

News Release
Public Information
Department

The Jewish Journey: Frédéric Brenner's Photographic Odyssey
A Portrait of Jewish Diversity on view October 3, 2003 through
January 11, 2004 at the Brooklyn Museum of Art

August 2003

Contemporary French photographer Frédéric Brenner has spent the last twenty-five years traveling the world documenting the lives of Jews in over forty countries on five continents. More than 140 of his most compelling photographs drawn from approximately 80,000 negatives will be presented in ***The Jewish Journey: Frédéric Brenner's Photographic Odyssey***, at the Brooklyn Museum of Art from October 3, 2003 through January 11, 2004.

Born in Paris in 1959 and trained in social anthropology, Brenner also draws upon history and philosophy for his project to capture images of the Jewish Diaspora in such places as India, Italy, China, Ethiopia, Yemen, Mexico, Russia, Canada, America, and Israel. By establishing visual histories of Jewish communities in flux, Brenner records the evolution of Jewish civilization, debunking stereotypes and illuminating the concept of cultural diversity while exploring the myriad reinventions of the Jewish people.

Brenner made his first photograph—a child dressed as an angel running down a back alley in the Mea Shearim quarter of Jerusalem—when he was 18 years old. Since then, tens of thousands of Brenner's contrasting and contradictory photographs have challenged society's stereotypical images of what it means to be Jewish.

By photographing Jewish subjects such as a village woman in Ethiopia, a man of Iraqi origin in Calcutta, leather-clad bikers in Florida and barbers with Muslim customers in Tajikistan, he has created a new vision of Jewish life in far-flung corners of the world.

Frédéric Brenner

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His visually stunning, exquisitely crafted black-and-white photographs—many of which were taken with wide-angle lenses—act as a metaphor for the scope and dynamism of one of the world's oldest, most diverse cultures. Unlike more conventional photographic depictions of Jewish life, which tend to focus on specific moments or high points, Brenner's portraits capture both ordinary and extraordinary individuals and groups set up for the camera.

The Jewish Journey: Frédéric Brenner's Photographic Odyssey at the Brooklyn Museum of Art is being organized by guest curator Dara Meyers-Kingsley. It is made possible by the Righteous Persons Foundation and other generous friends of the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Coinciding with the exhibition's opening will be the two-volume book *Diaspora: Homelands in Exile*, published by Harper Collins. A worldwide tour will follow the BMA's exhibition. Venues are to be announced.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:

Contribution \$6; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$3. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. **Bus:** B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.