The George J. Sherman and Lottie K. Sherman- Museum of Jewish Civilization -
William Singer Gallery
University of Hartford
Presents

“All of God's Children - Special Children and Special Needs”
February 13-March 21, 2011

"A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its neediest members."
Mahatma Gandhi

College of Arts and Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

Exhibit made possible
by the children of
Minnie Goldenberg
and the
Maximillian O. and Marion E. Hoffman Foundation
George J. Sherman and Lottie K. Sherman
Museum of Jewish Civilization

The George J. Sherman and Lottie K. Sherman Museum of Jewish Civilization was founded in 2003 thanks to a generous gift by Dr. William Sherman of West Hartford and other donors. It was directed by Dr. Richard A. Freund (2003-2007) and is presently directed by Dr. Avinoam Patt of the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Hartford. Dr. Anna Hadash serves as guest curator. The Sherman Museum is a teaching museum and its primary goal is to tell the story of Jewish civilization for the general and academic communities of Connecticut through exhibitions coordinated with our library collections at the Mortensen Library, our endowed lecturerships and coursework in the extensive Judaica offerings of the Greenberg Center.

The Sherman Museum's Singer Gallery has featured exhibits highlighting the history of Jewish interactions with Muslims and Christians; the lives of the Jews in Germany, the United States, Latin America, and ancient Israel, as well as books on and about the Jewish people worldwide and the Holocaust. The Jewish Music section features the Cantorate, highlighting the way Jews used the Arts to express their spirit, while the section on archaeology chronicles the daily and religious life of Ancient Israel.

The Sherman Museum is located in Mortensen Library, Harry Jack Gray Center, University of Hartford, 200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT. For docent led tours and Museum hours, please call 860.768.5729 or email mjcjs@hartford.edu and the Greenberg Center’s website: www.hartford.edu/greenberg.
"All of God’s Children: Special Children and Special Needs"

The new exhibition in the William Singer Gallery of the Sherman Museum entitled: “All of God’s Children: Special Children and Special Needs” is an exhibition of photographs of Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist children in Israel, India, and Sri Lanka, by local photographer, Lena Stein. The exhibit explores the question of how we treat those who are least able to advocate on behalf of themselves—children with a wide spectrum of special needs. Thirteen photos are from Israeli institutions, five are from Sri Lanka, and four from India. Some of the special needs will not be immediately clear from the photograph. There are unseen and seen disabilities that children and their families face daily. For thousands of years, some of these children and their families faced these disabilities with caring communities that reached out to them and created ways for all of these children to become a part of the greater society and stay in their own homes, treated by their own family members. Sometimes children with disabilities were confined to isolation and the families faced enormous challenges. In the modern period, many ways of teaching and caring for children with special needs have allowed them to participate fully in education and society.

With the Greenberg Center’s help, Lena contacted institutions with children with learning disabilities, Down’s Syndrome, mental and physical handicaps, as well as children who are blind, deaf, mute or have a combination of disabilities and worked with administrators and care-givers at each of these locations, from Jerusalem to Galilee, Calcutta and other locations in India, and Sri Lanka all in the summer of 2010. Thanks to the support of the Marion O. and Maximilian H. Hoffman Foundation and the Minnie Goldenberg exhibition fund at the Greenberg Center, Lena was able to visit Israel and create this exhibition. Frequently our exhibitions have featured men and women celebrating occasions of their lives or just smiling at the camera. Many of the children in this exhibition are not usually photographed for exhibitions. In many cases, in the 12 institutions (seven institutions in Israel, three in India and two in Sri Lanka) visited, some of the care-givers asked us why the University of Hartford’s Greenberg Center was mounting this exhibition. We told them that it was intended to show the beauty of all of God’s children. Israel is a diverse nation that has achieved a level of “first” world comfort and health care. Many of the institutions we visited took in children from Jewish, Christian and Muslim backgrounds because this is the constituency of the nation. What follows is a short background of the institutions and their missions.

Israel

There are literally scores of institutions and organizations in Israel that work with children and young adults with special needs. The list of programs that we visited was limited by our time, but spanned religious and state sponsored schools to afereschool and summer camp programs from the north and south of Israel. We were able to work only for one week during the summer of 2010 as part of the University of Hartford’s summer program in Israel with photographer Lena Stein, who also worked with us on our excavations photography and with the students who were studying language and archaeology in our summer program. Thanks to some of our contacts in the Greater Hartford community, we were introduced to seven different programs in Israel where we were able to photograph. For the most part we will not be giving too much information on the photographs. We did not want to “label” a disability, a special need or to give too much information on the person. We preferred for the visitor to come and see the beauty of the person, the volunteers, the situation, the place, the interaction, and to not focus solely on the disability. We did not say what religion the child was and in many cases did not even give a name. We hope that the visitor will come to know these children and young adults as we came to see them: as God’s Children.

