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Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan Announces ISRAEL @ 75 a Celebration of Israel's 75th Anniversary with Star-Studded Artists, Politicians & Cultural Guests

New York, NY (March 22, 2023) – The **Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan (MMJCCM)** has announced *Israel @ 75*, a celebration of Israel's milestone anniversary through arts, culture, and political events, happening late March through the end of June. The JCC's David H. Sonabend Center for Israel's programs will celebrate the country in a variety of ways, through Yom Ha'atzmaut and Yom Hazikaron events, and will welcome star-studded Israeli guests to examine culture, discuss hot topic issues, and offer music, dance, and comedy performances. *Israel @ 75* tickets are on sale now at mmjccm.org/israel-75.

"This year, with Israel at the center of a major debate that may redefine its core, it is more important than ever to shine a light on Israel's heart," shares **Udi Urman**, Director of the JCC's David H. Sonabend Center for Israel. "It is a critical time for New Yorkers to join in the conversation around both sides of the discussion, while at the same time acknowledging the great achievements of the country as it celebrates its 75th anniversary. We have created a multi-month celebration to join together and remember the good things, the values, and the culture that continue to make Israel what it is. From comedians to music, conversations with politicians to the people on the ground in Israel, we will take a deep dive and learn, laugh, sing, and celebrate the complexity of the state of Israel."

Israel @ 75 will offer a celebration of Israeli culture through music and dance performances including Jerusalem-based **c.a.t.a.m.o.n Dance Group** who will kick-off the three-month long celebration. On Wednesday, March 29, c.a.t.a.m.o.n will perform their newest piece [Somewhere](#) during their two-stop tour in New York City, which is choreographed by Elad Schechter, and performed by Korina Fraiman and Ido Gidron. Other performances during *Israel @ 75* include **DUGRI**, an Israeli-Palestinian social venture and rap group by Uriya Rosenman and Sameh SAZ Zakout on Thursday, March 30; and a special conversation and performance with Israeli pop sensation **Harel Skaat**, best known for representing Israel in the Eurovision Song Contest with the song "Milim," who will perform his greatest hits on Saturday, June 10. The JCC will also welcome Israeli comedian star **Avi Nusbaum** on Saturday, May 13, who returns to NYC after his last sold-out show to perform in Hebrew.

To celebrate Israel's 75th Yom Ha'atzmaut (Independence Day) on Tuesday, April 25, **Rabbi Joanna Samuels**, MMJCCM CEO, will join in conversation with **Lihi Lapid**, bestselling author, journalist, and public speaker whose husband, Yair Lapid, was Prime Minister of Israel in 2022 and is currently Leader of the Opposition. Rabbi Samuels and Lapid will discuss the strength of women, the unique challenges they face in Israel today, Lihi's own journey in the political arena and motherhood. The JCC will then partner with the Shalom Hartman Institute on Wednesday, April 26 for a live recording of the *Identity/Crisis Podcast* between host **Yehuda Kurtzer**, President of the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America, and **MK Merav Michaeli**, leader of Israel's Labour Party, who will discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by this current moment in Israel and the ways in which Israelis are responding to events as they unfold.

On Monday, April 24, in honor of Yom Hazikaron (National Remembrance Day), the JCC will host **Sharim Zikaron**, an evening of songs in memory of Israel's fallen soldiers and civilian victims of terrorism. And, at the 20th annual **Paul Feig z"l Tikkun Leil Shavuot** on Thursday, May 25–Friday, May 26, a free, revelatory night of study, film, music, dance, yoga, and more in celebration of Shavuot, the JCC will offer an *Israel @ 75* track to explore the unique reality of the Israel in this moment and beyond.

For more information about *Israel @ 75* events, and to purchase tickets, visit mmjccm.org/israel-75.

ISRAEL @ 75 LINEUP

c.a.t.a.m.o.n Dance Group Presents *Somewhere*

Wed, Mar 29, 7–8:30 pm

Enjoy an evening of dance presented by c.a.t.a.m.o.n Dance Group. Based in Jerusalem, c.a.t.a.m.o.n is a collaborative dance group and cultural organization. They will be performing their piece *Somewhere*. c.a.t.a.m.o.n Dance Group is a cultural organization established by choreographer Elad Schechter in Jerusalem in 2012. All the group's activities are grounded in creating diverse intercultural collaborations that create intense body-to-place experiences. By embodying the uniqueness of Jerusalem—its multicultural mosaic and the avant-garde spirit of young Jerusalem artists—c.a.t.a.m.o.n is excited to be taking both the physical and the celestial Jerusalem on tour.

About Somewhere

Somewhere, between the desire for a life of connection with our surroundings versus the desire to set the limits of our body, there lies an action. It is documented in movement and material. Similar to Italo Calvino's masterful book *The Invisible Cities*, this is how we depict distant islands becoming concrete material. Material recorded in space through sound, text, human movement, and color on the ground. Here the human body is shown devoid of tangible concepts. As if it is requiring us to rebuild fallen walls around our own island. Choreographed by Elad Schechter. Performed by Korina Fraiman and Ido Gidron.

