

THE BETSY-SOUTH BEACH TO SPONSOR YIDDISHKAYT INITIATIVE'S INAUGURAL INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL YI LOVE YIDDISHFEST 2020

Virtual Festival Taking Place From September 7-13 Will Include South Florida Politicians, Celebrities of the Jewish World and a Special Holocaust/Liberation Commemoration

SOUTH FLORIDA - The Betsy-South Beach (thebetsyhotel.com) -- the award-winning, family-owned luxury boutique hotel on Miami Beach -- has announced it has become the lead sponsor of the Inaugural International VIRTUAL YI Love YiddishFest 2020.

YI Love Yiddishfest 2020 will take place from September 7-13 when the Yiddishkayt Initiative (YILoveJewish.org) hosts the 43-event FREE Festival online. Major American and international celebrities and stars of the Jewish and Yiddish world will gather virtually to present performances, concerts, film screenings, theater readings, art showings, lectures, cooking classes and more from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

"I am 'kvelling' at the fact that we have some of the most distinguished international celebrities, including George Takei, Lorna Luft, Loni Ackerman, Richard Kline, Grammy-Award-winner Frank London, Tony Award-winning Rebecca Taichman, among many others," said Avi Hoffman, Founder and CEO of Yiddishkayt Initiative (www.yilovejewish.org).

YI Love Yiddishfest 2020 will also feature the Liberation Commemoration, a series of special events honoring the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II and the liberation of the last Concentration Camps, sponsored by Miami-Dade County.

This special series will feature messages from South Florida's most prominent political leaders, including Gov. Jeb Bush, U.S. Rep. Ted Deutch, U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Miami Mayor Francis X. Suarez and Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez, who has established an official Proclamation declaring September 7 as *Liberation Commemoration Day*, in honor of the festival.

YI Love Yiddishfest 2020 will allow participants from all around the world to sign on to their computers, tablets and phones to enjoy seven days of FREE outstanding Jewish cultural events with primarily English and a 'BISL' Yiddish language content, streaming live on multiple platforms.

The Betsy-South Beach (thebetsyhotel.com) -- affectionately referred to as "The Home of Yiddish on Miami Beach" -- has an interest in Yiddish programming as part of the

hotel's commitment to champion communities from various cultural backgrounds and walks of life with ongoing programs in philanthropy, arts, culture and education.

"I remember my grandmother speaking Yiddish in our home," said Betsy-South Beach owner Jonathan Plutzik, "and I know how vibrant Yiddish-speaking culture was on South Beach a generation ago. It's our privilege to honor this history by revisiting it with the goal of preserving even just a small part of it -- and helping to build a new community around it locally, regionally, and around the world."

Hoffman said he was so proud and honored to have The Betsy-South Beach as the lead festival sponsor.

"This sponsorship is the culmination of several years working with The Betsy-South Beach on projects of mutual import," Avi Hoffman said. "We are so thrilled for this major support from The Betsy-South Beach for our VIRTUAL YI Love YiddishFest 2020."

Jonathan Plutzik commented, "The Betsy Hotel family has been collaborating with the Hoffmans for several years through their various and wide-ranging Yiddish language and culture initiatives. Sponsorship of this festival enables us to reach an international audience that shares our interest in Jewish culture and Yiddishkayt."

YI Love Yiddishfest 2020 will take an interdisciplinary approach to celebrating Jewish culture and Yiddish language, that also includes poetry and film - in partnership with the Miami Jewish Film Festival - a screening of the documentary "Hyam Plutzik: American Poet," about mid-century immigrant poet, Hyam Plutzik, whose family spoke exclusively Yiddish.

Ultimately, Hyam Plutzik (hyamplutzikpoetry.com), the father of Betsy owner Jonathan Plutzik, went on to become a three-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry; this offers us yet another powerful immigrant story that speaks to the beauty of American citizens living multilingual lives.

The film will be streamed live during the festival at 3:30PM on Friday, September 11, Avi Hoffman will conduct a Q-and-A with Edward Moran, Hyam Plutzik literary scholar, from the Writers Room at the Betsy Hotel immediately following the screening.

Other events taking place live at The Betsy-South Beach during the Yiddishfest -- from the hotel property's library and 'writers room' -- will feature the works of Yiddishkayt Initiative co-founder Columbia University Professor Miriam Hoffman, who founded the organization along with her son, Avi. He will present his mother's three books with

multimedia presentations: “A Breed Apart: Reflections of a Young Refugee” at 8PM on Tuesday, September 8; “Legends of the *Alef Bet*: The Origins of the Alphabet” at 6PM on Wednesday, September 9; and “Amazing Rabbinic Tales: The Shortest Tall Stories (her soon-to-be-released book) at 6PM on Saturday, September 12.

The programming of the VIRTUAL YI Love YiddishFest 2020 will consist of a wide variety of cultural events over the seven days of Labor Day week.

For a complete schedule of events for this entire week-long festival, visit www.yiddishfest.org. For more information about the Yiddishkayt Initiative, see the organization’s website at www.YILoveJewish.org or its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/YiddishkaytInitiative/>, email info@yilovejewish.org or call (888) YI-Love-J (888-945-6835).

ABOUT THE YIDDISHKAYT INITIATIVE Yiddishkayt Initiative (YI), a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization that celebrates and promotes Jewish history, life, and culture, and their positive and far-reaching impact on the world. From performing arts, publishing, and education to language, philosophy and literature, YI offers a global clearinghouse of Jewish culture and entertainment staffed by experts in subject matter and production. The organization works with a wide range of organizations, including Federations, JCCs, synagogues, Hadassah chapters, Hillel chapters, men’s groups, women’s guilds, special interest clubs, youth groups, summer camp programs, and educational institutions, including the University of Miami’s Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies.

ABOUT THE BETSY SOUTH BEACH The Betsy-South Beach (thebetsyhotel.com) is a luxury boutique hotel located on Ocean Drive that embraces *‘things that matter’* under the auspices of a Philanthropy, Arts, Culture and Education Program - with a very special focus on poetry and literature. In the past decade, the hotel has become a catalyst for energized discourse, innovative thinking and charity -- working with hundreds of local, national and international nonprofit partners. A robust range of programming related to Jewish topics includes programs that take place all year long; the hotel is host and producing partner to the annual Jewish American and Holocaust Literature Conference; was co-founder of The Betsy/FIU Exile Writers in Residence Program; and is a lead supporter of The Yiddishkayt Initiative. The Betsy Writer’s Room has hosted 1000+ resident artists and thought leaders since its founding (Thebetsywritersroom.com). Jonathan Plutzik and Lesley Goldwasser are principal

owners of The Betsy-South Beach. Zachary Plutzik is Managing Director. The Betsy Hotel is located at **1440 Ocean Drive**, Miami Beach. 33139.

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