



American Sephardi Federation
with **Sephardic House**

at the **Center for Jewish History**

15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011
Tel: 212 294-8350 Fax: 212 294-8348
e-mail: asf@cjh.org http://www.asfonline.org

Leon Levy, Honorary Lifetime President

David E. R. Dangoor President

Morrie R. Yohai Vice President, Programming

Esme Emmanuel Berg Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike M. Nassimi Chairman of the Board

STEERING COMMITTEE

Marc Angel	Moses Hy Harary
Jack Azose	Stella Levi
Carole Basri	Joel Marcus
Norman Belmonte	David Moche
Carlos Benaim	Mike M. Nassimi
Norman Benzaquen	David Ribacoff
Esme Emmanuel Berg	Robert Shasha
David E. R. Dangoor	Ralph Sutton
Karen Erani	Florence A. Tatistcheff
Murray Farash	Gwen Zuares

Elie Abadie	Norman Lawi
Jack Abraham	Morris Levy
Isaac Ainetchi	Sandra Malamed
Vivette Ancona	Alan Matarasso
Ralph Anzaroot	Albert Nassim
Isaac Assael	Edgar Nathan
Amram Attias	Max Negrin
Jack Avital	David Nissani
Herbert Barbanel	Bernard Ouziel
Josef Bildirici	Sarina Roffe
James H. Caspi	Joan Roth
Isaac Dabah	Clifton Russo
Martin Elias	Victor H. Saltiel
Kayvan Hakim	Jack Shakarchy
Joe Halio	Albert Sibony
Juliette Halioua	Moses Silverman
Moshe Labi	Gilles Sion

REGIONAL REPRESENTATION

Leon L. Levy, PA	Sol Hasson, IL
Sami Totah, DC	Deanna Pool, MO
Gwen Zuares, DC	Janice Halfon, WA
Armando Franco, FL	Max Candiotty, CA
Solomon Garazi, FL	Mitch Julis, CA
Serge Otmezguine, FL	Jose Nessim, CA
Michael Azose, IL	

ADVISORY BOARD (IN FORMATION)

Jane Gerber	Maurice Shohet
Arnie T. Goldfarb	Stanley Uhrman
Marcello Hallake	Salomon Vaz Dias
Joshua Plaut	Nina Weiner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Esme E. Berg
Director
American Sephardi Federation
212-294-8820, eberg@asf.cjh.org

Tamara Moscovitz
Public Relations Director
Center for Jewish History
212-294-8303;tmoscovitz@cjh.org

**A Unique View of the Culture, Art, and Music of Italy's
Western Sephardi, Roman, and Ashkenazi Jews**

Three-Day Weekend of Lectures, Exhibits, and Concerts

Co-sponsored by the American Sephardi Federation, the Edmond J. Safra Synagogue, and Centro Culturale Primo Levi

Friday, May 14th, 2004-Sunday, May 16th, 2004

New York, NY—May 3, 2004 -- Italian luminaries from Rome, Venice and Torino, Italy will be featured speakers for three-days of festivities -- *The Italian Experience Weekend – A Celebration of Italian Jewry* – to be held Friday, May 14-Sunday May, 16 in New York City. The *Italian Experience Weekend* focuses on the rich history, culture, art scholarship of the Italian-Jewish community, one of the oldest groups of Jews to emigrate from ancient Palestine to Europe, The 9th in the “Sephardic Experience Weekend Series,” this offering will enlighten, stimulate, and enrich the knowledge of those interested in Italian Jewish culture and history.

