

Etr  g

Spring 5786



# In This Edition

## From Sukkat Shalom

A Word from the Chair

Wendy Crane

A Purim Photo Album

Seder shel Tu Bishevat

A Tu Bishevat Photo Album

A Burns Night Photo Album

A Double Baby Blessing

Introducing... Audrey Davis

## Jewish World

Essay:  
Dear Ellyn

Shoah:  
International Holocaust Remembrance Day

## Culture

Visual Art:  
Francisco de Zurbarán's *Jacob and His Twelve Sons*

Visual Art:  
Difference as Visibility

Books:  
Yehuda Fletcher's *Chutzpah* (2026)

Theatre:  
*A Grain of Sand*

Food:  
Tu BiShevat Haggis

Folk Stories:  
Joha the Sage

## A Word from the Revolving Chair



Helen Searle

Introduced by Sue Bard

Some members of Sukkat Shalom have expressed alarm, or at least asked questions, about our recent AGM from which we emerged without a chair. Our response has been to institute a temporary voluntary rotating chair system. Helen Searle, one of our new council members, bravely stepped forward not only to be our second person in the role (Han Smith having been the first) but also to write the “Word” for *Etrog*. So having earlier replaced the *Etrog* sofa

with a single static chair, we’re now trying out a revolving chair. It didn’t occur to me at the time that this would be anything other than a temporary measure. However, looking at this collective and participatory form of leadership coming into action, I see that it could present a more long-term opportunity for shared responsibility and mutual accountability for our precious and diverse community.

Sue Bard

I am writing this in March, only a few weeks into the latest human-made catastrophe to befall our world: the US and Israeli wars on Iran and Lebanon. Iran is a large country and the majority of people who are trying to escape US and Israeli bombing are, in official terms, “internally displaced” – moving from one part of the country to another. Iran also has a large population of refugees, who fled Afghanistan only to find themselves in the midst of another war. Before this war Lebanon hosted more refugees per capita than any other country in the world, victims of the civil war in Syria and the ethnic cleansing of Gaza. The *New York Times*, however, spoke bluntly about the true concern of Western governments with an article headed “As Iran War Drags On, Europe Wants to Avoid a New Migration Crisis.”

It was against this background that we held our Erev Shabbat service on the 13th of March as part of

HIAS+JCORE (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and Jewish Council for Racial Equality)’s eighth annual Refugee Shabbat, reading poetry by American and Palestinian authors and considering the often repeated mitzvah, “you shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” (Exodus 22.20). It is a lesson some still have to learn.

It has occurred to me more than once that the laurels we (all British people, not only British Jews) rest on are pretty threadbare. We remember the Jewish children saved by the *Kindertransport* – but forget that their parents (and disabled siblings) were left behind to be murdered by the Nazis. We look at the ICE concentration camps in the US, and pride ourselves that “that couldn’t happen here” when the party leading in opinion polls has explicitly promised to do the same thing. Indeed only eight days after our Refugee Shabbat, the far right demonstrated in Edinburgh, under the odd name “Unite the

Clans.” Happily, they were met with an antifascist counter-protest almost ten times their size.

By the time this is published Pesach will be over, and Shabbat by Shabbat we will be following the Israelites on their long trek out of oppression in Egypt and towards the Promised Land. The details of this – the haste they were in, able only to grab their unleavened dough (which we know today as *matzah*) before running to freedom; the danger, as Pharaoh, whose heart had been hardened against them, sent an army to kill them in the wilderness; the joy at their escape through the Sea of

Reeds turning to fear and anger at their lack of food and water – all sound strikingly familiar from refugee narratives over the centuries.

Of course the Israelites did not starve, due to the protection of God, who led them to fresh water and gave them manna from the sky. These days manna and miracles (and sometimes even clean water) are in short supply; this makes it even more imperative for us to act in God’s stead by welcoming the stranger – and by telling our modern-day Pharaohs that their hard-heartedness will be their own downfall.

# Obituary

## Wendy Crane (1946-2026)

Aaron Crane



I've been finding it hard to write this and to summarise my mother in a few words, especially in ways that don't misrepresent who she really was. Other people's recollections have included terms like "fiercely independent" and "forthright" and "savagely determined". I agree with all of those — I'd perhaps even go further! — but

everyone who's said anything like that has been clear that the full picture of my mother is more detailed.

Wendy was an only child, born and brought up in a village in West Yorkshire's Colne Valley — a place she disliked intensely. By her own description, her early life involved reading books in a number of proscribed

situations. She also said how disappointed she'd been to be sent to the new local comprehensive school, because the nearby grammar school in Huddersfield (for which she'd sat and passed the 11+) had a much better uniform.

Sadly, she didn't get on with her mother's family, with only very few exceptions; it was only in the last few years that she was able to tell me some of why that was. Furthermore, her father was apparently some sort of black sheep in his own family, so she didn't have a relationship with them. She certainly loved her parents, but they both died quite young — before I was born. As a small child, she had an operation on her eyes, and during recovery, she was left alone in a hospital bed, bandaged and unable to see, and without parental comfort. This traumatic experience informed her relationship with medicine and medical professionals for the rest of her life.

At 18, she went to the then-new University of York to read

English, expecting to be most interested in modernist literature, though she was surprised to discover a fondness for Anglo-Saxon poetry. It was at York that she met my father Norman while he was doing post-graduate teacher training; they married in 1967, shortly after she graduated. She subsequently became a Jew by choice, and my parents had a second wedding in 1974 after her conversion was finalised.