DUGRI, Let's Talk Straight

Thu, Mar 30, 7–9 pm

In May 2021, a [blunt Jewish/Arab rap-battle music video](#) about history, war, family, trauma, and the Israeli-Palestinian reality went viral, serving as a mirror to society and evoking civil discourse on hatred, discrimination, and co-existence. From this phenomenon DUGRI was born, a social venture bringing Jews and Arabs together by creatively echoing a new, moderate Israeli-Palestinian narrative.

Join Israeli educator/creator Uriya Rosenman and Palestinian rapper Sameh SAZ Zakout to hear their mutual story and analysis of Jewish-Arab relations, a live performance of DUGRI's songs, and engage in an open and honest conversation with all the hard-hitting questions. This is a unique opportunity to engage with deep questions about the current reality in a new and fun way that is accessible to a broad audience.

Shabbat Shabbang: Yom Ha'atzmaut!

Fri, Apr 21, 7 pm

We begin every Shabbat Shabbang in the lobby for rituals and appetizers. It's a moment to come together as a Shabbat community and begin the process of letting go of the hustle of our week. From there we go off to our selected program rooms for a dairy meal, delicious wines, and an hour of stimulating conversations, artistic experiences, and illuminating learning opportunities. This shabbat will be all about Israel, with program options including concerts, talks, and lectures discussing Israel.

Sharim Zikaron

Mon, Apr 24, 7:30–8:30 pm

Join us for an evening of songs and remembrance for Yom Hazikaron, in memory of Israel's fallen soldiers and civilian victims of terrorism. *This event will be conducted in Hebrew.*

Lihi Lapid in Conversation with Rabbi Joanna Samuels

Tue, Apr 25, 7–8:30 pm

To celebrate Israel's 75th Yom Ha'atzmaut (Independence Day), Rabbi Joanna Samuels, CEO of the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, will join in conversation with Lihi Lapid. Lihi is a bestselling author, journalist, and speaker with a finger on the pulse of contemporary women's issues, whose husband, Yair Lapid, was Prime Minister of Israel in 2022 and is currently Leader of the Opposition. We will discuss the strength of women, the unique challenges they face in Israel today, and how we can be better to ourselves, as well as Lihi's own journey in the political arena and motherhood.

The Current Moment: Israel at 75

Wed, Apr 26, 7–8:30 pm

Join The David H. Sonabend Center for Israel and the Shalom Hartman Institute to celebrate *Israel @ 75*. Yehuda Kurtzer, President of the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America and host of the Identity/Crisis podcast, and MK Merav Michaeli, leader of Israel's Labour Party, will discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by this current moment in Israel and the ways in which Israelis are responding to events as they unfold.

Stand Up Comedy Night (in Hebrew)

Sat, May 13, 8:30–9:30 pm

One of Israel's funniest comedians will be live at the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan for the only NY show on his tour.

The Paul Feig z"l Tikkun Leil Shavuot

Thu, May 25–Fri, May 26

Come together with people from across the spectrum of Jewish life for a free, revelatory night of study, film, music, dance, yoga, and more in celebration of Shavuot. Come for the revelation, stay for the cheesecake! We will hold an *Israel @ 75* track to explore the unique reality of Israel in this moment and beyond.

Special Conversation + Performance with Israeli Pop Sensation Harel Skaat
Sat, Jun 10, 8:30–10:30 pm

Known simply as Harel, the Israeli singer and songwriter has won multiple “artist of the year awards” and sold out the biggest concert halls in Israel. He represented Israel in the Eurovision Song Contest 2010 with the song “Milim.” Harel has been singing and performing since he was a child. He will talk about his life, the songs that shaped his unique career, and perform some of his greatest hits.

Special Edition of TAMUZ

TAMUZ, the Center for Israel’s magazine, highlights various aspects of Israeli culture, society, and politics. Each issue features different artists, chefs, and public figures, with op-eds and articles delving into a topic of note. At this pivotal time, as Israel turns 75, a special edition of TAMUZ, in partnership with the Shalom Hartman Institute, will explore what the future holds for the Jewish state.

ABOUT THE MARLENE MEYERSON JCC MANHATTAN

Together with its community, the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan creates opportunities for people to connect, grow, and learn within an ever-changing Jewish landscape. Located on 76th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, the JCC is a vibrant non-profit community center on the Upper West Side. It also presents a robust slate of virtual programming, serving an even wider community. The JCC serves over 55,000 people annually through 1,200 programs each season that educate, inspire, and transform participants' minds, bodies, and spirits. Throughout COVID-19, the JCC has pivoted to meet the community online, exceeding 102,000 registrations to over 3,000 virtual classes and programs in the earliest part of the pandemic. Since its inception, the JCC has been committed to serving the community by offering programs, classes, and events that extend beyond neighborhood boundaries, reaching people at all stages of their lives.

Learn more at mmjccm.org

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