Friday, May 14th, 2004 -- Gathering for Sabbath services at the Edmond J. Safra Synagogue, 11 East 63rd Street at 6:45 p.m., guests will be treated to a dinner that will be a true historical culinary journey – the cuisine of Roman, Western Sephardi, and Ashkenazi Jews – groups that came together in the Italian peninsula. Following dinner, **Amos Luzzatto**, a noted Talmud scholar and President of the Federation of Italian Jewish Communities will discuss “**Jewish Studies in Today’s Italy.**”

Saturday, May 15th, 2004 -- Following morning services at the Edmond J. Safra Synagogue and a Shabbat lunch, Professor **Dario Calimani** from the University of Venice and President of the Jewish Community of Venice, will examine “*Italian Jewish Communities: from Past to Future.*” The celebration will continue at 9:30 p.m. at Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70 Street with a **concert of baroque, operatic, choral, and folk music from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries.** Organized by renowned musicologist Francesco Spagnolo, the concert will be led by choirmaster Leon Hyman.

Sunday, May 16th, 2004 -- The final event takes place at the Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street, and will offer a special preview of the exhibit "**Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani: A Life for Peace and Democracy.**" The brother of the world-renowned painter Amedeo Modigliani, he was one of Italy's foremost vocal anti-war activists and a proponent of the unification of Europe at the dawn of World War I. A union leader in his early years, he later delivered more than 100 lectures in the U.S. under the auspices of Local 89 (the Local Garment Union) to raise awareness of the dangers of the Nazi and Fascist regimes. Modigliani's life and work will be examined through an exhibit of his correspondence, political writings, posters, and photographs from the Italian National Archives. The exhibit is on view from May 16 to September 1, 2004 at the Center for Jewish History.

In conjunction with the preview on May 16, a panel discussion on "**Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani and the Italian Jewish Intellectuals from the Unification to the Rise of Fascism (1860-1924)**", will feature Professor **Vittorio Dan Segre**, Director of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies at University of Lugano, who will open the program with a historical overview. The noted Italian journalist **Andrea Fiano**, will serve as moderator, and will be joined by **Viviana Simonelli** and **Luisa Montevicchi**, co-curators of the exhibition and fellow journalist **Maurizio Molinari**. A light Italian buffet follows. The program is organized by the Centro Culturale Primo Levi at the Center for Jewish History in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute, the Fondazione Modigliani, the Italian National Archives and the American Sephardi Federation with Sephardic House.

Reservations

Sabbath meals will take place at the Fifth Avenue Synagogue, 5 East 62nd Street. The cost of the entire program is \$150.00. The Friday night dinner and Saturday luncheon are \$50.00 each. Saturday's concert followed by dessert, and the symposium on Sunday, followed by a light Italian Buffet, are \$35.00 each. **Reservations are required.** For further information, please contact The American Sephardi Federation at 212-294-8350 or by email to isperling@asf.cjh.org.

The American Sephardi Federation is a national Jewish organization dedicated to strengthening and unifying the American Sephardic community and promoting its spiritual, cultural and social traditions. ASF serves as the coordinating body and resource for all of the American Sephardi communities. Since its arrival at the Center for Jewish History, the archival holdings and library of ASF have been enriched with valuable records of personal and community history. For more information, call 212-294-8350 or visit www.sephardichouse.org.

The Edmond J. Safra Synagogue was the dream of Edmond J. Safra, the world renowned banker and philanthropist. Through the hardwork and dedication of his widow, Lily Safra, the synagogue was completed and inaugurated in December 2003. Under the spiritual leadership of Rabbi Elie Abadie, the dream of the late Mr. Safra is becoming a reality. The synagogue is home to the Sephardic community on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. There is a daily minyan, Friday night and Shabbat services, a Beit Midrash program, as well as an array of cultural, social, and religious events.

The Centro Culturale Primo Levi joined the Center for Jewish History in June 2003, under the umbrella of the American Sephardi Federation. The Centro Culturale is an offspring of the Genoa-based organization of the same name and is dedicated to creating a growing, dynamic and contemporary context for Italian-Jewish studies in North America. The organization will function as a department of Italian studies at the Center and will provide a U.S.-based interface and access point for the archives and libraries of all the Italian-Jewish communities, including the Central Library of the Jewish Communities of Italy