I learned of her conversion and second wedding only in my mid teens, when friends who'd known my parents at York mentioned it in passing to my sister. Abigail asked our parents about it, and I remember my mother saying that she was glad we knew — she'd always wanted to tell us “when the time was right”, and the time had never been right. Looking back, there were plenty of clues that I'd never followed up on, such as her being remarkably vague when we asked what synagogue she'd attended as a child!

Abigail died in January 1996, a few weeks before her 21st birthday, when I was 19. I found dealing with my grief overwhelmingly difficult; until twenty-odd years and several years of therapy later, even thinking about my sister reopened an unmanageable wound for me. My mother didn't take Abigail's death any better, unsurprisingly, though she was at least capable of talking about her. This terrible loss coloured our relationships with each other for many years.

My mother retired after Abigail's death — she'd been a secondary-school English teacher, with an excellent track record at getting her pupils through GCSEs with good grades, even though she hated teaching. Then in May 2008, my parents moved from the Manchester area up to Edinburgh (I'd moved up in January 2005), as my mum had never really liked Manchester either.

Edinburgh was a place I think she felt truly happy for

the first time in years. My parents joined Sukkat Shalom; they took an active role in the life of the community, and made many good friends. After this point, my mother reconnected with a variety of old friends dotted around England. This period also marked a change in my relationship with both my parents, and with my mother in particular. I'd come round for dinner every week or two, and we'd sit and talk, and drink gin and wine. I also joined them at some synagogue events, including several communal Seders. I moved to London in spring 2018, to be with my partner, and one obvious downside of that was that I was no longer seeing my parents anywhere near as often. The start of the Covid pandemic in 2020 only made that harder.

My mother's health deteriorated over the last few years (as has my father's), with joint pain in her knees being the most obvious issue. She fell and broke her arm in

November 2025, and about a month later, while in hospital, she was diagnosed with a brain tumour. The cancer progressed very rapidly. By the time I was able to visit a couple of days after the diagnosis, she was already finding it difficult to remember words; I'm sure that was particularly hard for someone of her intelligence and her easy skill with language. I visited her, still in hospital, in early February, and although she could no longer speak at all, she looked at me as I held her hand, and I was confident she recognised me and was happy to see me. She died three days later.

This piece is already much longer than I intended, and it barely scratches the surface of my memories of her. I could talk about her interest in art

(she attended art college in the early noughties, and we used to visit galleries together), or music (she was an accomplished pianist), or her excellent cooking skills (and only as I've become the main cook for my partner and stepchildren have I realised just how much quiet work goes into preparing tasty and nutritious meals week in, week out).

There's so much I could say about my mother, if I had space and time, but I will stop here, and merely hope that her memory is as much a blessing to those others whose lives she touched as it is to me.

*Wendy is survived by her husband Norman Crane and their son Aaron Crane.*

Wendy Crane appreciated the support and advice she received from Citizens Advice Edinburgh, especially from volunteer Dithe Fisher at the Dalmeny Street office, and recommended CAE as one of our Kol Nidre charities. Benjamin Napier of CAE writes below:

Citizens Advice Edinburgh wish to express our sincere gratitude for the donation received in memory of your dear friend and member Wendy Crane. We were sorry to hear of her passing, but so very grateful that she thought of our organisation as being worthy of your generous support. Every year, we provide advice and support to over 12,000 individuals, but demand for our services is much higher. This donation will go a long way to helping us to continue to develop our services, so that we can be available to everyone who needs us.

Benjamin Napier, Chief Executive

## Chag Sameach! A PurimPhoto Album

Our cheder and the wider community joined forces for our Purim celebrations, which included games, crafts, *hamantaschen* and a *mishlochey manot* raffle. And that was before we got down to the serious business of *megillah* reading and a brand new gender-switched *purimspiel*. Thank you to Helen Searle and Tamara Kandlik Eltanani for the latter!



# *Chag Sameach!*

## A Tu BiShvat Photo Album

We were happy once again to host our annual interfaith Tu B'Shevat seder, attended by more than 60 people to share a sumptuous communal feast. While we celebrated the new year of trees with its agrarian and Kabbalistic roots, it was impossible not to deplore and to mourn the tragedy and devastation that has befallen Gaza and the Occupied West Bank where the annual olive harvest, traditionally a time of joy, has become a time of violence, fear, destruction and dispossession.



*Sláinte Mhath!*  
A Burns Night Photo Album



## *Mazel Tov!* A Double Baby Blessing



**I**t was a great pleasure for our whole community to celebrate this double baby naming service conducted by Rabbi Mark, for Sophia, named Chana Binah bat Asher v'Rivkah and Fergus, named Yitzhak ben David v'Zoe. Fergus, Sophia and big sister Amelia all enjoyed the occasion too. *Mazel tov* to parents Andrew and Rebecca, and David and Zoe; to grandparents Nick and Kate Silk, Tina and Nick Lewis, and Dave Marshall and great grandmother Margaret Silk.

# Introducing Audrey Davis

Shlomo ben Avraham



Originally from the USA and now working for Edinburgh's museums, we welcome Audrey to our community.

## *Your role at the museum sounds interesting...*

I am a Learning Communicator at the National Museum of Scotland, which means I develop and deliver our public programmes – these can

include, but are not limited to, schools workshops, tours, family activities, and special events. Most of my work at the moment is focused on schools programming, which covers a wide range of topics and can be either in-person or virtual. My favourite part of the museum to teach is the Kingdom of the Scots gallery, which contains objects related to King James VI and I, the Wars of Independence, and Mary,

Queen of Scots. I also give tours at the National Museums Collection Centre and help look after our handling collection, which are museum objects that we've set aside for educational purposes.

