

## **SCOTS JEWS: IDENTITY, BELONGING AND THE FUTURE**

### **EXHIBITION PROPOSAL**

How minority communities relate to and integrate within majority cultures has become a significant issue in the contemporary world. The Jewish community remains the archetype in this regard with its extensive history of diaspora existence and it is continually fascinating to see how this community has been able to maintain its identity while fully engaging in wider society.

Documentary photography has long been used as a special way of capturing a whole range of realities, and the medium is now being used to focus in on the contemporary Jewish experience in Scotland.

There have been Jews in Scotland since the 1700s, a community that at its height numbered around 20,000, for a long time the largest non-Christian minority in Scotland. Invariably proudly Scottish, this community has produced scientists and doctors, judges and MPs, artists and writers - and farmers and foresters, and kilt makers and whisky producers! The story of this community and its contribution to Scottish society is a fascinating one and yet, remarkably, little has been recorded of its existence.

Judah Passow, a winner of four World Press Awards, has had a distinguished career as a documentary photographer, and his website [www.judahpassow.com](http://www.judahpassow.com) gives a flavour of his distinctive style. In 2013, Judah travelled across Scotland to capture Jewish life as it is lived today in all its complexity and diversity, reflecting especially the interplay of Scottishness and Jewishness - 'Scottishness through Jewish eyes'. Judah created a gallery of some of the images - <http://www.judahpassow.com/galleries/scotgallery/> (to access - username: skye password: lerwick).

Never before has such an initiative been undertaken, and Judah's work has become a major exhibition of photographs, approximately 80 images, that was launched at the Scottish Parliament in February 2014 in the presence of the Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond, and is now being shown in prestigious venues across the United Kingdom and abroad.

We are eager to include Italy in the international tour and plan to approach significant galleries and museums in the country to host the work.

The project secured substantial funding from Creative Scotland, the main public arts funding body in Scotland. Furthermore, the leading publishers Bloomsbury has produced a fine art book to accompany the exhibition - <http://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/scots-jews-9781472906175/>.

***The aim of this special initiative is to present in an engaging and visually rich way a remarkable Jewish story - and a remarkable Scottish one.***

For further information, please contact the Exhibition Producer Michael Mail at [michael.mail2@ntlworld.com](mailto:michael.mail2@ntlworld.com) or tel 00 44 7968 529609.

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