

2005

Yulie Gerstel Visit

Department of History

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The Cultural Affairs /Distinguished
Lecture Series Committee
Grant Application

I. Applicant Organization: Department of History

II. a. Responsible Organization Officer: Alexander Grab

b. Title: Professor of History

c. Campus Address: Dept of History
Stevens Hall
First Class
Ph. 1928

III. Summary of program requiring funding:

A visit by an Israeli film maker Yulie Gerstel at UM

I am asking for funding to help bring Yulie Cohen Gerstel, an Israeli film director and producer, to UM to show and discuss her two films "My Terrorist" and "My Land Zion." The two events will take place on Monday and Tuesday, 24 and 25 October at 7:30 PM at 100 DP Corbett Hall. Ms Gerstel will also appear at the WIC luncheon series on Tuesday, 25 October and will speak on Israeli women and her own experience as a film maker in Israel.

IV. a. Total Funding for program: \$1257

b. Amount committed by applicant organization: \$100

c. Amount committed from other funding sources: \$425

d. Amount requested of Cultural Affairs/DLS Committee: \$625

~~\$1000~~
625

PROPOSAL

To: Cultural Affairs Committee
c/o Carole Gradner
200 Alumni Hall

From: Alex Grab,
History Department
265 Stevens Hall
x11928

About: **Distinguished Lecture Funding** for 24 & 25 October 2005 visit by an Israeli film maker Yulie Gerstel at UM.

Request

I am asking for funding to help bring Yulie Cohen Gerstel, an Israeli film director and producer, to the UM campus to show and discuss her two videos "My Terrorist" and "My Land Zion." The two events will take place on Monday and Tuesday, 24 and 25 October 2005 at 7:30 PM at 100 DP Corbett Hall. Ms Gerstel will also appear at the WIC luncheon series on Tuesday, 25 October and will speak on Israeli women and her own experience as a film maker in Israel. All events are free and open to the public.

I am anticipating expenses of \$ 1257.

I have received pledges of support for the total amount of \$525 from various departments including the History Department. I am requesting \$625 from the Distinguished Lecture Series.

Background

Ms Gerstel is an Israeli citizen. She was born and grew up in Israel. She earned her BA at Tel Aviv University and an MA with distinction in Communication Art from New York Institute of Technology. During the 1980s Gerstel worked in film making in New York and Los Angeles. In 1993, after returning to Israel, she became an independent film maker.

Her two videos, "My Terrorist" (58 minutes) and "My Land Zion" (57 minutes), discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, now more than a century old,

from Ms. Gerstel's very unique perspective. Both videos are challenging and provocative and have been shown in various forums such as TV programs (including the BBC), film festivals, and campuses in Israel, Europe, and the US. They have been acclaimed by film critics and scholars.

"My Terrorist," which was produced in 2002, deals with Gerstel's efforts to help obtain the release of an Arab terrorist, Mihyi Fahad, who wounded her more than twenty years before in London while she worked as a stewardess for the Israeli airline El Al. This unique effort, which aroused controversy in Israel, reflects Gerstel's questioning of the cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians and her wish to contribute to the reconciliation between the two sides. The film "My Terrorist" won the Special Jury Prize at the Jerusalem Film Festival and the Silver Wolf Nomination at the Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival. Various critics called the film, "Absorbing" "riveting" and "a moving and personal account of one woman's struggle to step outside the cycle of retribution."

In "My Land Zion" Gerstel examines the question of the injustice caused to the Palestinian people during the Israeli-Arab war of 1948. About 700,000 Palestinians became refugees during that war. Israelis call this war the War of Independence, while Palestinians call the events of 1948 the Naqba (catastrophe). Gerstel wonders what kind of future awaits her two young daughters in a country torn by war. Demonstrating an unusual degree of candor, Gerstel questions her father about the role he played as a member of the Jewish militia in 1948 in displacing Palestinians. Gerstel interviews a Holocaust survivor and draws some parallels between the murder six of million Jews during the Holocaust and the tragic conditions of the Palestinian refugees. She tackles difficult questions such as what the land means to the Israelis and whether one should defend the land at all costs, including with one's life. The BBC reporter Nick Fraser commented "Yulie Gerstel goes straight to the heart of Israeli identity in this passionately developed film."

Program

In the second half of October, Ms. Gerstel will be touring the US, showing and discussing her videos on various campuses including Harvard University, Rutgers, and at the Art Institute in Chicago. "My Land Zion" will also be shown at the Hamptons Film festival in New York. Since other institutions are paying for Gerstel's trip to the US, I took advantage of this opportunity to invite Ms. Gerstel

to the University of Maine.

Ms. Gerstel will show her two videos and respond to questions about their contents and production on 24 & 25 October 2005. She will also talk about women in Israel and her experience as a film producer in Israel in the Women in the Curriculum Luncheon series on 25 October.

The Women in the Curriculum and Women's Studies Program have purchased video copies of both films from Women Make Movies. After the showings they will be housed in their media resources for use by people from the University as well as the wider community.

This will be a unique experience for our students. Rarely do they have the opportunity to hear Israeli visitors speaking on the volatile Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Obviously, faculty, administrators and any members of the University will benefit from that opportunity as well. Moreover, I intend to advertise the showing throughout the Bangor area, including the Jewish and Moslem communities. In sum, I expect much interest and very good attendance in those events.

BUDGET

Flight from NYC to Bangor -	\$370
Bus to Boston -	\$ 35
Honorarium -	\$500
Lodging at Black Bear Inn (two nights) -	\$192
Publicity -	\$ 100
Meals -	\$ 60

Total \$1257

Contribution by Department of History \$ 100

Contribution by various departments (English, Economics, Modern Language, Honors, Political Science, Sociology) \$ 425

Requested from Cultural Affairs/DLS Committee \$625