***What first brought you to Scotland?***

I moved to Scotland after my partner, Zack, accepted a place as a history PhD student at the University of Edinburgh. Prior to that, we were both Masters students at the University of York, where we studied Renaissance and Early Modern History. I also worked at the National Railway Museum while living in York. But I was definitely ready for a change, and I had heard that Edinburgh was like York but bigger!

***What was your childhood like from a Jewish perspective?***

I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, although my dad is originally from New York and my mom is from Colombia. My parents were founding members of our local

synagogue, Adat Shalom. Although I initially resented having to attend Hebrew school there twice a week (especially on Sundays, as I've never been a morning person), I really enjoyed my bat mitzvah studies and stayed on as a tutor at the school throughout my high school years. The bat mitzvah process also made a big impression on my dad, who was not born Jewish but decided to convert shortly after. I also joined B'nai B'rith Youth Organization at around this time, and helped organise Jewish youth events across Pittsburgh. As a teenager, a lot of my closest friends and fondest memories came from my BBYO experience.

***What first attracted you to Sukkat Shalom as a community?***

When I first moved to the UK for my studies, I was a bit intimidated by how much smaller the Jewish community seemed to be, especially in the north of England and Scotland. For a while, I didn't really try to learn what might be available. However, after I got

engaged, it felt very important for me to expose my non-Jewish partner to the traditions that will certainly be a big part of our life together. I really enjoyed my first Sukkat Shalom service and liked that the community seemed welcoming and full of people of different backgrounds.

***You seem to be adapting well to being in a smaller community compared to Pittsburgh and NYC. How does it feel different?***

If there's one thing that has actually been quite nice about the transition, it's that I've had the chance to chat about Judaism with non-Jews a lot more than I ever did at home. Big holidays like Hanukkah, which are ubiquitous in the US, are less known here but always pique people's interest. I've gotten a lot of good questions, and although I'm no expert, I've definitely found myself using some of my old Hebrew school knowledge!

***What are you into outside of work and Jewish life?***

Outside of work, I love to sing and I also play the guitar. We have a record player at home, and I really enjoy going to record shops to collect vinyl. Some of our favourites to play at home are The Smiths, The Strokes and Lana del Rey. I'm a big Formula 1 fan and I'm looking forward to the new season starting this week!

***Are you looking forward to any particular Jewish festivals or events in Scotland?***

I haven't been to a proper Passover seder in a while! Such a joyful time of year. I always used to sing the Four Questions for my family when I was a kid!

***Which kid did you tend to be in the Four Questions?***

I always considered myself to be the wise child. Not sure how right I was about that!

*Picture:  
Audrey at Linlithgow Palace.*

# Dear Ellyn

## Intergenerational Resonance as a Jewish Exploration of Time

Han Smith



Intergenerational trauma is a concept which seems to saturate pop culture: from the 2025 award-winning Netflix series *Long Story Short* to the surreal, captivating 2022 film *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. As a psychotherapist, I see the impact of the term firsthand as I explore with clients

the legacy their parents', grandparents' and more distant ancestors' stories have on them. In my own life, I often conceptualise the past as forever-in-dialogue with the present. The lives of my ancestors seem to mingle with my own to create something not-quite-mine but also not-

just-theirs. This reverberation between past and present has always felt inextricably Jewish to me – the ways in which our culture, religion and stories transcend generations.

My own connection to Judaism has perpetually been fuelled by my curiosity around the past. I am a patrilineal Jew with two parents not particularly interested in Judaism; yet, my father's mother, Ellyn, who died before I was born, was deeply proud of her Jewish identity. Ellyn was born in New York City in December of 1942 and spent her childhood enmeshed with Jewish life in the city. As a young girl, at eleven years old, Ellyn was diagnosed with type I diabetes and her life changed tremendously. Later, in her early twenties, Ellyn married my grandfather and became a mother. Eventually, the family moved to southern New Jersey and lost a large Jewish community. It was during these years, as Ellyn was growing more ill, that my grandmother became deeply involved with a

local synagogue and her connection to Judaism strengthened. Ellyn died several years before I was born, and I never had the opportunity to meet her. Yet, as I grew up and learned more about Ellyn and our family, I became more interested in living a Jewish life myself. As a young adult, when I moved to Scotland and pursued my Doctorate in Psychotherapy and Counselling at the University of Edinburgh, I knew I wanted to explore the draw I felt towards Ellyn and, more broadly, the past. However, I was also aware that the concept 'intergenerational trauma' didn't seem to fully encompass the experience. My connection to Ellyn did not feel solely, or even mostly, tied to trauma.

Thus, for my doctoral thesis, I enquired into experiences that disrupt the pre-existing concept of intergenerational trauma. I coined the term *intergenerational resonance* which simply refers to the connection between the past and the present. I compared the sensation to sympathetic

resonance, or the musical phenomenon wherein a vibrating string on a stringed instrument which sounds at a certain frequency can make a different string, with the same natural frequency, vibrate. In other words, the two strings do not touch, yet one impacts the other simply because of its shared properties. This description felt eerily similar to the way in which I experience intergenerational resonance with my grandmother. Ellyn died in the year 1992, and I was born in the year 1996 – our metaphoric strings never existed in the same timeline. Nonetheless, the echoes from her life seemingly reach forward and reverberate with my own, co-creating a new symphony.

