

# THE LAURIE M. TISCH GALLERY

Located in the soaring lobby of the JCC, The Laurie M. Tisch Gallery exhibits interdisciplinary shows and offers interactive programs that strengthen, engage, and grow our community. Exhibitions are free and open to the public during JCC building hours.



## FINDING HOME: The Art of Siona Benjamin

**On View**  
**May 18-July 30**

In the vibrant world created by Indian-Jewish artist Siona Benjamin (originally from Bombay, now living in the US), biblical characters appear as blue angels faced with problems and dilemmas of the contemporary world. Her artwork embodies the many cultural and artistic influences embedded in her biography, such as Indian miniature paintings and Sephardic icons, as well as the contemporary styles of pop art and multi-media installations. The themes and energy in *Finding Home* have inspired a wide array of programs here at the JCC, and we're thrilled to have you get to know Siona and her multi-faceted work.

## OPENING EVENT!

### The Making of Trans-Cultural Art

Siona Benjamin in conversation with Marc Michael Epstein, professor of Religion, Vassar College. Gallery wine reception will follow the discussion.

Wed, May 18, 7 pm, \$10

## RELATED PROGRAMS



### Traditional Vegetarian Indian Dishes

Chef Linda Lantos recently spent several months eating and cooking her way through India. She will share her exotic tales and food adventures as she leads you through mouthwatering recipes including chana (chickpea) masala; cabbage thoren with grated coconut, mustard seeds, curry leaves and turmeric; kajur imli ki chatni (date and tamarind chutney); and gajar (carrot) halwa, a delectable, traditional Indian dessert.

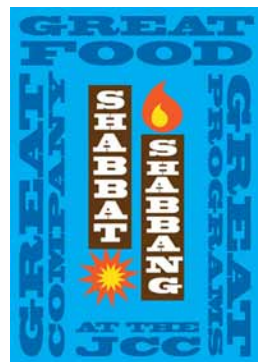
Thu, May 19, 7-9:30 pm, \$85/\$95

### Shabbat Shabbang: Friday Night Dinners at the JCC

Multicultural Shabbat Featuring Indian Jewish Artist Siona Benjamin

Join us for a community Shabbat dinner featuring vegetarian Indian cuisine and an evening of engaging programs focused on multicultural Jewish identity.

Fri, May 20, 6:30 pm, \$18



### Envisioning Women: Siona Benjamin on the Art of Midrash

The practice of interpreting biblical text dates back nearly 2,000 years to the first rabbinic midrashim. Visual artists have unique gifts for interpreting texts and unique tools for creating midrash. Experience this tradition through the eyes of a gifted artist, gaining new insights into familiar stories and characters as Benjamin shares her vision in this extraordinary class.

2 Tuesdays, May 24 & 31, 1 pm, \$40/\$50

### The Bene Ephraim of India

Rabbis Bonita and Gerald Sussman will present highlights from their visit with the Bene Ephraim community of Kotha Reddy Palem. Located in south eastern India, this community was isolated from all other world Jewry for centuries. Be inspired by the video of women making matzah for the first time on their stovetop griddles!

Thu, Jun 2, 7 pm, \$15/\$20

### Rang de Nila: Color Me Blue

In this interdisciplinary event, the artwork of Siona Benjamin comes alive. Traditional Indian and modern dancers transform into the characters found in the exhibit *Finding Home* as Benjamin tells their stories and myths to a soundtrack of Indian/jazz/hip-hop/Bollywood music. After the performance, enjoy Indian treats and wine, and meet Siona and the dancers!

Wed, Jun 1, 7:30 pm, \$15/\$20



## RELATED PROGRAMS



### FILM SCREENING

#### Sita Sings the Blues

Directed by Nina Paley (82 min, US, 2008)

Three hilarious shadow puppets narrate both ancient tragedy and modern comedy in this beautifully animated interpretation of the Indian epic the *Ramayana*. Set to the 1920's jazz vocals of Annette Hanshaw, *Sita* earns its tagline as the "Greatest Break-Up Story Ever Told."

Tue, Jun 14, 7:30 pm, \$Free/\$5

#### Tikkun Leil Shavuot

Siona Benjamin will be a featured teacher at this year's all-night celebration, discussing her creation of visual midrash. For more information on this annual event, please visit [jccmanhattan.org/tikkun](http://jccmanhattan.org/tikkun).

