

For Immediate Release
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**"OCTOBER 7, 1944", ORIGINAL JONAH BOKAER WORK COMMISSIONED
BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY, OPENS OCTOBER 7
AT YESHIVA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM @ THE CENTER FOR JEWISH HISTORY**

Bokaer Dance/Film installation Is Inspired by Women Hanged for Role in Auschwitz Rebellion

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New York City, October 3 - The world premiere of choreographer Jonah Bokaer's "Four Women," a dance/film installation inspired by four women who were hanged for their participation in an attempted rebellion in Auschwitz on October 7, 1944, opens at the Center for Jewish History on October 7. The film is part of Bokaer's exhibition entitled "October 7, 1944," which was commissioned by the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) and takes place at the Center for Jewish History in cooperation with Yeshiva University Museum.

Using four female dancers, Bokaer's 30 minute work is a distillation and abstraction of the heroic but little known story of the four women—Ala Gertner, Róża Robota, Regina Szafirsztajn, Estera Wajcblum—who secreted ammunition into the death camp to aide a carefully planned, but ultimately unsuccessful, uprising which included the explosion of one of the camp's crematoria. Rather than text, "Four Women" is dependent on the language of the body to honor and explore subject matter in which human bravery and brutality defies spoken language. The work is choreographed and directed by Jonah Bokaer, with editing by Nir Arieli. Bokaer's research for the project included spending five days at Auschwitz.

Commissioned by the American Jewish Historical Society and curated by its Executive Director, Rachel Lithgow, "October 7, 1944" draws on the riches of AJHS and YIVO Institute for Jewish Research archives. It will feature a series of hand drawn graphite drawings by Bokaer and a deconstructed violin (Bach's "Chaconne," a section of Bach's Violin Partita in D minor, recorded by Henryk Szeryng will be gently playing in the background). There will also be selected archival material from Auschwitz and the National Jewish Welfare Board will be featured as part of the exhibit. The exhibit also includes the film "Study for Occupant," a work by Bokaer from 2012, featuring the same cast of four women.

Presented in Yeshiva University Museum's Popper Gallery at the Center for Jewish History, the project is a collaboration between several institutional partners at the Center, and reflects the ways archival holdings at the Center are being presented and interpreted anew for the public.

WHERE TO GO

"October 7, 1944" is open to the public Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, 11 am – 5 pm; Monday, 5pm-8pm; Wednesday, 11am-8pm; and Friday, 11am-2:30pm. Admission: \$8.00 for adults, and \$6.00 for

seniors and students. Monday, Wednesday (5pm-8pm) and Friday free. The exhibition runs from October 7-December 30.

The Yeshiva University Museum's Popper Gallery is located at the Center for Jewish History in New York City, 15 West 16th Street near Union Square in Manhattan.

ABOUT YESHIVA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

Yeshiva University Museum is dedicated to the presentation and interpretation of the artistic and cultural achievements of Jewish life. The Museum, founded in 1973, is distinguished by its wide-ranging and intellectually rigorous exhibitions and, as the cultural arm of Yeshiva University, by its strong educational mission. As a partner in the thriving Center for Jewish History and a participant in New York's lively downtown cultural scene, Yeshiva University Museum makes a distinctive and important contribution to Jewish life and to the world of culture and the arts. The Museum's rich and diverse collections preserve Jewish artifacts, art, texts and material culture for posterity, making objects accessible through exhibitions, educational programs, and research and conservational initiatives.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY (AJHS)

The American Jewish Historical Society is the oldest ethnic, cultural archive in the United States. AJHS provides access to more than 25 million documents and 50,000 books, photographs, art and artifacts that reflect the history of the Jewish presence in the United States from 1654 to the present. AJHS illuminates American Jewish history through our many archival treasures, scholarship, exhibitions, and public programs. Among the treasures of this heritage are the handwritten original of Emma Lazarus' The New Colossus, which graces the Statue of Liberty; records of the nation's leading Jewish communal organizations, and important collections in the fields of education, philanthropy, science, sports, business, and the arts. AJHS is the future of the American Jewish past.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born to Tunisian and American parents in Ithaca, NY, Jonah Bokaer is an international choreographer, media artist, and artspace developer. His work, which integrates choreography with digital media, is often the result of his cross-disciplinary collaborations with artists and architects.

Creating choreography for museum spaces since 2002, Bokaer's work has been exhibited at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, P.S.1 MoMA, The New Museum, the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City, as well as in The Asia Society Texas Center, Le Carré d'Art à Nîmes, IVAM Valencia, Kunsthalle St. Gallen, and MUDAM Luxembourg, among others. A full list of museum projects is listed below.

The author of 33 choreographies, ten videos, three motion capture works, three interactive installations, two mobile applications, and one film, Bokaer's work has been produced throughout theaters in Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, India, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Recent performances include two seasons at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (2011-2012), the 2012 Festival d'Avignon in France, Théâtre de la Cité Internationale in Paris, and the BAM Next Wave Festival 2012, for which he was commissioned for the inauguration of BAM Fisher, with artist Anthony McCall. Upcoming works include a commission from the Ludwig Museum of Budapest, BAM Next Wave Festival, and the inauguration of Frank Gehry's newly designed LVMH Foundation in Paris.

In 2008-2009 Bokaer became the first dance artist to be appointed a Young Leader of the French American Foundation, in acknowledgment of his efforts to develop Chez Bushwick, and CPR - Center for Performance Research, two independent arts centers which nurture young artists in New York City and internationally. Bokaer has collaborated with artists including Daniel Arsham (2007-present), Anne Carson, Merce Cunningham, Robert Gober, Anthony McCall, Tino Sehgal, and Robert Wilson (2007-present).

As choreographer for Robert Wilson, he has completed many operas including "Faust" (Polish National Opera), "Aïda" (Teatro dell'Opera di Roma), "KOOL" (Japan/USA Guggenheim Works & Process), and "Fronteras" (IVAM Valenica), and "On The Beach" (Baryshnikov Arts Center).

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