

Tracing Jewish Histories (London, 19–20 May 25)

London, The Courtauld Institute of Art, Vernon Square campus, May 19–20, 2025

Deadline: Feb 27, 2025

Laura Feigen

The Courtauld Institute of Art and Case Western Reserve University are delighted to jointly host the two-day symposium "Tracing Jewish Histories: The Long Lives of Medieval Hebrew Manuscripts, Judaica, and Architecture".

Works of art and architecture made by or for Jewish communities in the medieval period are often examined through the lenses of persecution and expulsion, or are contrasted against Christian or Muslim "styles." This symposium seeks to expand and nuance these narratives in order to highlight how works of art and architecture can uniquely trace the history of particular Jewish communities by mapping their movements and traditions across generations and geographies. Medieval Jewish objects and spaces can also serve as loci to examine ideas related to collective memory and cultural identity. To that end, the symposium seeks to open new dialogues regarding the "afterlives" of medieval Jewish art writ large, initiating discussions regarding the ways in which works of art and architecture continued to bear witness to the richness of Jewish life and culture long after they were created.

The symposium will take place at The Courtauld Institute of Art's Vernon Square campus on 19-20 May 2025, and will bring together scholars and museum professionals. The first day will be dedicated to the presentation of new research while the second day will feature a roundtable with curators from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the Victoria & Albert Museum, and the J. Paul Getty Museum. The second day will also include a special, curator-led visit to the Victoria & Albert Museum for speakers and chairs only.

We invite submissions for 20-minute papers that investigate the trans-historic impact of art and/or architecture made by and for medieval Jewish communities. Submissions should respond to one of the following themes: manuscripts and printed books; metalwork and textiles; the architecture of secular and ritual spaces; and collecting practices.

Please send a paper title and abstract of no more than 200 words along with a CV to Laura Feigen (laura.feigen@courtauld.ac.uk) and Reed O'Mara (rao44@case.edu) by 27 February 2025. Travel bursaries will be available for a few early-career scholars and those without institutional support. Funds are limited, please email the organisers to discuss further.

This symposium is made possible by the support of Case Western Reserve University and the Mellon Foundation.

Reference:

CFP: Tracing Jewish Histories (London, 19-20 May 25). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 17, 2024 (accessed Dec 21, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/43146>>.