

Amud Aish Annual Student Visual Arts and Literacy Contest



Precious Gift

The Miracle of Shanghai

DEADLINE: APRIL 10, 2018 | SEE BACK PAGE FOR MORE INFORMATION

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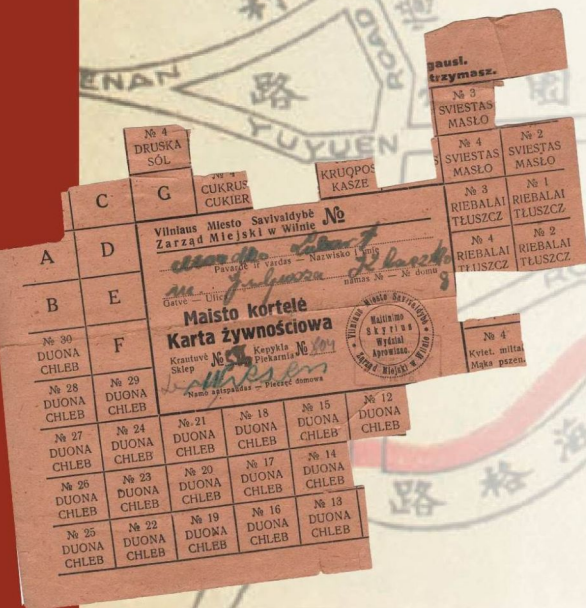
GOLDBART TOYS

The life of 10 year old Yehudith Cohn-Goldbart of Berlin, Germany irrevocably changed on the night of November 9, 1938. Kristallnacht (The Night of Broken Glass) literally shattered the Jewish community, along with the lives of all German and Austrian Jews. 267 synagogues were burned, 7,500 businesses were looted, 91 people were murdered and 30,000 men were arrested and sent to Nazi concentration camps. Yehudith's family was one of the lucky few to subsequently escape the inferno and make their way to Shanghai, China where they lived until after the war. Despite the overcrowding and unsanitary conditions in the Hongkew district, the refugees strived to adapt and make the best out of their surroundings. Yehudith's memorabilia reflect the foreign world of the Orient, her new home. These wooden toys are a unique testament to Yehudith's resilience and strength while far away from home.



LUBART RATION CARD

For hungry refugees fleeing the Nazis, a ration card could sometimes spell the difference between life and death. Mordechai Yehuda Lubart, a student of Yeshiva Chachmei Lublin, fled Poland with little more than the clothes on his back. Like many others, his first stop was Vilna where more than 15,000 Polish Jews needed food, clothing and shelter. To meet this demand, relief organizations in America raised funds to care for all those in need. Mordechai Yehuda's card was his ticket to a meal. Each ticket was for different food items, giving him the energy to press forward and survive another day, until he was able to escape Europe via the Soviet Union. He made his way eastwards, eventually arriving in Shanghai, where he would remain until the war's end.



GELBFISZ VISA

Jews desperate to escape the Nazi dominance of the European continent faced daunting obstacles. Most countries' refusal to accept refugees and the legal maze of immigration paperwork required, posed a formidable challenge for those anxious to leave. Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese Vice Consul in Kovno, Lithuania, selflessly came to their rescue. Against the orders of his government, he issued transit visas allowing the passage of refugees to Kobe, Japan and eventually Shanghai. The Gelbfisz brothers, Binyamin Beinish and Avraham Dovid, of Siedlce, Poland, were two of the thousands that Sugihara saved. The Jews that received Sugihara visas were able to escape just in time, as the Nazi Einsatzgruppen (paramilitary death squads), would soon murder 1.4 million Jews in Soviet provinces. Through the kindness of Sugihara and their faith in G-d, the Gelbfisz brothers were able to survive, while tragically most of their family was murdered.





SHIMANOWITZ CANDLESTICKS

Rabbi Shaya and Mrs. Ettel Shimanowitz were married in Europe before the war. Rabbi Shimanowitz was a renowned talmid chacham (Talmudic scholar) and a student in the Mir Yeshiva in Poland. In 1940, the Shimanowitz family escaped with the yeshiva to Shanghai, where they were determined to recreate the spirit of a true Torah home. With few resources available, Mrs. Shimanowitz was able to obtain a pair of candlesticks for Shabbos. They were not typical Shabbos candlesticks; they are marked with the Chinese attributes for a good life: Longevity, Prosperity and Status. While far away from the world they had always known, the Shimanowitz's Shabbos table was graced by two flickering flames, symbols of a Jewish life that will never be extinguished.



LANGE GEMARA

Plucked from the flames of the Holocaust, refugees in Shanghai still faced tremendous challenges to their health and wellbeing. Nonetheless, students of the Mir Yeshiva recognized the significance of their miraculous rescue and were completely devoted to uninterrupted Torah study. Despite the difficulties of their situation, the students remained resilient in their Judaism and took their Torah with them wherever they went. To that end, they established the Ezras Torah library and started publishing numerous sefarim (religious texts), the universal cornerstone of Torah living. Pictured is a Gemara printed in Shanghai in 1943 and used by Mir Yeshiva student Azriel Lange during those difficult years of exile. After the war, Rabbi Lange became an educator in Yeshiva Torah Vodaath. His Gemara remained a cornerstone for his life.



