

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Valerie Peters | 917.328.6787
vlpcommunications@gmail.com

Trail of the Magic Bullet: The Jewish Encounter with Modern Medicine, 1860-1960

Exhibition Looks at the Modern Jewish Experience through the Lens of Medicine



New York, NY (February 26, 2012) –It was only about a century and a half ago that scientific medicine began to emerge, radically shaping the way we live. For Jews—and for the Jewish community at large—the development presented new opportunities, new challenges and new ways to engage with modern society. This transformation from the personal to the communal level is explored in the multi-media exhibition ***Trail of the Magic Bullet: The Jewish Encounter with Modern Medicine, 1860-1960*** on view at **Yeshiva University Museum (YU Museum)** now through **August 12, 2012**.

Beginning in the 19th century, Jews began to train as doctors in universities and saw practicing medicine as a way to integrate into the larger society, to improve the health and economic conditions within their own communities by creating uniquely Jewish medical institutions, to blend Jewish traditions and modern identity, and to benefit mankind.

“Medicine was an attractive and relatively open profession for Jews, and medical faculties were frequently more ready to accept Jews than many other disciplines,” said Guest Curator Josh Feinberg. “Medicine was an entrée into the modern world and Jews entered medicine in large numbers. They blazed trails in a number of new medical specialties such as psychiatry, dermatology, microbiology and pathology.”

Trail of the Magic Bullet explores the Jewish relationship with modern medicine through a series of case studies: first of individuals—the “new Jewish doctors” and their participation in creating

modern medicine; then, the impact of modern medicine on Jewish communities; and, finally, the intersection of Jewish tradition and modern medicine. Through the display of vintage medical instruments and artifacts, documents, photographs and video, the exhibition focuses on the period from the emergence of scientific medicine up through the end of anti-Semitic discrimination in the mid-20th century. A concluding film, *Heal, You Shall Heal*, produced for this exhibition by award-winning filmmaker Ilana Trachtman [*Praying with Lior*], brings the exhibition's subject up to date with perspectives on bioethics and Jewish tradition.

“Visitors will come away from the exhibition vividly aware that many of the medical and bioethical issues and challenges we face today are part of a long trajectory in which Jews and medicine have been in steady dialogue,” said YU Museum Director Jacob Wisse.

Trail of the Magic Bullet: The Jewish Encounter with Modern Medicine, 1860-1960 is presented in collaboration with Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University and made possible by the Leon Levy Foundation, The David Berg Foundation, the René and Susanne Braginsky Foundation, The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey and an anonymous donor.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The Museum will present a series of public programs focusing on such topics as the impact of communal health programs, the role of the minority physician and the challenges of contemporary bioethics.

Location:

Yeshiva University Museum, 15 W. 16th Street, New York, New York 10011, 212.294.8330, yumuseum.org

Hours:

Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday: 11 am–5 pm; Monday: 5 pm–8 pm (FREE); Wednesday: 11 am–8 pm (5 pm–8 pm FREE); Friday: 11 am–2:30 pm (FREE)

Admission:

Adults: \$8; Seniors and Students: \$6; Members and Children under 5: Free; Yeshiva University Faculty, Administration and Students: Free (with valid ID).

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For more information about *Trail of the Magic Bullet* or to request an interview with the curator or a guided tour, contact Valerie Peters at vlpcommunications@gmail.com or 917.328.6787. Additional information and images are available at <http://yumuseum.tumblr.com/MagicBullet>.

Photo captions, from L: *Pediatric Ward, Newark Beth Israel Hospital, early 20th century. Collection of the Jewish Historical Society of New Jersey; Surgery, Newark Beth Israel Hospital, early 20th century. Collection of the Jewish Historical Society of New Jersey; A nurse saves steps between patients in the tenements by crossing over roofs, 1910. Courtesy of the Visiting Nurse Service of New York.*

ABOUT YESHIVA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

For more than 35 years, the Yeshiva University Museum has provided culturally diverse exhibitions and programming for the greater metropolitan area and beyond, as well as Yeshiva University students, faculty, and alumni. Its permanent collection includes more than 9,000 objects spanning over 3,000 years of Jewish history. The Museum also emphasizes teaching schoolchildren and adults of diverse backgrounds about Jewish culture through many varieties of interdisciplinary programs. Located at the Center for Jewish History, the Museum occupies four spacious galleries, a children's workshop center, and an outdoor sculpture garden.