

Advanced Curatorial Education Programme Jerusalem 2018

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The Israel Museum, Jerusalem

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The latest seminar was a great opportunity to get a closer look at the rich collection of The Israel Museum in Jerusalem. This museum is particularly special in the respect that it covers Judaica objects from various communities worldwide. Director Ido Bruno welcomed us warmly with high personal expenditure and engagement, as did all the other professionals who supervised our stay. All workshops and tours were organized in a highly professional way, also regarding the scholarly level. I experienced a high interest and appreciation from the host as well as from the participants, thanks to Collections Manager Gioia Perugia and Michaela Feurstein-Prasser who organized the programme.

We started our program with curatorial tours through the Jewish Art and Life Wing, each gallery presented thoroughly by the respective curator. The workshops by Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek deepened my skills in analysing Judaica objects. These training sessions, for me, represented the most important part of the program as the acquired knowledge is directly usable for the day-to-day work in a Jewish museum. It was an enormous enrichment to compare the European pieces in the collection of The Israel Museum with the ones we know from European collections and former editions of the A-CEPs. An additional vital focus of a curator's work represents provenance research. Julie-Marthe Cohen explained and demonstrated relevant sources and tools based on her recently (with Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek) co-published handbook.

Later in the week we enjoyed a guided tour through the Israeli Art Wing as well as through the Archaeological Wing of the Israel Museum. Both put the Judaica collections of the museum in historical and contemporary framework. Last but not least Sharon Weiser Ferguson, curator of the Israel Museum, presented her recent exhibition *To Go – New Designs for Jewish Ritual Objects* to us, in which contemporary Judaica design reflects the perception of tradition, function and form.

The workshops with a variety of amulets by William Gross and the presentation of Italian Judaica objects in the U. Nahon Museum of Italian Jewish Art gave us the unique possibility to put hands on such pieces. In this very museum I saw for the first time a unique and typically Italian object, a so called "Sharvit", which fixes the Azei Chajim while lifting the Torah scroll.

As the research and exhibiting of Judaica objects are main tasks for Jewish museums, discussions about its presentation according to the embedding in the life cycle, the Jewish festivals or grouped by the country of origin, the different aims and means in our museums, multilingual texts and other curatorial questions were part of the enriching exchange with colleagues during these five days.

Having been able to participate in four previous A-CEPs, I see how my knowledge and experience have been continuously growing. I would really appreciate the opportunity to continue these courses which highly contribute to the knowledge of curators in Jewish museums.