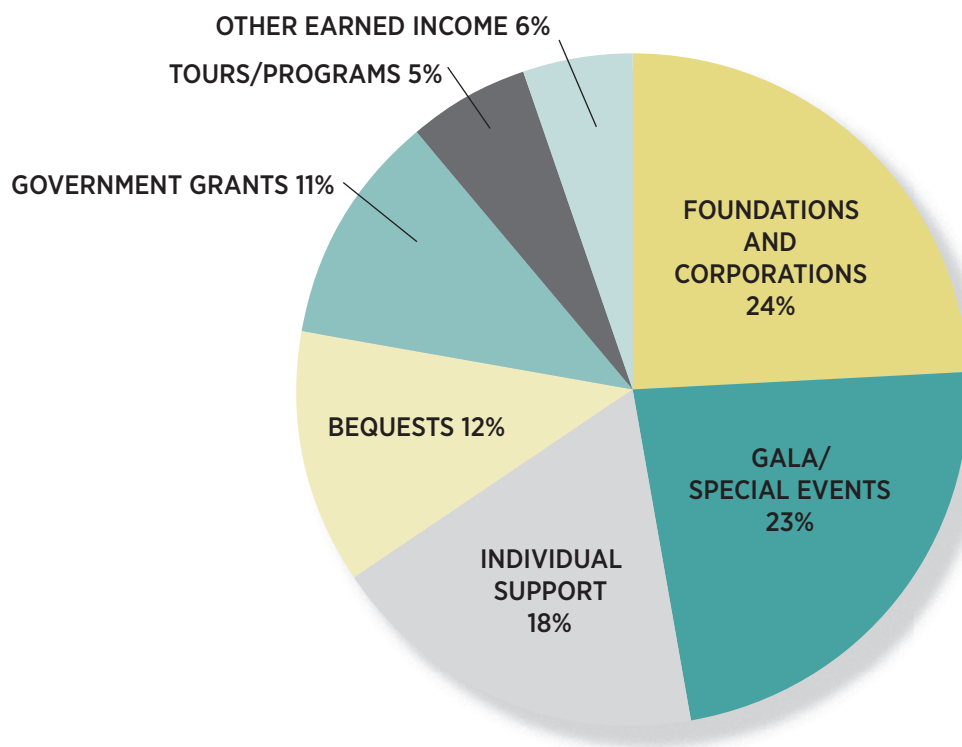
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# 2021 INCOME BY SOURCE

