

Social Notes

ENGAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Dianne & Matthew Glass & Debbie & Irving Estein are pleased to announce the engagement of Michelle Glass to Roni Estein. Wedding to take place Sept. 3rd, 2006.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Earl and Lisa Raber are ecstatic to announce the arrival of their little girl, MIKA ERIN RABER, born Thursday, October 6th, 2005, at 8:14 pm, weighing 7 lbs, 6 oz and measuring 20 1/4 inches long.

Also excited about the arrival are brother Matthew Raber, and sister Megan Maister, grandparents Monte and Myrna Raber, Sam and Wendy Wilder, and great grandparents Max and Sally Nelko.

Mika, you are named after your great Baba Marcia and your great Zaida Aron (Harry) Raber, two very special people. So special that your mom and dad chose to get married on their anniversary. May you take on their strength, warmth, patience, understanding, happiness, and ability to love. We look forward to our lifetime together.

To our children, grandchildren and our relatives near and far and our dear friends

Thank you for sharing our joy as we celebrated our

65th Wedding Anniversary

Joe and Rose Mindell

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People

Veteran of Winnipeg acting scene new Winnipeg Jewish Theatre artistic director

Mariam Bernstein excited about new role

Longtime Winnipeg-based actor Mariam Bernstein is very excited about her new role as artistic director of the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre.

OUR LITTLE SHTETL



MYRON LOVE

"It's exciting to be able to choose the material, put together the artistic theme, choose the director and get people talking about the production," Bernstein says. "For me personally, this is an excellent opportunity for professional development."

The position had been vacant since Kayla Gordon's departure the season before last. Marla Aronovitch had been filling the position on an interim basis while also serving the WJT as general manager.

"It was too much for one person," says Bernstein, who had been a member of the WJT's artistic advisory committee for the past couple of years. "Marla asked me if I was interested in the role of artistic director."

Bernstein became interested in acting while at the University of Winnipeg. "I had a teacher who encouraged me," she says. "My teacher gave me the confidence to believe that I could make a go of it as an actor."

The budding actor graduated from the U of W with a double major in drama and French. After graduation, she spent a year in France as a teaching assistant. She also joined a theatre company while she was overseas.

On returning to Canada, she enrolled in a three-year program at the National Theatre School of Canada in Montreal. Following graduation, she worked in Toronto for a couple of years. She came back to Winnipeg in 1988.

"My family is here and there was more opportunity to work here," she says.

As an actor, she has found plenty of work in Winnipeg over the years. Her credits include roles at the Manitoba Theatre Centre (Melitta in "Mrs. Klein" and Marie-Ange in "Les Belles Soeurs" and Becky/Betsy in "The Heidi Chronicles"), Prairie Theatre Exchange (Zlateh in "Village of Idiots", Lady Aberdeen and Queen Victoria in "A Flush of Tories" Mrs. Yankl in "Crackpot", Baba Sawatsky and Yetta in "Selkirk Avenue" and other productions), Dry Cold Productions ("Into the Woods") and The WJT ("Ten By Ten"). She has also had roles in several movie and television productions filmed here in recent years and voiceovers, narration, radio dramas and readings and commercials.

She moved into directing as well as acting in the early 1990s. One of her earlier plays as a director was WJT's "The Always Prayer Shawl". "As an actor, I appreciate the control that the director has over the entire process," Bernstein

says. "As a director, you have more artistic control. You are better able to implement your vision."

In addition to being the WJT's artistic director, Bernstein is also the director for the theatre company's first two productions this season. She notes that she was invited to direct the season's first production, "Sight Unseen", before being asked to become artistic director. She reports that the production - about a Jewish artist who turns his back on his heritage and loses his sense of identity - met with critical and public acclaim.

The WJT will stage "Via Dolorosa", a one-man show by award-winning playwright David Hare, which presents Israeli and Arab views of the conflict in a

few months.

The following production is "Einstein's Gift", which is being directed Chris Sigurdson.

"We are still working on the financial situation," Bernstein says. "The WJT's endowment fund is doing very well. We are hoping that will assist us with longterm stability."

As well as being the WJT's artistic director, Bernstein continues to coach drama students privately - she has taught drama in the past at both PTE and the Manitoba Theatre for Young People - and look after her family (including husband Darrell Baran and daughters Hannah, 6, and Miranda, 8).

"I take opportunities as they come," she says.

Richard Kahan is also taking full advantage of the acting opportunities coming his way in Vancouver. The young former Winnipegger currently has a regular role in the hit science fiction series "The 4400" (on Channel 39, the Space Station).

"The 4400" is a story of 4,400 individuals who had disappeared at different times from different (Cont. on page 9. See "People".)

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People/community news

Jewish Book Fair (Cont. from page 7.)