Local Profile: Tom Falik

Thanks to a Greater Hartford resident, Tom Falik, the Chairman of the American Friends of the Kishorit in Galilee, we began our work on the special needs children of Israel at Kishorit in late June, 2010. Kishorit is an extraordinary residential community in the Western Galilee for 150 adults with developmental disabilities and mental health issues. Built upon the abandoned Kibbutz Kishor, Kishorit (Hebrew...
diminutive of Kishor) recognizes the ability of every member to contribute to the community and offers members a full life including work and leisure activities, opportunities for integration into the broader community, private, dignified living quarters, medical supervision and nursing care for senior citizens. Kishorit aims to change the way that individuals with special needs are integrated into the community and cared for long-term. Drawing on elements of the Kibbutz model, Kishorit uses the notion of community as a therapeutic tool. Residents are given autonomy to make communal and personal decisions. The community provides a sense of strength and empowerment when venturing into the broader society. At the Ziv Getz Democratic School at Kishorit, a day program for troubled Jewish and Arab teenagers with disabilities, Lena photographed young adults from various backgrounds. Kishorit calls itself, “a caring community of adults with special needs.” (www.kishorit.org). In the one photograph in the exhibition we featured the unique relationship between one of the young adults, Guy Holzter at Kishorit and a horse.

At Shatuf, (Hebrew word meaning: “partner”) which is the only camp in Jerusalem for children with special needs; the children were photographed during the end of the school year and the beginning of the summer vacation. Vacation time often forces families that have organized daily programs for their children into the difficult position of finding daily activities that will enhance the year round programs that many of these children are in. Shatuf features a “summer camp” atmosphere all year round for the children (www.campshatuf.org). One photograph was taken at one of Shatuf’s inclusive, after-school youth groups at the Museum of Nature in Jerusalem where children learned to care for small animals, an important lesson at many of the programs we visited. Thanks to the director of Shatuf, Beth Steinberg, we were introduced to two other programs. We include the photograph of Beth’s son, Akiva in his music class at the Feuerstein School at the International Center for of Learning Potential (www.icelp.org) on our calendar.

One of the unique elements at many of the institutions was the spirit of volunteers and paid staff who worked together to help the children. The spirit of volunteerism is seen in the photograph of an Israeli Defense Forces soldier at the Nizanei Rishon at the after school center for children with special needs in Jerusalem. "Nizanei Rishon" (Hebrew meaning: “First Blossoms” or “Blossoms of Rishon LeZion”, a city near Tel Aviv), is a non-profit organization established in 2001 by parents to children with special needs, which has as its mission helping these special children and their families have a place to interact for after school and vacation activities. The society's founders are interested in the quality of education and welfare in Israel, from the time when the child joins the formal education system through special programs and treatments which are guaranteed by law. “Nizanei Rishon” is the society’s motto and means that the families support each other, by sharing information. On the day that Lena photographed, there were some soldiers volunteering to work with the children and teach computer skills and other activities. (www.nizani.org.il/eng.asp)

Lena photographed at Shalva, (Hebrew word meaning: “joy”) the Association for Mentally and Physically Challenged Children in Israel (www.shalva.org), at the location in Jerusalem. Lena was introduced to the program by Andrea Simantov, the director of communications for this program. This innovative program works with parents and families who have special needs children from soon after birth through the day care and elementary education stages. There are after school activities as well as a full range of educational programming that continues through young adulthood. The photographs come from the pre-school summer programming which includes children with different levels of needs in music, art, lunch and learning activities throughout the day.

A University of Hartford Alumna in Special Education
Making a Difference in Israeli Special Education

Stymie Liff and Professor Regina Miller

P'TACH which spells out Parents for Torah for All Children and is a play on words in Hebrew since it also means to “open up.” (www.ptach.org.il) is a Jerusalem-based organization dedicated to “opening up” the lives of children and giving them the opportunity to succeed in life and in school by helping them overcome or compensate for learning difficulties. We feature one photograph from P'TACH, a student named Rachel who Lena photographed in front of her school. At P'TACH they detect, assess and evaluate learning disabilities in children in the areas of dyslexia, comprehension (reading and oral), dyscalculia, visual or auditory perception, language, processing, organizational disorders, dysgraphia, communicative disorders, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and sensory motor integration. We were introduced to P'tach
thanks to Professor Regina Miller, emeriti professor of Education at the University of Hartford whose student, Symie Liff (a University of Hartford Alumna) is executive director of the organization. Symie and her husband, Rabbi Eliezer Liff moved to West Hartford in 1977. Symie transferred to the University of Hartford from Brooklyn College where she was studying Special Education. She finished her Bachelor of Science in Special Education at the University of Hartford and then completed her Masters in Special Education in 1980. "Professor Regina Miller always used to tell me that I would do great things one day. My husband and I immigrated to Israel (Aliyah) in 1980 and it is only because of Regina’s work and my training at the University of Hartford that I was able to head P'TACH."