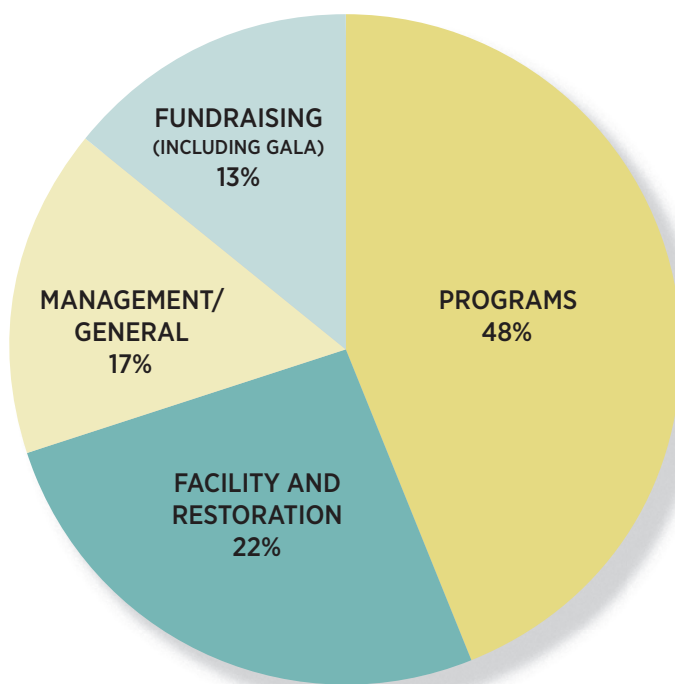
PERCENT OF TOTAL



Lisa and Tomas Friedlander  
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 Sarah A. Gelber  
 Rabbi David Gelfand  
 Zivia and Robert D. Gill  
 Arnold L. Glickman  
 Bernice Gola  
 Joyce Gold  
 Monica Gold  
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 Arlene Goldman  
 Rochelle Goldstein  
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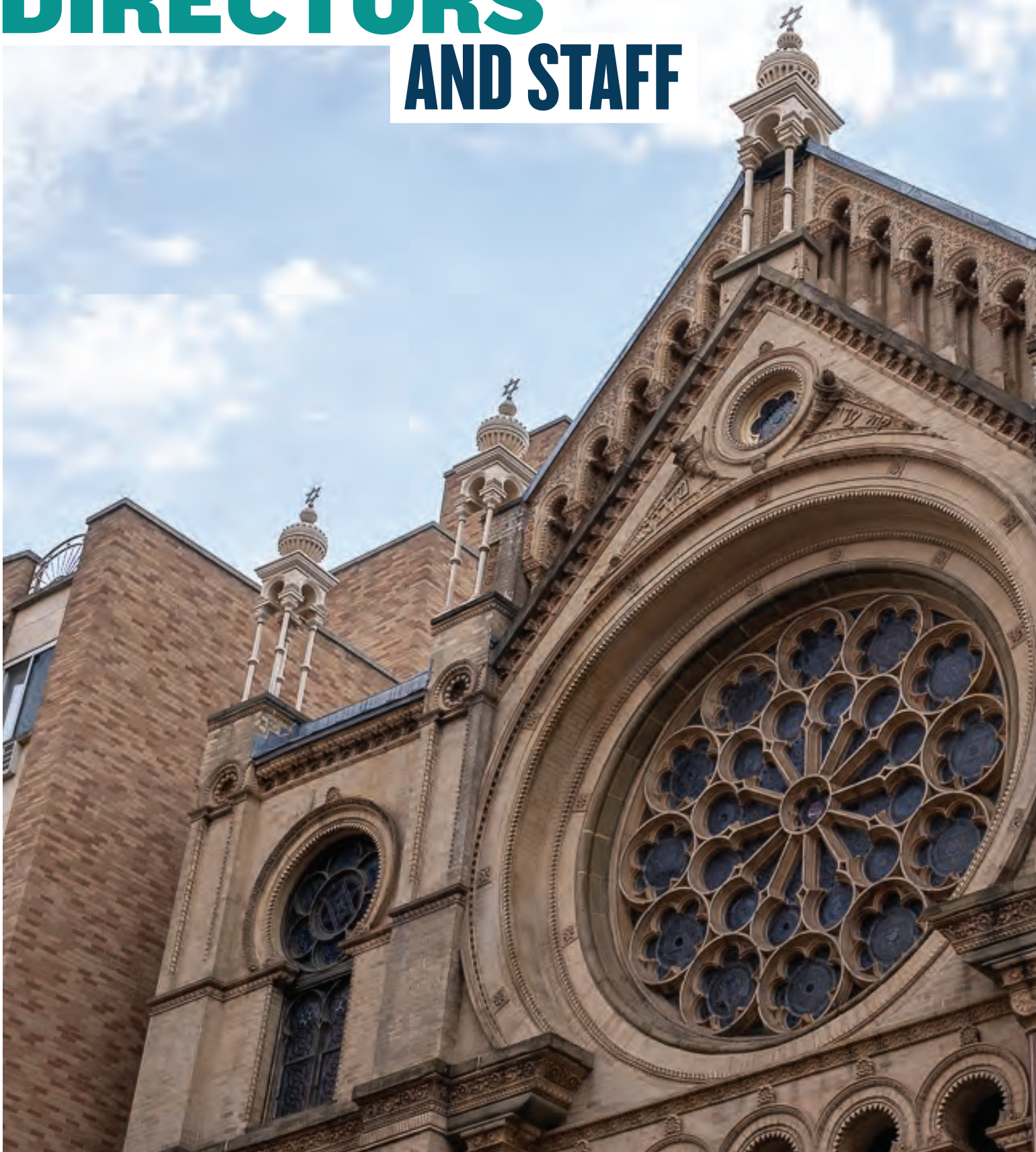


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 Estate of Adele Bernardi  
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 Estate of Leonora Edberg  
 Estate of Gladys P. Edelman  
 Estate of Sari H. Fishman  
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 Estate of Raymond and Miriam Freedman  
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 Estate of Inez Gellin  
 Estate of John Heller  
 Estate of Blanche K. Goldberg  
 Estate of Fanny Goldfarb  
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 Estate of George Hecht  
 Estate of John Heller  
 Estate of Miriam Jacobs  
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 Estate of Louis Katzowitz  
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 Estate of Gloria Loftus  
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Scott Brevda





Photos: Erin Flynn




The 20-year restoration of our landmark building was a team effort, uniting people with vision, people with drive, and artisans with the skills to make our dreams (and memories) come alive. Today, the continued success of the Museum is a team effort, too! The Museum truly would not function without our dedicated supporters. When you donate your time, your energy, or your hard-earned money, you keep the wheels turning at 12 Eldridge. Our valued supporters are involved in ways as diverse and exciting as the Lower East Side itself. But what they all have in common is their invaluable contribution to our Museum.

**DONATE** Your tax-deductible contribution to the Museum at Eldridge Street supports all the exciting things happening at our landmark cultural site. Special opportunities include a fund dedicated to architectural restoration, gifts to honor or memorialize loved ones, a tribute wall dedication, permanent naming opportunities, and the 1887 Society planned giving program. To learn more and to donate, please contact [vball@eldridgestreet.org](mailto:vball@eldridgestreet.org) or 212.219.0888 x202.

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The Museum at Eldridge Street, a non-sectarian cultural organization in Lower Manhattan, is preserving and interpreting the historic 1887 Eldridge Street Synagogue, a magnificent National Historic Landmark that re-opened in December 2007 after an extensive, \$20 million restoration. Since then, more than 450,000 people from around the world have participated in tours, cultural events, exhibits and educational programs that present the history and heritage of this historic house of worship and the Jewish immigrant community of the Lower East Side.

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