One of the strands of Ellyn's life which seemingly reverberates most strongly with my own is what drew us both to Jewish community. When Ellyn moved with her family to southern New Jersey, she experienced for the first time not being surrounded by many

other Jewish people. Nearly two million Jews lived in New York City around the middle of the century. Whereas, at the same time in my family's new home in Camden County, New Jersey, less than 8,000 Jews resided. My father tells me that before the move, Ellyn was not particularly invested in Jewish life; the family celebrated certain holidays and spent time with Jewish friends and family. However, when faced with isolation from Jewish community as a result of the move, Ellyn began to take interest in connecting with Judaism in a new way. She registered the family to join Temple Beth Sholom and, when they could not afford the fee, applied and was hired as an administrative assistant at the synagogue. From publishing the weekly newsletter to orchestrating the synagogue's move to a brand-new building, Ellyn became an invaluable piece of the community.

Similarly, when my partner, Jen, and I moved from the United States to Edinburgh, we

suddenly felt the absence of a larger Jewish community. We decided together to reach out to Sukkat Shalom and join ELJC's community. While at the time I did not know that isolation was what inspired Ellyn to join a local synagogue, decades later and thousands of miles away, I responded to a similar experience in a similar way. It's in moments like these when I experience intergenerational resonance, moments when I feel that Ellyn's life reaches forward and guides my own. This research has led me to believe more firmly that the past and present are in ongoing dialogue with one another, dismantling and reshaping each other. As we celebrate another Pesach, I am reminded that this way of engaging with time is inextricably Jewish. At seder we are asked to think about the

stories of our ancestors and conceptualise how these experiences relate to our own and others' experiences in the present. The youngest generation is encouraged to ask the older ones about our traditions and, together, create new ones. On special occasions, like Passover, we take extra care to tune into the reverberations from the past and allow them to guide us.

I end my dissertation with the old Ashkenazi saying, 'the sea has no shore, the Torah has no end.' In doing so, I acknowledge that there is no point from which we begin or from where we end. Instead, intergenerational resonance allows us to think of the everlasting conversation between that which has passed and that which will come.

# Shoah

## International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2026

Gillian Raab

Photo: Christine Schmidt

This year's event to remember the victims of the Shoah was held in the elegant surroundings of the New Town Church (formerly St. Andrews and St. George's) on George Street. The Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Edinburgh, Christiane Hullmann, introduced this year's theme: **Bridging Generations**. She discussed the ways that such bridges could be built: by keeping alive the memories of what had happened to older generations, through events like this one and, in particular, providing education for the youngest generation. She highlighted the work of the Holocaust

Memorial Day Trust ambassadors: school children who learn about the Shoah, including a visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau, and pass on their knowledge and experience to their schoolmates.

Introduced by Sukkat Shalom member Prof. Hannah Holtschneider, the main part of the evening was a panel of representatives from organisations based in Scotland and London with missions to preserve the memory of the Holocaust and pass it on to future generations.

Dr Christine Schmidt, acting Co-Director of the Wiener Holocaust Library in London and her colleague Elise



*Left to Right:* Christiane Hullmann, Elise Bath, Christine Schmidt, Dan Stone, Hannah Holtschneider, Deborah Haase, Harvey Goldstein

Bath talked about the work of the library. Since 1933, when Dr. Alfred Wiener began to collect material about Nazi activities to aid efforts to resist them, the Wiener Library has maintained an extensive archive of material related to the Holocaust and it continues to add new material up to the present. Only 5 million of the 6 million who died can be documented and the library runs a tracing service for relatives of survivors. They continue to add to their

archives and share information with Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. The archive's premises in Russell Square can be visited on any weekday; they host exhibitions and tours of their material. Professor Dan Stone from Royal Holloway talked about the work of the Holocaust Research Institute. As one of the leading centres for research, teaching and public engagement about the Shoah, the institute provides a wide range of resources and activities for

scholars and for the general public.

The two Scottish organisations represented on the panel were the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre and the Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre, which are both housed within the building of Garnethill Synagogue in Glasgow. Harvey Kaplan of the Archives talked about the material that they hold about Jews who moved from Nazi Germany to Scotland in the 1930s and 40s. Deborah Haase, the Director of the Heritage Centre, described the establishment of their

Holocaust-Era Study Centre and, in particular, their work hosting school classes on visits to the centre that passes this knowledge on to future generations. Both organisations host events and exhibitions and can arrange group visits that you can learn about on their websites.

The event was well attended by people from Jewish organisations and by many representing other faiths – an opportunity, 80 years after the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, to continue to remember and to pass on the stories.

## Art

# Francisco de Zurbarán's *Jacob and His Twelve Sons* in Bishop Auckland

Charles Raab



About thirty years ago, along with academic conference colleagues, I enjoyed the privilege of dining at Auckland Castle, the Bishop's Palace in Bishop Auckland, not far from Durham in the north-east of England. The walls of that vast, elegant room were filled with twelve very large, vertical paintings by Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664), one

of the great masters of Spanish painting. The subject of the paintings were *Jacob and His Twelve Sons*. The paintings were acquired at auction in 1756 by Richard Trevor, the prince-bishop of Durham, to adorn the Palace's Long Dining Room, and they have been there since then. My dinner wasn't memorable, and in fact went cold as I spent the time

admiring Zurbarán's extraordinary and beautiful portrayal of Jacob and our foundational patriarchs (see Genesis 49:1-28): Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun and Joseph, each with a different Biblical pictorial story to tell, with different costumes, artefacts, motifs, animals and landscapes. Bishop Trevor had championed the passage of the controversial Jewish Naturalisation Act of 1753, which allowed Jews in Britain to become citizens by application to Parliament. The Act, however, was repealed a year later following antisemitic protests by some parliamentarians and the public, but the bishop nevertheless held his ground, acquiring the Zurbaráns depicting Jacob and the sons born to Leah, Rachel and two servants.