Symie’s story is a success story of the University of Hartford. The first few years in Israel, Symie taught at a school for boys with learning difficulties, but she saw a great need to create an integrated program in the regular school system to mainstream children with learning issues. She wanted to keep the students in their regular classes. She started with 7 boys in a religious school in Har Noof and helped them overcome their problems (which included dyslexia, language acquisition and comprehension, etc.) while remaining in their regular classes. One success led to another and today P'Tach is running resource rooms in over 15 schools as well as two afternoon clinics in Jerusalem. They offer occupational therapy, speech and language intervention and educational remediation. Today, they service almost 400 children a year and over the years they have really made an impact on the school system in Israel.

At Hettena School (hettenaschool@gmail.com), a day care center in Jerusalem established in 1978 for children with severe multiple disabilities, the diversity of the children and the care-takers was evident. Lena was introduced to the children by Ruth Nahum, an occupational therapist at the center. In the picture we featured Joseph, an Arab-Israeli with his care-giver, Elisheva Klein, who is the daughter of a local Rabbi. Hettena has a day care for severely or profoundly developmentally delayed children who may have other disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy, hearing and sight deficiencies, Down’s Syndrome, Caravan Syndrome, Crie du Chat Syndrome, among many others. Finally, in Jerusalem, Lena went to the Western Wall and was introduced to some of the children that are a part of the daily religious life of this pilgrimage site. In the one photograph included in the exhibition we see the Rahmani family, a mother and her son, as they prayed at the Western Wall.

India

In India, the photographs were taken at the Loreto Day School, Sealdah in Calcutta, India Day School, (www.loretosealdah.com). The girl on one of our posters with her uniform and patent leather shoes is a student there. Lena has made different trips to Rainbow house at the school and documents the lives of street children that have become part of the school. The school has 1500 female students of which 721 are
so poor that every need has to be taken care of - food, medicines, rations, shoes, books, uniforms, even money to meet the rent which eviction threatens. In many instances the school has also helped families set up a small scale business, by providing interest-free loans in order to become self supporting. Sometimes the school has reached out to the family as a whole, be it a drug addicted father, or an errant sibling or an ailing member. They write that “Our doors are always open.” Sister M. Cyril Mooney, the principal of the school, is a nationally recognized educator and a leader in bringing quality education to urban and rural poor children. In India the photographs were also taken at Bodhdir Bidya Bhavan in Uttarpura, a school for the hearing impaired (near Calcutta) and the Asha Niketan, a community for children with learning disabilities at a Day Care Center in Calcutta. Lena was introduced to Bodhdir Bidya Bhavan School by K Ramon, president of VSEI (Volunteers in Service to Education in India), organization based in Hartford, CT (www.vsei.org)

Sri Lanka

Lena’s invitation to Sri Lanka was thanks to two Americans, Jean-Michel Tijerina - founder of Child Education International (www.ChildEd.org) and Eric Lyons, founder of Hope for the Silent Voice (www.hopeforthesilentvoices.org). These organizations service large areas of the world. In Sri Lanka, Lena photographed at three very different places; a public school, the Sambodhi Home for the Physically and Mentally Disabled and at the Ahangama School for the Deaf and Blind in Galle, Sri Lanka.

http://www.child-education.net/ahangama-school-for-the-deaf-blind-galle-sri-lanka/. Over the past decade, Sri Lanka and especially these schools which have students that are not very mobile have suffered through storms and violent tsunamis (see the article: http://www.lankalibrary.com/news/sambodhi.htm). Ahangama School for the Deaf and Blind is on the southern coast of Sri Lanka which houses approximately 60 blind and/or deaf children during the course of any week. It is a modern facility in Sri Lanka and provides unique educational opportunities and care to children ages 8 to 18. According to their website, these children are some of the lucky ones in Sri Lanka. They come home to loving households each weekend.

The organization, Hope For the Silent Voices, has worked to help this institution that uses innovative learning methods to give voices to these children.

