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For information contact: Betsy Gomberg  
[bgomberg@spertus.edu](mailto:bgomberg@spertus.edu)  
312.322.1756

Brian Zimmerman  
[bjzimmerman@spertus.edu](mailto:bjzimmerman@spertus.edu)  
312.322.1724

## SCOTS JEWS: IDENTITY, BELONGING AND THE FUTURE

Portraits by award-winning photographer Judah Passow capture contemporary Scottish Jewish life

**Photos from the series will be on display at  
Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership  
June 8- October 5, 2014**

(Chicago) In his latest venture, award-winning Israeli-born photographer **Judah Passow** spent a year with Scotland's Jewish communities, producing a series of portraits that capture Scottish Jewish life at the beginning of the 21st century. An exhibit of the series — titled **Scots Jews: Identity, Belonging and the Future** — premiered at the Scottish Parliament in February 2014.



**Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership** is proud to be part of the exhibit's North American tour. Twenty of the photographs will be on view on the seventh floor of Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan Avenue, from June 8 and running through October 5, 2014. They can be seen for free during public hours. An online gallery of select photos can be seen on the Spertus Institute website at [spertus.edu/exhibits/scots-jews](http://spertus.edu/exhibits/scots-jews).

London-based Judah Passow's work has appeared in publications across the globe, including the *Guardian*, the *Observer*, and the *Independent* in Britain; *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *The New York Times* in America; *Der Spiegel* and *Die Zeit* in Germany, and *L'Express* in France. A winner of four [World Press Photo](#) awards for his coverage of the conflict in the Middle East, his photographs have been shown in Amsterdam, Glasgow, London, Paris, New York, Tel Aviv, and Washington D.C.

There have been Jews in Scotland since at least the 17th century, coming initially in ones and twos to study at Scotland's famed universities and then in increasing numbers through the 19th and into the 20th centuries as persecution in Eastern Europe made Jewish life increasingly precarious.

**(MORE)**

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While maintaining its particular traditions, the Jewish community prided itself in the way it quickly became immersed in Scottish society. The religious, educational, and welfare institutions established were expressions of communal confidence — and confidence in Scotland, a land that uniquely for Europe had no history of state-sanctioned antisemitism. It remains a small community, at its height never more than 16,000. “This is a community that despite its small size has a rich quality of Jewish life,” said the photographer in an article from *The Jewish Week*.

The photographs in **Scots Jews: Identity, Belonging and the Future** deliver an up-close view of the daily life of Scotland’s Jews. It showcases members of the Scottish Jewish community who are scientists and doctors, judges and politicians, artists and writers, farmers and foresters — and even kilt makers and whisky distillers!

Judah Passow notes, “One of the more remarkable features [of the Scottish Jewish community] is that it has become so tightly woven into the national fabric. I hope people looking at these photographs will see what I saw — a people deeply devoted to their heritage both as Jews and Scots.” Spertus Curator of Collections Ilana Segal adds, “Passow’s photographs capture a community at a crossroads, with a declining population contributing to a sense of uncertainty about the future. It is a unique moment in the history of this fiercely independent, passionately committed, and impressively diverse people.”

**Scots Jews: Identity, Belonging and the Future** was created and produced by Michael Mail and made possible by funding from Creative Scotland and support from the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCOJEC). Later this year, a book of the photographs will be published by Bloomsbury.

Spertus Institute is open Sunday to Wednesday from 10 am to 5 pm, Thursday from 10 am to 6 pm, and Friday from 10 am to 3 pm. Spertus is closed on Saturday for the Jewish Sabbath and on Jewish and secular holidays.

Discount Parking is available with Spertus validation at the Essex Inn, 8th Street and Michigan Avenue.

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**Image shown above: Burns Night at the L’Chaim kosher restaurant in Glasgow by Judah Passow.** Burns Night is celebrated in Scotland on or around January 25. It commemorates the life of Scotland’s national poet, Robert Burns. Burns Night celebrations typically consist of a Burns Supper, in which guests eat traditional Scottish foods, make toasts over rounds of drinks, and recite Burns’ poetry.

### ABOUT SPERTUS INSTITUTE

Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership offers dynamic learning opportunities, rooted in Jewish wisdom and culture and open to all. Graduate programs and workshops train future leaders and engage individuals in exploration of Jewish life. Public programs — including films, speakers, seminars, and concerts — take place at the Institute’s Michigan Avenue facility, in the Chicago suburbs, and online. For more information, please visit [spertus.edu](http://spertus.edu).

*Spertus Institute is a partner in serving the community, supported by the JUF/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.*