Where's Benjamin? He's there too, but it's a copy painted to order by Arthur Pond (1701-1758), because Trevor was outbid by another buyer for Zurbarán's original.

That original is now in the Spanish Gallery, a stone's throw away in Bishop Auckland, and part of the Auckland Project. [The project](#) is a charity, founded by the philanthropist Jonathan Ruffer and his wife, Jane – who bought the Zurbaráns and the Palace in 2012 – and which also receives other financial and community support. The project is devoted to the regeneration of the town by attracting visitors to the palace, the extensive Spanish Gallery (think El Greco, Velázquez, Murillo – and Zurbarán), the Faith Museum (6,000 years of belief and practice in Britain), the Mining Art Gallery (art by miners from the north-east of England), an 18th-century terraced walled garden growing a variety of vegetables and flora, an excellent tapas Restaurant, and much more. Bishop Auckland is about 2 hours 40 minutes from Edinburgh by rail, with one change. It's well worth a day trip or an overnight stay.

## Art

# Difference as Visibility

Sue Bard

“It’s like someone’s just thrown a bomb into the Turner prize. A good bomb,” said Charlotte Hollinshead of ActionSpace when Nnena Kula was nominated for the 2026 Turner prize – the first time ever for a learning-disabled person. Kula went on to win the award and her stunning work is on exhibition now in *We Contain Multitudes* at Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA).

The question of art created outside the mainstream – whether or how it should be supported, what it should be called, who it applies to, whether it’s a valid concept – has been a matter of debate for a century. The term “outsider art” was coined by British art historian Roger Cardinal in the title of his 1972 book. The European (as opposed to the North American) origin of the genre is attributed to the

German psychiatrist Hans Prinzhorn who amassed work produced by patients in German psychiatric hospitals, and in 1922 published *The Artistry of the Mentally Ill*. Prinzhorn’s book ignited French artist Jean Dubuffet’s interest in such artwork, which Dubuffet termed *art brut* (*brut* meaning raw or uncooked). It was Dubuffet’s work that had informed Roger Cardinal, who, in 1979, co-curated an influential exhibition at London’s Hayward Gallery based on Dubuffet’s work and titled *Outsiders: An Art Without Precedent*.

In 1996, Richard Klein, a young man with a degree in fine art brought his passion for Jean Dubuffet’s expressionist painting and his interest in *art brut* to Garvald Edinburgh, a community of workshops for people with learning disabilities. Employed initially



**Above:** 'Jaycee' by Annie Gutteridge

as an assistant to the workshop leaders, Richard says: “outsider art was not a prevailing concept here at the time but I came in and looked around and saw artists everywhere and I managed to establish a corner where I could paint with people.” Two years later Richard organised Garvald Edinburgh’s first exhibition in The Bongo Club, showing the work of five Garvald artists at “The GV5” exhibition. “No-one told me I couldn’t do it so I just cracked on. I wanted to get it out there in the mainstream

setting, to push the contemporary edge of what we were doing versus being woolly and folksy. Craft can be cutting edge too.”

A string of exhibitions followed in venues all over Edinburgh drawing on the work of many of the Garvald workshops including pottery, glass, woodwork, weaving and puppetry. “Nowhere else was doing it - the range of workshops wasn’t available elsewhere. It couldn’t have happened anywhere else. It’s a process of working with people

and recognising the unique and authentic marks people make that make people stop and say WOW.”

In 2007 Richard took up the new post of Exhibitions Manager and a new workshop, the Art Studio, was established. That was the year that my daughter Annie Gutteridge, who’s a member of Sukkat Shalom, became a member of Garvald Edinburgh, working in a range of workshops and acquiring companionship, skills and discipline in all of them. For more than a decade she has spent one day a week in the Art Studio, co-led by two artists, Morvern Macrae and Sharon Quigley. Annie is one of a community of twenty Garvald artists who create and exhibit locally, nationally and internationally, producing a body of individually distinctive work.

Several artists living with (different) disabilities, have contributed to *We Contain Multitudes* at DCA. *We Contain Multitudes* is also the name of the three -year collaborative project that includes DCA and aims to bring about systemic

change in visual arts in Scotland so that disabled artists have visibility and access to opportunities. This exhibition includes a thought-provoking film of the contributing artists talking about their work.

Turner Prize winner Nnena Kula works with ActionSpace, a London-based organisation that supports the development of learning-disabled artists in ways similar to Garvald’s Art Studio. Kula makes her large-scale, dramatic and exuberant cocoon sculptures from ordinary and found materials such as textiles, thread, paper, adhesive, and videotape that she binds, wraps and knots around frameworks of timber and plastic tubing. The pieces in this exhibition, a number of which hang from the ceiling, are colourful and dynamic, reflecting the changing light as the breeze moves them. Kula now exhibits widely. It was an installation of her sculptures at Manifesta 15, a European art biennial held in Barcelona in 2024, that brought her to the attention of the Turner committee.

Andrew Gannon’s work



**Above Left:** Sculpture by Nnena Kula. **Above Right:** Nnena Kula, Drawing 73 Acrylic pen and pencil on paper.

includes performance, painting and sculpture. He uses his body as a stencil to make paintings and creates life-sized screen prints by projecting himself onto the screen. He assembles sculptures with casts of his limb difference made by wrapping his left arm in plaster bandages – a process akin to making a cast for a prosthetic limb, like the one he has worn for most of his life. Gannon describes how he gradually began to draw on his own disability in his work, defying the realisation that “the world would rather disability remained invisible.”