KOTLER JEWELRY BOX

With the eruption of World War II in 1939, communities and families were thrown into turmoil. Rischel Friedman of Lithuania became engaged to Rabbi Shneur Kotler, in 1941. Rabbi Shneur managed to escape to Mandatory Palestine (Eretz Yisroel), while Rischel his bride fled to Shanghai. There, Rabbi Meir and Rebbetzin Taube Ashkenazi welcomed Rischel into their home. The Ashkenazis were the spiritual leaders of the Shanghai Jewish community. As a gesture of their closeness, Rebbetzin Ashkenazi gifted Rischel with a jewelry box. Rischel arrived in America in 1946 and subsequently married Rabbi Kotler. The relationship between the Kotlers and the Ashkenazis came full circle in 1987, when the great-granddaughter of Rabbi and Rebbetzin Ashkenazi, married the son of Rabbi Shneur and Rebbetzin Rischel Kotler. Rebbetzin Rischel gifted the jewelry box she had received from Rebbetzin Ashkenazi to the new couple, linking together the generations and countries in the continuing chain of Jewish tradition.



Rischel Friedman at the wedding of Manya Ashkenazi in Shanghai, circa 1941

READ

About these individuals, their escape, and the items they brought along on their journey

REFLECT

On the significance of these items and why they were key to their miraculous escape from the Holocaust and subsequent rebirth

GUIDELINES

- Each entry must respond to one of the items provided in this brochure
- The contest is open to students in Grades 6-12.
- **The entry must include one of the following:**
 - A. Written:** Write a response to one of the individuals sharing your connections and observations
 - B. Visual Arts:** Create a work of art that reflects on the life of one of the individuals and the artifact that represents their experiences
- All work must be original student work created for this contest.
- Written submissions must be no longer than 750 words in length. All text entries should be double-spaced, 12 pt. font.
- **All submissions must be received by April 10, 2018.** Winners will be announced on May 25, 2018.
- Entries must include a cover page with student's name, grade, school, school address, school phone number email address (either personal or teacher's), and teacher's name.

PRIZES

All students will receive a Certificate of Participation for their work. Winning entries, in both Written and Visual Arts Response categories, will receive valuable Visa Gift Cards as prizes! The grand prize for both Written and Visual Arts responses in each grade level is \$150. Second place winners will receive \$72. Third place winners will receive \$25. Student work will be judged in the following categories: Grades 6-8, Grades 9-10 and Grades 11-12.



RESPOND

OPTION A: WRITTEN

Write a response to one of the individuals, sharing your connections and observations

OPTION B: VISUAL ARTS

Create a work of art that reflects on the life of one of the individuals and the artifact that represents their experiences

ATTENTION TEACHERS

The first 80 participating teachers will receive a free copy of A Bridge Between Two Worlds published by Amud Aish Memorial Museum! Sign up at www.amudaish.org or send an email, with your full contact information, to education@amudaish.org. Books will be distributed after receiving your students work and the conclusion of the contest.

All artifacts featured in the contest are on display at the Amud Aish Memorial Museum and Kleinman Holocaust Education Center for the 2017-2018 year. School groups are invited to schedule a visit. Slots are limited. Contact the Education Department to book your program today!

WHY ESCAPE TO SHANGHAI?

The contest documents the extraordinary chapter of the Holocaust that took place from 1933 until 1945 as thousands of Jews made the miraculous journey from Europe to Japanese Occupied Shanghai. As the rest of the world closed its door to the plight of desperate Jewish refugees, Shanghai proved to be one of the only safe destinations. Despite the mass destruction of Jewry elsewhere, Jewish life flourished in Shanghai. Even in the worst of times, the Jewish refugees resiliently carried traditional Torah scholarship and values to the Far East and ensured the continuation of Torah Jewry.

This curated collection of six items that belonged to those that fled to Shanghai for safety to escape Nazi persecution, portrays the Holocaust through the eyes of those who survived. Artifacts and documents give us insight into the fragility of their worlds and the challenges they overcame. We present this program as a memorial to those that were unable to escape and thereby murdered in the Holocaust. We hope to inspire bravery, faith, and resilience in our readers.

TO ENTER (CHOOSE ONE)

- **EMAIL:** (For written entries only) Email a Word doc or PDF with a cover page to education@amudaish.org. Subject line: The Miracle of Shanghai Contest
- **MAIL:** Mail your entry to: Amud Aish Memorial Museum, Attn: Education Department, 5923 Strickland Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11234
- **DELIVER:** Schedule a time to drop off your entry by calling 718-759-6200 ext 1538