



THE LAURA & ALVIN SIEGAL
LIFELONG LEARNING
PROGRAM

Jewish Explorations

Lectures • Programs • Views

ISRAEL: THEN AND NOW

Dear Friends,

I visited the Maltz Museum last week to get a glimpse of the soon-to-be-opened exhibition, “Israel Then and Now.” I found the walls painted a lush shade of blue, but the space still empty, anticipating state-of-the-art modules that are to be installed in the coming weeks. In the meantime, one lone wooden crate sits on the floor.

The Maltz staff were excited to tell me that this crate – which doesn’t look like much from the outside – holds “The Flag.” With two blue stripes and a single star sewn onto a white background, this flag contains no information about its dramatic history. But once it is installed, explanatory plaques and accompanying photos will tell its story: That it was hoisted on the mast of the Exodus ship, which set sail from France in 1947 carrying 4,500 displaced persons and Holocaust survivors who were seeking safe haven in pre-State Israel. Intercepted by the British, these refugees were sent back to France, then on to Germany where they remained in limbo for over a year before finally gaining entry to Israel.



When the exhibit is fully-mounted and opened to the public, docents and educators will elaborate on the flag’s powerful symbolism, and the stories it tells about refugees seeking a home, and about dramatic conflict over territorial control.

Of course, this flag is only one artifact among the many that will fill the lush-blue space. I draw attention to it here as a single example of the way that the Maltz - like all good museums - uses objects to stir the imagination and ignite conversation.

This season, I am thrilled to announce that CWRU-Siegal is working closely with the Maltz Museum to extend the stories of “Israel: Then and Now.” The many programs our two

organizations will be offering in partnership are designed to deepen the public's engagement with the exhibit, to enrich the viewing experience, and to provoke critical thinking about the stories it tells and their relevance.

Don't miss the opening event to be held on Sunday, September 23. And see [our website](#) for details about upcoming lectures to be delivered by professors of world-renown, courses, play readings, documentary films and moderated discussion. Members of either/both organizations receive discounts for all related programming. I look forward to seeing you at an "Israel: Then and Now" event soon!

Best,
Alanna E. Cooper
Director, CWRU Jewish Lifelong Learning