Daisy Lafarge is primarily a

writer and poet. She studied at Edinburgh College of Art and suffers from Ehlers Danlos Syndrome. During periods of acute chronic pain and fatigue, she isn’t able to write, but has painted within the limits she can manage: on the floor with light brushes and paint. Lafarge explains how painting gave her a way of extracting pleasure from pain. A series of such paintings is exhibited here along with a pamphlet of new poems *The Romance of the Sick Rose*. In both, Lafarge embraces and eroticises her pain, inspired by William Blake’s poem *The Sick Rose* and finds “a different



**Above Left:** Andrew Gannon, *Reclining Semi-Nude* screenprint on paper. **Above Right:** Daisy Lafarge. *The Invisible Worm*, watercolour and kinesiology tape on layout paper.

vocabulary for pain,” than its measurement on a scale of one to ten.

In 2022 curator and researcher Lisa Slominski published her encyclopaedic *A New History of Self-Taught Artists* (“self-taught” being another general label describing artists working outside the mainstream, used especially in the United States). In her introduction, Slominski says “my approach is a multi-faceted presentation of each artist that is practice-led and steps away from previous

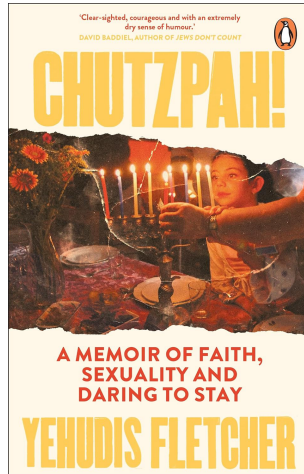
biographies guilty of the ‘fetishising’ of difference. This approach does not focus on ‘difference as separation’ but on ‘difference as visibility.’ Asserting the difference need not assign an individual as other” ‘separate from’ or ‘outside of.’” An apt description of *We Contain Multitudes*.

*We Contain Multitudes* is on at the DCA, Dundee until Sunday 26 April. The galleries are open Tuesday to Sunday, 11-6pm.

## Books

# Yehuda Fletcher's *Chutzpah* (2026)

Jen Andreacchi



There is something very distinctive about Yehudis Fletcher's memoir, *Chutzpah*, and it's not simply that it tells a story of lesbian Jewish self-discovery, nor that it deals with growing up in a high control Charedi environment. There have been some interesting, high-profile memoirs in recent times exploring both of these subjects (think *Unorthodox* by Deborah Feldman or *Kissing Girls on Shabbat* by Dr. Sara

Glass). What makes this memoir so unique is in its subtitle—that she dared to stay. If there's one apt word to describe Yehudis, it would be daring. She faces undue hardship at times in her life, this is apparent, but at every turn, she makes bold, authentic choices for her, and there is so much to admire about how she has approached the cards life has dealt her.

Yehudis Fletcher was born

in the UK and spent most of her childhood in the Charedi circles of Glasgow and Manchester. She moved with her family to Israel for her teenage years, before returning to the UK in adulthood. She describes the experiences of her youth as archetypical of ultra-orthodox families. There were many expectations placed on her as a young girl in this environment, and she writes poignantly about how she struggled to fulfill these obligations and how her family often viewed her as the defiant or difficult child. This led to her parents seeking various ‘solutions’ to correct her errant behaviours, such as sending her to live in another rabbi’s home or to a stricter religious school for girls.

In her life, Yehudis has become a fierce advocate for addressing the occurrence of childhood sexual abuse in Charedi communities, representing the voices of survivors and bringing the issue to light, an issue which is so often shrouded in shame and

silence. Yehudis experienced this abuse at the hands of Rabbi Todros Grynhaus in Manchester at the age of 15, and much of the memoir details how this trauma impacted her and her pursuit of justice, bravely sharing her testimony and ensuring that this rabbi would never be able to repeat his crimes. She expertly explores the tension wherein Charedi Jews who report crimes to secular authorities could be shunned due to the closed nature of the community, the overall sense that Jewish issues should not leave the community and risk bringing about antisemitic backlash. This is one of the main reasons why Yehudis has fought for the stories of survivors to be brought out of the darkness, encouraging other young people not to live with these painful secrets, as she herself knows all too well the pressure to remain silent. But the silence means that the community can never learn how to better protect young people, how to combat issues of

misogyny and violence, and how to improve and become safer.

The latter half of the book focuses on Yehudis's adult relationships – her two arranged heterosexual marriages, her experiences of motherhood and divorce, and finally, engaging with other queer people online and beginning to live openly and proudly as a lesbian, all while never sacrificing her love of Judaism and her own community. Though there are dark moments in her story, this is not a memoir focused solely on trauma. This book is an examination of Charedi Jewish culture and community from someone who clearly loves her people and believes that growth and change are always possible, even where some would give up and walk away. Personally, I was moved by Yehudis's assertion that queer people belong everywhere. That

we can dare to carve out the space that is ours, that we do not necessarily need to leave our communities of origin behind and pursue our lives only in designated safe spaces.

I so admire her courage to exist as a proud lesbian Jew in an Orthodox community. Yehudis writes with unabashed clarity – she is candid, dryly funny and emphatic, willing to explore all of the complex nuances her story raises without capitulation. Her story is ultimately a celebration of hard-won freedom, unapologetic lesbian Jewish identity, and a call to embrace all aspects of who we are. She lets us know that we may discover that there can be harmony between even the parts of us that seem insurmountably at odds. .

*Chutzpah* is published by Doubleday.

Theatre  
*A Grain of Sand*  
Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh

Sue Bard



This remarkable one-hour solo show was performed by Palestinian-Irish actor Sarah Agha (also the play's co-deviser) playing an 11-year-old Gazan girl, Renad.

