



Picasso Painting Sold While Escaping Nazi Persecution to Stay at the Met

A work of art painted by the iconic artist Pablo Picasso, and then allegedly sold by a Jewish businessman to fund his escape from Fascist Italy will remain with the Metropolitan museum of Art (MET). Earlier this week, United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ruled in favor of the Met citing that there was an “unreasonable” delay in the demand for the return of the artwork. Chief Judge Katzmann added, “This is not a case where the identity of the buyer was unknown to the seller or the lost property was difficult to locate.” In 1938, Paul and Alice Leffmann were living in Italy during the height of Mussolini’s fascist government. In their rush to raise cash and finance their escape to Switzerland, the Leffmanns, who had escaped the grasp of



Nazi Germany only a year earlier, sold their Picasso painting titled, “The Actor” to Kate Perls, a private dealer, for \$12,000. Three years later the painting was sold to American collector and arts patron, Thelma Chrysler Foy, daughter of Chrysler founder and automobile giant Walter Chrysler, for \$22,500. In 1952, Chrysler -Foy donated “The Actor” to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 2010, the Leffmann’s

great-grandniece, and administrator of the Leffmann estate, Laurel Zuckerman, sued for possession of the classic work. Upon filing the suit, Zuckerman’s Lawyer said, “We believe the painting is tainted by the history of the Holocaust, and the Leffmanns, given the circumstances under which they sold it, never lost title,” “The suit seeks the return of the painting or \$100 million in compensation.”

In 2018, the US District Court for the Southern District of New York ruled in favor of the Met, noting, while the Leffmanns might have been under some duress when they sold the painting, the defendant, Metropolitan Museum of Art had not been the source of that duress, nor had art dealer Kate Perls been the source of their duress. According to U.S. District Judge Loretta Preska, “The sale “occurred between private individuals, not at the command of the Fascist or Nazi governments,” and not be-


cause of a “wrongful threat.”

Lawyers for the Met argued, that based on 1938 figures, the Leffmanns did indeed receive fair value for the painting. Their lawyers contended the price the Leffmanns received was higher than other Picasso works were demanding in those days.

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Leffmanns made no claim on the work nor did they make any attempt to recover the work from the museum. Court documents revealed, while Paul Leffmann had made other restitution claims for Nazi-era losses, he never made any approach about recovering “The Actor.” Met lawyers also pointed out the painting had been on public display for 58

years prior to the Zuckerman suit. 

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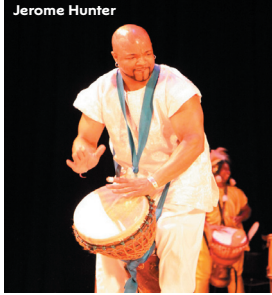
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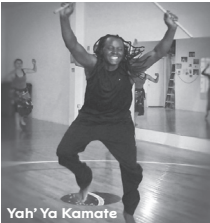
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AJC Disappointed by Supreme Court Decision on Gerrymandering


American Jewish Committee (AJC) is disappointed by the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Rucho v. Common Cause*, in which the Court held that partisan gerrymandering claims "present political questions beyond the reach of the federal courts."


In an amicus brief, AJC had urged the Court to find that partisan gerrymandering in fact violates the Constitution.

Justice Kagan, for herself and three other justices, sharply criticized the majority's decision. In her dissent, she agreed with AJC's view that there are "manageable judicial standards to resolve partisan gerrymandering claims," which can be applied fairly to the most egregious gerrymanders.

Justice Kagan emphasized that partisan gerrymandering "not only subverts democracy," but also "violates individuals' constitutional rights." She stressed that "partisan gerrymanders here debased and dishonored our democracy, turning upside-down the core American idea that all governmental power derives from the people."

Fundamental to American democracy, she said, is that "voters should choose their representatives, not the other way around." "We take some comfort in the fact that even the majority recognized that partisan

gerrymandering is 'incompatible with democratic principles' and emphasized that, while it is not an issue that the Court can resolve, other avenues of recourse are available to Congress and to the states," said AJC General Counsel Marc Stern. "We believe that it is critically important that society pursue such methods in order to eliminate the political distortions created by intentional gerrymandering." 

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friend, Herb
Oppenheimer is still
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him a visit or give him
a call. His phone
number is 973-634-
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visit the sick, even by
telephone.
Simon***

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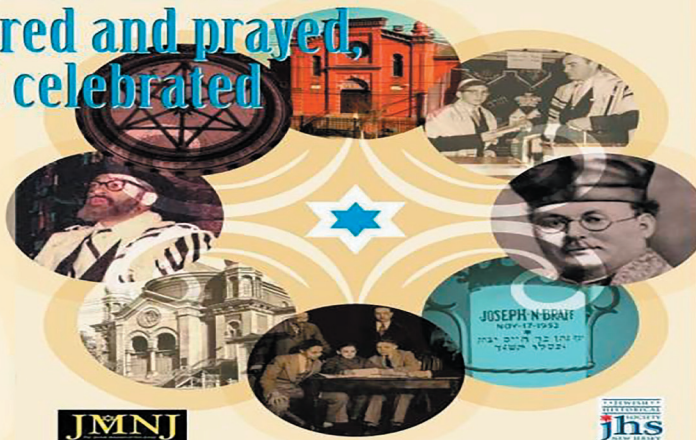
JUNE 2 to JULY 31, 2019



