

# Forgetting or Remembering - Child Migration in Museums

A **Child in the World** seminar for people working in museums, heritage, academia, education, community work and/or with an interest in child migrants



(The Shleimowitz sisters, Ukrainian Jewish refugees, Eastleigh, 1920s. Picture reproduced by kind permission of Tony Kushner)

**Place: V&A Museum of Childhood,  
Bethnal Green**

**Date: Monday 18 March 2013**

**Time:**

**17.30 – 18.30 presentations**

**18.30 – 19.00 questions and discussions**

How do we represent the experience of child migrants in museums and heritage? What is included or excluded, remembered or forgotten? Whose identity and voice are represented and how do we engage adults and children from all backgrounds in thinking about migration?

This seminar draws on the experiences of *Kindertransport* refugee children in the 1930s; child migration schemes from the UK to Australia and Canada between the 1860s and 1960s including from Dr Barnardo's homes in Barkingside and Stepney; and more recent migration of Eastern European children to Glasgow.

**Tony Kushner** explores how a country such as Britain, which prides itself on its innate tolerance and decency, remembers past intolerance. Moments of perceived generosity such as *Kindertransport* are often celebrated at the expense of migrants who were excluded or deported. This talk will explore the ethical dimensions to remembering and forgetting and the significance this has for museums.

**Rachel Mulhearn** shows how child migration schemes had profound consequences for those involved, raising questions of belonging, identity and personal agency. She explores the interpretation approaches used in the exhibition, *On their Own: Britain's child migrants* (Australian National Maritime Museum 2010), including how the identity and voice of the migrant child is represented.

**Carrie Ann Newman** shares her experience of enabling children to think across cultures and share their perception of migration through photography, visual art and creative writing. The project drew on research by Strathclyde University into East European child migrants' experiences and resulted in the exhibition *At Home Abroad: Migration Through Children's Eyes* (Scotland Street School Museum 2012).

## Biographies of speakers

**Tony Kushner** is Professor in History and Director of the Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/non-Jewish relations at the University of Southampton. He is the author of eight monographs, including *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (Manchester University Press, 2006) and *Anglo-Jewry since 1066: Place, Locality and Memory* (Manchester University Press, 2009). His most recent book is *The Battle of Britishness: Migrant Journeys since 1685* (Manchester University Press 2012). He is currently working on a study of the construction of ethnicity in the British armed forces and a longer-term project on Holocaust journeys.

**Rachel Mulhearn** is an independent cultural heritage consultant who previously worked at National Museums Liverpool, most recently as Director of Merseyside Maritime Museum. Her curated exhibitions include *On Their Own: Britain's child migrants* and at the International Slavery Museum. She has published and presented papers internationally about Liverpool's maritime history and the role of maritime museums. She was recently a research partner in the AHRC-funded project Mapping Memory on the Liverpool Waterfront, a collaboration with the University of Liverpool.

**Carrie Ann Newman** is a community artist whose particular focus is on migration and intercultural living and thinking. She developed the *Curious* Learning Programme with Glasgow Museums as part of a Legacy Trust UK larger project. She has extensive experience of working in theatre and visual culture with young people from diverse backgrounds, has curated several exhibitions and, since 2007, directed an intercultural production for Refugee Week with her company Theatre Found.

This seminar is part of a series organised within the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award Programme *The Child in the World: Empire, Diaspora and Global Citizenship* involving Queen Mary, University of London and the V&A Museum of Childhood.

### Admission is free

To book a place please email: [mocbookings@vam.ac.uk](mailto:mocbookings@vam.ac.uk) or ring 020 8983 5205

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