Renad, in her dungarees, stands alone on a red chair planted on a patch of sand in a razed landscape. Her home has been bombed and she is

searching for her family – her mother, father, brother, sister and grandmother – for her friends, and for the life she used to live.

Renad has dreams. Inspired by her grandmother's tales, she wants to be a storyteller, and in her search she weaves narratives that combine past and present everyday life with

fantasy and folktales, populated by a cast of distinctive characters. She conjures up a world that is by turn terrifying and reassuring, tragic and funny, ugly and beautiful, despairing but not without hope.

The vividness of this world is a product of Sarah Agha's powerful presence of the set. The physical environment is created by sand, the sound of the sea and of Israeli fighter jets screaming overhead. The changing projections on the backdrop include swooping fighter jets, tents, washing lines, Gazan embroidery patterns, a graceful mosque, and Renad herself: upright, arms outstretched, her magnified shadow resembling the anqaa, an ancient bird of Palestinian folklore that symbolises resilience and rebirth.

The realisation of *A Grain of Sand* has deep collective and ethical roots. It has been produced by the company Good Chance that established its first temporary Theatre of

Hope in 2015 in the Calais "Jungle" refugee and migrant camp and since then has worked globally with hundreds of artists with lived experience of displacement and migration on a range of acclaimed arts projects. Commissioned by the London Palestine Film Festival to create a work that had testimonies at its heart, its writer and director, Elias Matar (also Deputy Artistic Director of Good Chance) based the script on the testimonies of children in Gaza collected during 2023 and 2024 and published in the booklet *A Million Kites*. The production team worked with a Gaza Voices Advisory Group.

During the post-performance discussion, Elias Matar described how Gazans in the diaspora who have seen the play said that it "took them home."

On 30th October 2023, Save the Children reported that the number of children who had died in three weeks in Gaza as a result of Israel's relentless attack surpassed the annual

number of children killed in conflict zones across the whole world in each of the last four years.

By January 2025, UNICEF was reporting that Gaza had the highest numbers of child amputees in the world relative to their population and that between 39,000 and 40,000 children had by then lost one or both parents.

By February 2025, according to the World Health Organisation, at least 21,000 children had lost their lives as a direct result of Israeli fire. The killing and wounding has not stopped since the so-called ceasefire in October 2025.

A Grain of Sand allows the voices of those children to be heard, to cut through the horrific but inevitably depersonalising – eventually even normalising – statistics of death and suffering, restoring and communicating the humanity of those living and dying in Gaza. The play ends

with the long scrolling of the known names of the children who have died onto the backdrop, asserting their identities.

After the performance I was at, there was a Q&A with Sarah Agha and Elias Matar. Inevitably the question was asked, “What can we do?” Sarah said, “Empathy and sympathy are needed. But on their own they don’t do anything. The urgency is to act.”

A Grain of Sand was performed at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh, part of a UK tour that ended in March 2026. More performances are intended.

A Million Kites, a booklet of Gazan children’s testimonies collected over 2023/2024, can be ordered from [www.amillionkites.com](http://www.amillionkites.com)

## Food

# Tu BiShvat Haggis

Gillian Raab



All quantities below are approximate and other ingredients, apart from those starred, can be added or removed for variation. This should make one large haggis. I made four times this quantity for our Tu b'Shevat seder. This version has 15 different fruits or nuts contributing to the recipe. To make it haggis-like you will need to ask a butcher to supply you with a skin that is used for vegetarian haggis and some butcher's string to tie it up.

### Ingredients

200 g black (Beluga) lentils  
1 onion  
Olive oil  
1 crushed garlic clove  
100g coarse pin-head oatmeal  
Vegetable stock  
1 apple (cored and chopped)  
1 pear (cored and chopped)  
  
Zest of 1 orange  
Dried fruits (total about 80 g)  
Raisins, figs, dates, apricots, prunes  
Chopped nuts (about 50g)

Walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds  
Pistachios and/or pinenuts – a  
spoonful of each – I left them  
whole  
Pomegranate molasses –  
tablespoonful  
2tsp ground coriander  
½ tsp ground cumin  
About ¼ of a block (25g) of  
creamed coconut, grated  
Salt and pepper to taste

### **Method**

Cook the lentils in salted water until they are soft (about 20 minutes) and drain. Finely chop or grate the onion and fry gently in the olive oil without letting it brown, add the oatmeal, garlic, stock (just enough to make the mixture into a fairly thick paste) and chopped apple and pear, and

cook, while stirring, for around 10 minutes. The oatmeal should be cooked but still retain its texture. Then stir in the lentils and everything else. Put the grated coconut cream in last (it is standing in for the suet in traditional haggis) and mix in well. Taste to adjust seasoning.

You are now ready to stuff your haggis skin. Tie it up well. It will keep well like this until you are ready to serve. It is then best reheated by bringing slowly to the boil in a pan of cold water and simmering for about 10 minutes. I usually wrap it in silver foil in the pan so as to avoid it turning to porridge if the skin leaks.

Alternatively, the mixture makes a nice filling for stuffed peppers and I am sure you can think of other possibilities.

### **THANK YOU**

A warm thank you to Findlay's of Portobello, a fantastic award-winning family-run butcher's that every year supplies us with vegetarian haggis skins for our Tu Bishevat haggis.

Fair fa' your honest sonsie face  
Within yer skin nae meat finds place  
Wi' oats and aw ye're fine for kashrut  
But whit for 15 nuts and fruit?

Weel, nane O' them mak greenhouse gases  
Unlike the beasties wha' live on grasses  
Tu B'Shevat maks us aware  
Of Tikkun Olam our world to repair.

