

THE JewishMuseum OF MARYLAND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Jewish Museum of Maryland

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The Eight annual Herbert M. and Irma B. Risch Memorial Program on Immigration

Baltimore, MD: On Sunday, May 18th at 2:00pm the Jewish Museum of Maryland will hold its Eighth annual Herbert M. and Irma B. Risch Memorial Program on Immigration. This event is free and open to the public. It will take place at Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, 7401 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore.

The Risch memorial program is our largest and most important annual event in our calendar year. Each year we focus on a different aspect of the topic of immigration. This year, as JMM looks at cultural ties between the Chinese and the Jewish communities through its *Project Mah Jongg* exhibit, we have invited a very special expert on the Jews of East Asia to be our featured speaker. Rabbi Marvin Tokayer, former rabbi of the Jewish community of Japan and author of the *Fugu Plan*, will deliver the keynote presentation *From Poverty to Culture: The Refugee Community in Shanghai During World War II*.

You won't want to miss this powerful evocation of how the 20,000 Jews of Shanghai struggled against impossible odds to not only survive, but thrive in this unexpected refuge. Rabbi Marvin Tokayer will bring to life this unique immigrant story.

Rabbi Marvin Tokayer served as United States Air Force Chaplain in Japan, upon his discharge he returned to Tokyo to serve for eight years as the rabbi for the Jewish community of Japan. He wrote 20 books in Japanese, including several bestsellers; discovered literally the last of the Chinese Jews; located a long-lost Jewish cemetery in Nagasaki; contributed to the Encyclopedia Judaica; acted as a bridge for many travelers between East and West; served the needs of his congregation; and became spellbound by the threads of a story which he began piecing together. Rabbi Tokayer's new book, *Pepper, Silk and Ivory: Amazing Stories about Jews and the Far East*, co-authored with Dr. Ellen Rodman, has just been published.

This program is made possible through the generous support of Frank and Helen Risch. Frank's parents, Herbert H. and Irma B. Risch, sought refuge in Baltimore in 1937, fleeing the storm of Nazi persecution. Frank is a native Baltimorean, and though he no longer resides in the city he returns annually for this very special event.

This is an important and fascinating story, as such Mr Risch and Rabbi Tokayer will be available for interview. In addition we are aware of a number of survivors, who resided within Shanghai during World War II that are still living in Baltimore today.

For more information or tickets contact Trillion Attwood 410-732-6400
x215/tattwood@jewishmuseummd.org or visit jewishmuseummd.org.

The Jewish Museum of Maryland, at 15 Lloyd Street, Baltimore, MD, 21202 is America's leading museum of regional Jewish history, culture and community, located in downtown Baltimore, blocks from the Inner Harbor. Here at the JMM, visitors can uncover the roots of Maryland Jewish history in our landmark historic sites – the Lloyd Street Synagogue, built in 1845, now the nation's third oldest standing synagogue, and B'nai Israel Synagogue, built in 1876 and home to a vibrant congregation. Visit the JMM Sunday to Thursday from 10-5 for more tours, more programs and more fun! For more information visit our website at www.jewishmuseummd.org, email info@jewishmuseummd.org or call 410-732-6400.

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