Tue, Jun 7, 10 pm, Free

#### Jewish Art Salon Panel Discussion:

##### Diversity in Jewish Art

Join us in welcoming Matthew Baigell, professor emeritus of Art History at Rutgers, author and editor of over 20 books on American and Russian art, and artists Julian Voloj, filmmaker Lacey Schwartz, and Siona Benjamin for an evening of discussion about contemporary art that represents the multi-dimensional identities of the Jewish people and Benjamin's exhibit at the JCC. Moderated by Yona Verwer, president of the Jewish Art Salon.

Mon, Jun 27, 7 pm, Free



#### Women-Only Henna Party

Enjoy a night of delicious wine, Indian hors d'oeuvres and incredible henna "tattooing." Begin the evening with a guided tour of Siona Benjamin's exhibit, then travel to the rooftop for a party! Henna artists will paint temporary tattoos while we drink, eat, and make new friends. Co-sponsored by *Eve NYC* and *Wonder Women*.

Wed, Jul 27, 7 pm, \$10/\$12 in advance; \$20 at the door

#### The Jews of India

Join us for an evening celebrating the art, music, and history of the Jews of India. Enjoy festive kosher vegetarian Indian delicacies! For more details visit [jccmanhattan.org/gallery](http://jccmanhattan.org/gallery).

Wed, Jul 13, 7 pm, \$20/\$25

#### Inspired Identity Collage: LGBTQ Art Workshop in the Gallery

Part workshop, part craft project, and part art salon, during this terrific event we will build 3-dimensional collages incorporating fragments of beautiful art supplies along with materials chosen to represent our various identities—via religion, gender, sexuality and everything else that makes us up. Materials provided. Wine and snacks served.

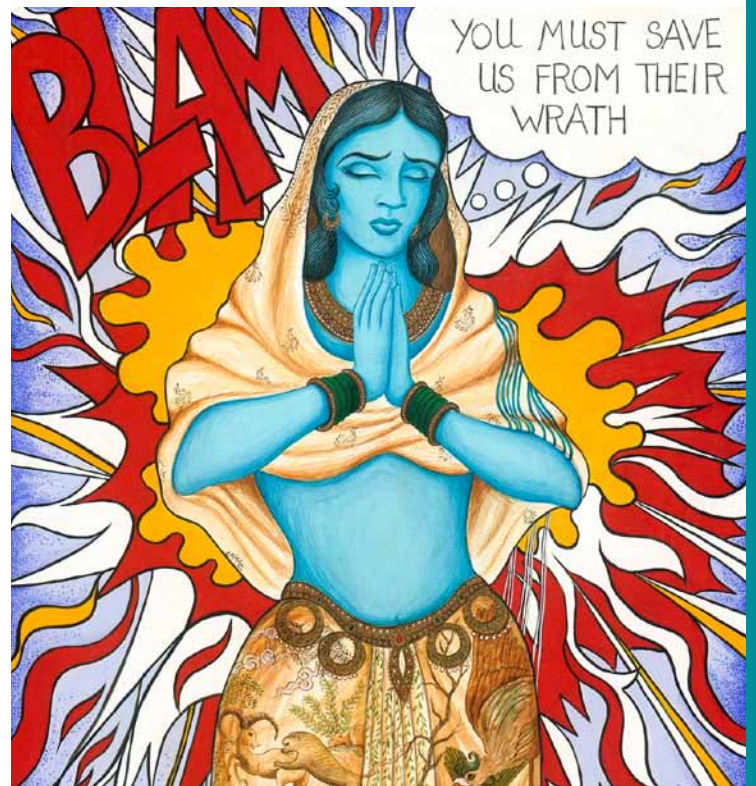
Wed, Jun 29, 7 pm, \$10/\$12



#### Indian/Persian Miniature Painting With Siona Benjamin

Explore the work and influences of artists born and raised in South Asia who are now living in the West. Their inspiration is often drawn from ancient, traditional cultures, yet they are creating contemporary art. Learn how they make these links between old and new and how they live these transitions through the act of immigration, all while you create unique and vibrant art. Supplies to be discussed.

4 Sundays, Jun 5-26, 10 am-1 pm, \$240/\$280



#### The Making of Summer Superheroes

##### Siona Benjamin, Artist-in-Residence at the JCC Summer Camps

Throughout the summer, JCC campers will be exploring the colorful world of Siona Benjamin's blue-painted, mythic superheroes! Campers will take educational tours in the Gallery, see an interactive performance of Siona's work, and make their own original artwork to be hung in the lobby in August!

For more information on the JCC's summer camps, please visit [www.jccmanhattan.org/daycamps](http://www.jccmanhattan.org/daycamps).

The Laurie M. Tisch Gallery offers FREE educational tours to student and adult groups!

For information please e-mail [gallerytours@jccmanhattan.org](mailto:gallerytours@jccmanhattan.org).

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