This haggis ecological food  
Helps to put us in the mood  
Tae think about our planit heatin  
And change the fare that folks are eatin.

We don't hae meat, but we can eat  
Bruchas for tree fruit are complete  
So I can finish this address  
And all can hae a muckle fress.

# Folk Stories

## Joha the Sage

Introduced and illustrated by Samara Leibner



**J**oha the Sage is known variously as Joha, Moha, and Seha in Sephardic Jewish contexts, and is often either referred to as “the Sage” or “the Clown”. When the Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492, many fled to the expanding Ottoman Empire. At that time, the Empire was open to immigration to populate its new territories, and while Jews did not enjoy equal treatment to Muslim citizens of the Empire, they were, at least

initially, far better off there than they had been in Spain even before the expulsion. As a result, tales about Joha are found in the Jewish communities of Morocco and the rest of the Maghreb, as well as Turkey and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Joha shares aspects of the wise fool archetype with characters we’ve already heard about, like Herschel of Ostropol and the Chelmites. According to Moroccan Jewish scholar

and artist Marc Eliany, Joha offers storytellers “an opportunity to make fun of everyone and everything without offending anyone”. Joha is usually described as a poor man with a wife, a son, and a donkey, who can be foils or allies according to the needs of the plot. He also seems to have supernatural powers, or at least supernaturally bad luck, which he can sometimes use to his advantage.

Much like Herschel of Ostropol, Joha tales are not exclusive to Jewish communities. Joha is sometimes identified with Nasruddin, the Turkish folk hero, and the ubiquity of Joha stories across the Jewish, Arab and Muslim cultures rooted in the former Ottoman territories proves how interconnected these communities often were.

### **Goha and his son ride the donkey**

Goha and his son were on their way to a nearby village. The son rode the donkey whilst

Goha walked alongside. On the way, they passed some people, who pointed at Goha and his son.

“Look at that boy,” they said. “He is riding the donkey and his poor old father is walking.”

When he heard this, Goha said, “You get off the donkey and I’ll ride.”

“Look at that man. He is riding the donkey and his poor young son is walking,” some other passers-by said, pointing at the two of them.

Goha thought about this. “Get on the donkey, we’ll both ride it,” he said. Again, Goha and his son passed by some people who pointed at them. “Look at those people riding that poor donkey. How cruel,” they said.

Goha thought about this as well. “Let’s both get off the donkey,” he said to his son, and so they both walked alongside it. The people they passed by looked and pointed. This time they said, “Look at those fools, walking along when they have a donkey they could ride!”

After some thought, Goha said, "I have a good idea. We'll carry it!" As they walked on another group of people looked at them staggering along under the weight of the donkey. They pointed. "Look at those fools," they said. "They are carrying a donkey instead of riding it!"

Goha turned to his son and said, "See, my son, how hard it is to please everyone?"

### **The pot that died**

Goha's neighbour thought that Goha was a bit of a fool, and used to borrow things from Goha and then make excuses for not giving them back. One day Goha borrowed a large pot from a neighbour to cook his dinner. The following day, Goha returned the pot with another small pot inside. The surprised neighbour asked how the small pot got there. "Your pot gave birth to a young one during the night," said Goha, and he then insisted that the young pot and old pot both be returned to the neighbour as they belonged together and it

would be cruel to separate them.

The delighted neighbour, laughing at Goha's stupidity, took both the pots. A few weeks later, Goha asked to borrow the pot again. When days had gone by, and Goha still had not returned the pot, the neighbour came by to ask for it. "May God have mercy on its soul," replied Goha. "Your pot has passed away. On the evening I borrowed it, it fell ill and died." The neighbour yelled: "Died! Since when do pots die?"

"Ever since they've been able to have children," answered Goha.

### **Seha the Rain Maker**

Everyone knows that saints in Morocco were capable of bringing rain after long droughts. But few ever guessed Seha was able to make rain, too.

One day Seha traveled to a far-away village behind the Atlas Mountains to sell his wares. Upon arrival, he not only could not sell any of his

merchandise, he also had to perform a miracle to save the poor villagers from thirst, as a drought of long duration had dried every well and people had no water to drink.

The people were desperate. They asked Seha to make the wind bring clouds and rain. Seha asked the villagers to bring him what little water was left, two sticks, and a rope. The villagers did as requested, returning with a small bucket just barely half-filled with water. Seha washed his clothes

and hung them on the rope between the two sticks.

“What have you done?” cried the villagers. “The bucket of water we gave you was our last drinking reserve and you wasted it to wash your clothes?”

“Don't despair,” replied Seha. “Whenever I hang my clothes to dry, rain falls.” And no sooner had Seha completed his sentence than a strong wind brought clouds above the village, and rain filled its wells again.

***Etrog***

Winter 2025/6 (Vol. 4, No. 6)

**Published by**

Sukkat Shalom, Edinburgh

**ISSN**

3050-0427

**Printed by**

Edinburgh Copy Shop

**Editor**

Sue Bard

[www.eljc.org/etrog](http://www.eljc.org/etrog)

**Words**

Jen Andreacchi

Sue Bard

Shlomo ben Avraham

Aaron Crane

Samara Leibner

Benjamin Napier

Charles Raab

Gillian Raab

Christine Schmidt

Helen Searle

Han Smith

**Voices**

Audrey Davis

**Pictures**

Sue Bard

Annie Gutteridge

Samara Leibner

Janet Mundy

Christine Schmidt

**Proofreading**

Sarah Jauncey Degamo

Chrissy Lieberman

Rachael Martin

**Design**

Shlomo ben Avraham (interior)

Andrea Torres (cover)