Scholastic Canada's "Dear Canada" series of stories about Canada for teen readers. "I knew that Scholastic hadn't done a World War II book in the series yet," she says. "I really wanted to do it. I felt that I would be able to do such as story justice with my background and the amount of writing I have done in the Holocaust. I wanted it to be a Canadian and a Jewish story. I want students to know what happened to the Jews in the war and Canada's record."

The positive side of that record was that a million Canadians enlisted. That number included a sizeable Jewish representation. (One of the characters in Matas' novel, Devorah's brother, is a pilot in the RAF.) The Jewish population had the highest percentage of any ethnic/religious group serving in the Canadian armed forces during the war.

On the negative side of the ledger, the Canadian government had a policy from the mid-1930s on of denying Jews entry into this country. Matas noted that she approaches students with a Holocaust background differently than other



CAROL MATAS: "I wanted it to be a Canadian and a Jewish story," she says of her new novel.



CAROL ROSE: She looked at how Bible stories can be related to Kabbalah.

students. For those other students, she talks about the basics of anti-Semitism and how it grew in Europe and led to the Holocaust.

"I show how the Jews were used historically as scapegoats," she says. "I also talk about Canada's record."

Most of the Jewish students she encounters had great grandparents or other relatives who served in Canada's military in World War II, she noted.

"A million Canadians served in the Canadian Armed Forces in World War II," she said. "The population at the time was only about 11 million."

She also noted that Jewish personnel made up about 10 per cent of the Canadian armed forces during the war. That was the largest percentage of any ethnic or religious group in Canada.

"As Canadians and Jewish Canadians, we had

People (Cont. from page 8.)

places over the past 70 years or so who all reappear at the same time in Seattle. Each one of the returnees has come back the same age they were when they left and each has a miraculous new ability which can be used for good or ill.

"I play Marco, a scientist who works with the two lead investigators," Kahan says. "The show started last year as a five-part mini-series and broke all viewing records for cable TV. It was nominated for three Emmys and was picked



RICHARD KAHAN: He has a regular role in the hit science fiction series "The 4400" on Channel 39.

"Mork and Mindy" biopic in which he played fictional "Mork and Mindy" writer Alan Davis, the new Fox series "Reunion", the new science fictions series "Stargate: Atlantis" and "Smallville".

"It's been fun," Kahan says. "I do a little bit of everything. There has been a lot of film and television work in Vancouver so I have been keeping very busy."

He says he is staying in Vancouver for now but doesn't know what the future holds.

Kahan was last in Winnipeg to visit his family at Yom Tov.

much to be proud of," she noted. "But then there was also Canada's exclusionary policy for Jewish refugees attempting to flee Europe and the Nazis."

She notes that Jewish Canadians made up just one per cent of the country's population during the war years and suggests that lack of numbers and clout was one reason Canadian Jewry's lobbying efforts were unsuccessful.

On Sunday, December 18, Carol Rose led a session at the Book Fair looking at how the Bible stories can be related to Kabbalah and specifically the four levels of the Pardes.

"The stories can help us understand our own lives," Rose said. "We also explored how the four levels or worlds of the Pardes can be applied to our lives."

Jewish Child and Family Service reaches out to isolated women

JCFCS is offering an eight-week group for older women whose quality of life may have diminished and are feeling isolated and alone. Taking Charge, as the name of the group suggests, will help women to feel empowered in an effort to find ways to make positive changes in their lives. The group will be led by Einat Keynan, a social worker who has had many years of experience working with groups for seniors. She will be assisted by Bonnie Johnson, who is a Faculty of Social Work student. The group will concentrate on helping women rebuild their lives, make new friends and become more involved in the community. Please read the ad below for details on how to register for this group.



TAKING CHARGE - A WORKSHOP SERIES FOR OLDER WOMEN

A group for older women to discuss issues such as life transitions, self esteem and making connections. In a warm and supportive atmosphere the group will empower women who may feel isolated and alone to enable them to make positive changes in their lives, make new friends and become more involved in community activities.

Dates: Tuesdays, February 14 to April 4 (8 weeks)

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Location: Gwen Selter Creative Living Centre

Fee: \$5.00 per session to cover the costs of soup and a sandwich which is served each time

Group leaders: Einat Keynan, MSW and Bonnie Johnson

Transportation will be provided if necessary.

Contact Cheryl Hirsch Katz at Jewish Child and Family Service - by January 18th at 477-7436 to apply to participate in this group.

In next week's Jewish Post & News:

- Paul Rusesabagina tells the real story he played the central role in, that inspired the movie, Hotel Rwanda to 1500 people at the University of Manitoba
- With our next issue - "Beautiful Brides" supplement featuring many Winnipeg Jewish wedding photos from 2005

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