



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 14, 2009

Media Contact: Sarah Chandler, 646-245-2076

events@everythingisgod.com

www.everythingisgod.com

### **What is the "New Jewish Spirituality"?**

Expert panel discusses resurgence of Jewish spirituality,  
while "Spiritual Woodstock" fair showcases it with over thirty participating organizations

New York, NY. Amid a widespread increase in spirituality among a new generation of post-denominational Jews, an expert panel is convening at the Center for Jewish History in Manhattan to discuss the trend -- followed by an unusual "spiritual Woodstock" fair featuring its most prominent leaders. The events take place Thursday, October 29, beginning at 6pm.

The panel features Dr. Caryn Aviv (University of Denver; author, *New Jews: The End of the Jewish Diaspora*), Dr. Jonathan Brent (executive director, YIVO Institute), Rabbi Michael Paley (UJA-Federation of Greater New York), Rabbi David Ingber (spiritual director, Romemu), and Jay Michaelson, whose new book, *Everything is God: The Radical Path of Nondual Judaism*, is the first major book of theology by a member of the so-called "New Jewish Culture." Published October 13, *Everything is God* (Shambhala/Trumpeter) is currently the best selling book in the Jewish Theology category on Amazon.com.

With both academics and practitioners on board, the panel will discuss the "new Jewish culture" and the new forms of Jewish spirituality emerging in the 21st century, how such forms resemble and differ from past ones, and what it means that Jews are post-denominationally and cross-culturally creating their own religious and secular approaches to Jewish spirituality.

"This is the Judaism of the iPod," said Michaelson. "Buddhist meditation, environmental activism, Hasidic theology, feminism and queer theory, hip-hop, postmodern ethics -- everything is on the playlist."

Presented by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, the Forward newspaper, and the Jewish journal Zeek, the panel discussion will be followed by a "Spiritual Woodstock" fair of contemporary organizations working and creating new spiritual and religious forms within the New Jewish Culture. The fair will provide an opportunity to encounter this new flowering of Jewish spiritual creativity firsthand, meeting directly with some of its leading institutions.

Participating "New Jewish Culture" organizations include Altshul, the AJWS-AVODAH Partnership, Brooklyn Jews, Brooklyn Jewish Meditation Center, Eden Village Camp, Hazon, Jewschool, Kehilat Hadar, Kirtan Rabbi, Kohenet, Kol Zimrah, Makom@JCC, Mechon Hadar, Mimaamakim, Moishe House Hoboken, Moving Traditions, Nehirim: GLBT Jewish Culture and Spirituality, New Shabbat Table, Romemu, Shemspeed, Tel Shemesh, Teva Learning Center, and Zeek. The fair will also include performances by "Kabbalistic hip-hop" duo Darshan, and Orthodox performance poet Matthue Roth.

The panel and fair together represent an unprecedented opportunity to explore emerging forms of Jewish spirituality and their significance for the American Jewish future. Over 200 RSVP's to the event have already been received on Facebook.

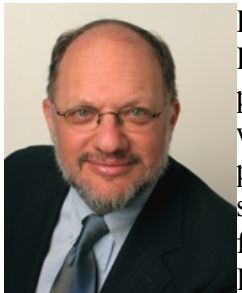
#### Panelists' bios:



Dr. Caryn Aviv is the Posen Lecturer in Secular Jewish Culture in the Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Denver, where she directs the Certificate Program in Jewish Communal Service and teaches courses about contemporary Jewish communities. Caryn is the co-author of *New Jews: The End of the Jewish Diaspora* (New York University Press 2005), and *Queer Jews* (Routledge 2002). She is also the director of research for Jewish Mosaic: The National Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity.



Dr. Jonathan Brent is the Executive Director of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Prior to joining YIVO, Brent was editorial director at Yale University Press for eighteen years. Brent is the author of *Inside the Stalin Archives* and *Stalin's Last Crime* among other books, and is currently at work on a biography of Isaac Babel. Among Dr. Brent's scholarly interests are the manifold ways in which Eastern European Jews responded to the challenges of modernity and secularism.



Rabbi Michael Paley is the scholar in residence and director of the Jewish Resource Center of the UJA-Federation of New York. He is an adjunct professor at the Columbia School of Journalism. Prior to his arrival at UJA, he was a professor of Jewish Studies and dean at Bard College and the vice president of the Wexner Heritage Foundation. For many years, Rabbi Paley served as the university chaplain at Columbia University. Rabbi Paley was the founder and first director of the Edgar M. Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel.



Jay Michaelson is the author of *Everything is God: The Radical Path of Nondual Judaism*. A recent visiting professor at Boston University Law School, Jay is the executive director of Nehirim: GLBT Culture & Spirituality, and a columnist for the *Forward*, *Huffington Post*, *Zeek*, and *Tikkun*. Previous books include *God in Your Body: Kabbalah, Mindfulness, and Embodied Spiritual Practice* and *Another Word for Sky: Poems*. Michaelson has taught Jewish mysticism at Yale University and City College of New York, and is completing his Ph.D. in Jewish Thought at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



Rabbi David Ingber is the founder and spiritual director of Romemu: Judaism for Mind, Body, and Spirit. Rabbi Ingber has learned at yeshivot from the ultra-orthodox Yeshivat Chaim Berlin to Yeshivat Chovovei Torah, and spent ten years studying yoga, shiatsu, pilates, kung fu, and Tai Chi. David received his rabbinic ordination from Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi in 2004 and served as the Rabbi in Residence at Elat Chayyim Retreat Center for two years.

### **Calendar Editors**

**WHAT:** Everything is God: A "Jewish Spiritual Woodstock"

**WHEN:** October 29, 2009

**WHERE:** Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY

**COST:** \$5 in advance/\$7 at door

**INFO:** [www.everythingisgod.com](http://www.everythingisgod.com) • [events@everythingisgod.com](mailto:events@everythingisgod.com)

**PRESS:** For additional press materials, photos, to arrange interviews, and to obtain press passes, please contact Sarah Chandler at (646) 245-2076 or [events@everythingisgod.com](mailto:events@everythingisgod.com)