A Photography Exhibition and An Educational Opportunity

Some people come to an exhibition to appreciate the art while others are seeking to learn something new. At this exhibition we hope that you will appreciate the art value of the photographs and learn something about Israel, India, and Sri Lanka and the variety of special needs and disabilities. When you look into the faces of the children and their care-givers in this exhibition, we want you also learn to see “all of the children of God” and to see the joy and the beauty of these children, the caretakers and teachers who love and teach them daily. By your spending time in the exhibition, reading about them and thinking about these children we hope it will move you to want to find time to be one of the “children of God” by supporting the work of one of these organizations. To learn more about Lena’s work please go to www.lenastein.com
Upcoming Events and Exhibits

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, September 25, 2011
Gala dinner honoring our founders, Beverly and Arnold Greenberg

Wednesday, March 30, 2011 - **NEW** Archaeology Lecture
7:30 pm - Prof. Michal Arzy to deliver The Judith Freund Memorial Biblical Archaeology Lecture, 1877 Club. “Akko: City of Phoenicians, Jews, Greeks, Romans, Muslims, Crusaders, and Napoleon”
Space is limited. Please call 860.768.4964 for reservations.

Sunday, April 3, 2011 - Holocaust Educators Awards Ceremony, Symposium and Exhibit Opening
1:30-3:30 pm - Holocaust Educators Awards Ceremony and Symposium
**After the Trauma: A Symposium featuring Holocaust Survivors and Laotian Refugees in Dialogue**
Chaired by Professor Lourdes Dale and graduate student, Laura Carroll, Dept. of Psychology, University of Hartford
3:45-5 pm - Reception and Exhibit Opening, Singer Gallery, Sherman Museum
“After the Trauma: Second-Generation Laotians and Holocaust Survivors Confront Their Pasts”
Space is limited. Please call 860.768.4964 for reservations.

Thursday, April 14, 2011 - Jewish Humor Lecture
7 pm - Lillian Margulies Singer Jewish Humor Lecture with Norman Finkelstein, author of *Jewish Comedy Stars*
Wilde Auditorium - Tickets are required. Call the University box office at 860.768.4228 after March 7.

Tuesday, May 3, 2011 - Award Ceremony
7:30 pm - 47th Annual Edward Lewis Wallant Award
Recipient: Julie Orringer, *The Invisible Bridge*
Space is limited; call 860.768.4964 for reservations.

Summerterm in Israel
June 19 – July 19, 2011. Bethsaida, Akko and Language Instruction. Up to nine academic undergraduate credits or graduate credit. For an application and information, contact the Greenberg Center 860.768.4964 or mgcis@hartford.edu.
The Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies

In celebration of its 25th anniversary at the University of Hartford, the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies, has organized a myriad of outstanding exhibitions and lecture series over the past 25 years. Founded in the 1984-85 academic year through the generous gift of Arnold C. and Beverly Greenberg, the Maurice Greenberg Center is a dynamic center which offers three different undergraduate degrees, maintains the George I. Sherman and Lottie K. Sherman Museum of Jewish Civilization and through a consortial agreement with the University of Connecticut offers a graduate program. The undergraduate major in the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies provides a unified and cohesive major within the College of Arts and Sciences and utilizes the established resources of two other colleges (College of Education and the Hartt School for the Performing Arts). The Bachelor of Arts in Judaic Studies allows students to focus in three pivotal areas: Judaic Studies; Judaic Studies and Elementary Education; and Judaic Studies and Pre-Cantorial Studies. Judaic Studies is an interdisciplinary program of study which focuses on the Jews and Judaism, including but not limited to, historical, linguistic, religious, sociological, political, and philosophical perspectives. The chronological scope of Judaic Studies spans the periods from the beginnings of ancient Israel through the modern Jews and modern Israel. In addition to the academic studies, the Center maintains and active community outreach division that runs teacher workshops on the teaching of the Holocaust and the teaching of Israel and the Middle East, and has an active lecture, concert, exhibit, and symposium schedule that is open to the public. In cooperation with the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford, the Greenberg Center has offered an Israeli visiting professor who works both in the University and in the community during the past decade. Summer programs at our field school in Israel at Kibbutz Ginosar are a part of the Bethsada Excavations Project Consortium where students study archaeology, Hebrew and Arabic.

SAVE THE DATE: On September 25, 2011, the 25th anniversary celebration will culminate with a gala banquet honoring founders, Arnold and Beverly Greenberg. For more information on the Greenberg Center, please visit www.hartford.edu/greenberg.

Richard A. Freund, Director
Avinoam Patt, Assistant Director
Rise Roth, Development Officer
Susan Gottlieb, Administrative Assistant