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NEWS & VIEWS

March 1, 2019 | 24 Adar I 5779

Blog Edition



Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are published weekly in [Patheos](#).

Weaving a Mishkan for Every Age

Parashat Vayakhel (Exodus 35:1-38:20)

By Rabbi Dr. Michael Shire
Chief Academic Officer, Hebrew College



"And all the wise-hearted women spun with their own hands and brought what they had spun in

blue, purple, and crimson yarns and in fine linen. And all the women whose hearts uplifted them in wisdom spun the goat's hair". (Exodus 35:25-26)

Exactly one hundred years ago, in March 1919, the famous art school the Bauhaus was established in Weimar Germany. Known as a formative influence on the development of modern art, design and architecture, it featured such luminaries on its faculty as Walter Gropius, Wassily Kandinsky, Laszlo Moholy-Hagy and Marcel Breuer. In the aftermath of the first World War, these men (and the faculty were almost exclusively men) wanted to create a new world of simplicity, democracy and aesthetically created objects and environments. They wanted to put class struggle, national conflict and disregard for human life behind them. From Marcel Breuer's tubular steel chairs and tables (seen in most of our cafeterias today) to Mies Van de Rohe's rectilinear buildings, the Bauhaus has had an enduring influence on modernism. Many would say that the Bauhaus created the look of the modern era. However, the school lasted only 14 years, having moved cities three times, when it was finally closed by the Nazis in 1933 as antithetical to the fascist age as well as being a hotbed for Jews and Communists.

The curriculum of the school emphasized a training for specialized handicraft. Each student was expected to be imbued with a love of creativity, innovation and superior design and execution. Importance was placed on unity and harmony reflecting the natural world where form follows function. Students were required to take a one-year foundation course in which they experimented with the raw materials of paint and glass, metal and textile to find new and innovative ways to produce functional and streamlined artifacts that reflected the "truth" of the material. Men and women were admitted to the new school, but only men could graduate into the specialist workshops of furniture making, metal working and architecture. Somewhat strangely for such a forward-looking institution, women were only allowed to enter the weaving workshop and learn their trade in what was considered 'women's work'. One such woman was Otti Berger, a young Jewish woman who arrived in Germany from her native Croatia to enroll in the weaving workshop. A talented and dedicated weaver, Otti created new and innovative designs that were sold as part of the Bauhaus brand, and then, when called upon to solve the problem of new durable textiles for the men in the furniture making or architecture workshops, she combined elements to create the first plastic textiles.

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EVENTS

Helping People Suffering with Addiction
A Hebrew College Rabbinical School Yom Iyyun
 Day of Learning supported by the Ruderman Synagogue Inclusion Project, a partnership between the Ruderman Family Foundation and Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

Dying Well: Multi-Religious End-of-Life Conversations
 Sponsored by the Boston Theological Institute Lifelong Learning Consortium
 Featuring Rabbis Or Rose & Joel Baron, Rab` 14
 April 2 | 9am-3pm

March 6 | 8am - 3:30 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)

**Community Hevra Kadisha Zayin Adar
Commemoration Dinner**
Hebrew College President Sharon Cohen Anisfeld
will be the featured guest speaker
March 12 | 6-9 pm
Temple Emanuel
Newton, MA
Guests \$20 | Free for Hevra Kadisha members
[Learn more](#) | [Reservations](#)

**Alternative Realities: Purim & the
Possibility of Transformation**
Rabbis Ebn Leader, Nehemia Polen & Or Rose
March 18 | 8-10:15 pm
Israeli-American Council of Boston, Newton
[View English flyer](#) | [View Hebrew flyer](#)
\$10 | [Register](#)

Hebrew College
\$10-\$25 | [Register](#)

Torah Godly Play
May 19-20
8 am-3 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#) | [Register](#)



ANNUAL SPRING EVENT - SAVE THE DATE
Hebrew College Live!
Stories in Honor of Our Teachers
May 30 | 6:30 PM
Information coming soon | Questions? Contact
advancement@hebrewcollege.edu



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