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Opening Reception
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Refreshments will be served
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For More Information Call

Lisa Suss, JCC curator, (973) 530-3413

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Simon Says

Weekly insights from Rabbi Simon Rosebach



Rabbi Simon Rosenbach

In this week's Parashah, God tells Moses to appoint one representative from each of the tribes (excepting Levi) to mount a scouting mission preparatory to a military attack on the inhabitants of Canaan. The spies returned at the end of 40 days, and ten of them report that the inhabitants are like giants and if the Israelites invaded, they would be defeated. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, urge the people to invade,

saying that the Israelites could conquer the land. As you know, the people accept the majority report, and God becomes angry, and imposes two penalties: the people will wander in the wilderness for a year for every day that the spies were reconnoitering the land (hence 40 years in the wilderness), and nobody alive over 20 (except Caleb and Joshua) would enter the land.

Thirty-eight years later, on the banks of the River Jordan, Moses launched into his three-day speech to the assembled Children of Israel. His memory was different that day:

Then all of you came to me and said, "Let us send men ahead to reconnoiter the land for us and bring back word on the route we shall follow and the cities we shall come to." I approved of the plan, and so I selected twelve of your men, one from each tribe. They made for the hill country, came to the Wadi Eshkol and spied it out. . . . And they gave us this report: "it is a good land that the Lord our God is giving to us." Yet you refused to go up, and flouted the command of the Lord your God. Your sulked in your tents

Besides conjuring the image of Achilles sulking in his tent (maybe the Deuteronomist was familiar with the Iliad), Moses speech imposes more guilt on the Children of Israel than they felt when

the story originally unfolded. More to the point, Moses imposes guilt of the Children of Israel who didn't have anything to do with the decision not to attack the inhabitants of Canaan.

It is one thing when the people had not part in the decision to send the spies to reconnoiter the land. That is the case in this week's Parashah. It is another thing when the people demand the survey party. In the latter case, the people look like (and are) ingrates: the people demanded a survey party, and they were upset with the results.

And Moses insults the people, who were all under 20 years of age, when he says, "Then all of you came to me." None of the people whom he was addressing came to him. Moreover, he chastises the people for "flout[ing] the command of the Lord your God," but God doesn't have anything to do with the decision to send out the survey party in the version that Moses recites on the riverbank.

Gunther Plaut, in his annotated Torah (the Reform Movement's standard Torah), says, "[David] Hoffman (an Orthodox rabbi and a Torah scholar who lived in Europe between 1840 and 1920) remedies the differences by seeing Moses in Numbers as a historian and in Deuteronomy as a moralist." But probably the account of the Moses who chastened the people in Deuteronomy was written by priests who wanted to get the attention of the people at the time (the mid- to late-7th century bce, during the reign of King Josiah). So everybody was guilty for forsaking the true God at that time, because in decades before that, King Manesseh (Josiah's grandfather) had installed idol worship in the Temple and had led the populace to turn away from the God of the Israelites. The Torah tells us much about the development of our religion, if we are able to decipher it. ☆



Help Us Remodel Our Kitchen

It's been estimated it will take \$60,000 to properly renovate our kitchen.

April Modlinger, who has always been a pillar at Congregation Ahavas Sholom, has generously pledged \$10,000 to making this happen.

We have recently received another pledge for \$2,200, bringing the total to 12,200.

With your help Congregation Ahavas Sholom will soon have a kitchen we all deserve.

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Kiddush Sponsorship

Kiddush was sponsored by Arkadi Vizel last week. Sponsoring Kiddush is \$150, which barely covers the cost of the lunch. Our goal is to have every Kiddush sponsored. To sponsor a Kiddush, email Rabbi Rosenbach or contact Alla Eicheldinger at Alla7815@yahoo.com. You can also help us by shopping, which doesn't cost any money, just a little time. We'll give you a list of items, you shop and we'll reimburse you.

Our Sister Synagogue in Uganda Needs Our Help

Ravaged by famine and drought, the Namutumba Synagogue is reaching out to us; let's not disappoint them.

The Namutumba Famine Relief Fund

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Shabbat Services

Join us this Saturday for Shabbat services. Strangers, visitors, friends, old and new; our doors are open to you. Looking for a new home? New members are always welcome at Congregation Ahavas Sholom services starts at 9:00AM. Our congregation is open and welcoming, so feel free to pay us a visit.



A choir is being formed to sing a few songs during the High Holiday services. Anyone interested in singing in the choir can come to the next rehearsal, during Kiddush this Shabbat, June 29, or call Fred Grabiner at (973) 420-3221.