

Sh'ma: A Story of Survival to Premiere on October 19 at the Museum of Jewish Heritage

Screening will be followed by a conversation with Dr. Suki John, Wendy Perron, Keith Saunders, and Kira Rai Daniel

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“

The international resurgence of fascism and anti-Semitism has spurred me to re-envision the choreodrama Sh'ma as a film. It is my hope that the languages of emotion affect them in ways words cannot.”

Dr. Suki John

[Story of Survival](#), an innovative and powerful new dance film, will have its world premiere on October 19th, at the Museum of Jewish Heritage (36 Battery Place, New York, NY 10280). This event is open to the public to view in-person in the Museum's 350-seat Safra Hall. It will be simultaneously livestreamed to the public, the Museum's full mailing list, and its social community. Press is invited to a VIP reception at 6:00 PM. Safra Hall doors open at 6:30 PM.

Sh'ma: A Story of Survival celebrates resilience, connection, and hope. Director and choreographer Dr. Suki John tells the story of her mother and her family during the Shoah,

weaving together the emotive languages of dance, music, and film. Originally a live choreodrama performed in the former Yugoslavia and New York City, the story follows our heroine from her school days to the ghetto, deportation to Bergen-Belsen, and finally to immigration to the U.S.

The film screening will be followed by a conversation, moderated by Wendy Perron, former editor-in-chief of Dance Magazine, with Dr. Suki John (Professor in Texas Christian University's School for Classical & Contemporary Dance) and two Sh'ma performers: Keith Saunders (Professor in TCU's School for Classical & Contemporary Dance, former principal dancer, and ballet master for Dance Theatre of Harlem) and Kira Rai Daniel (TCU alum and current Columbia student).

Sh'ma is not just a filmed performance; rather, it is a choreodrama adapted for the camera—or, in dancer's parlance, it is “not a film about your elbow.” The shoot involved four cameras, three of which were run by dancers. The cameras go in between the dancers, providing the viewer with a sense of immersion, as if they are actually on stage.

Wendy Perron has taught at Bennington, Princeton, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, and the Conservatory at SUNY Purchase, and she has often adjudicated for ballet and choreography competitions. She was the editor-in-chief of Dance Magazine from 2004 to 2013 and has also written for The New York Times, The Village Voice, vanityfair.com, and journals in Europe and China.

A longtime dancer and ballet master with Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH), Keith Saunders has taught all levels of ballet while serving on the faculties of the DTH School, the BalletMet Dance Academy, the New Ballet School (Ballet Tech), Steps NYC, the 92nd St. Y, the University of Wyoming (Guest Artist-in-Residence), and the Snowy Range Dance Festival.

SH'MA
A STORY OF SURVIVAL
FILM BY SUKI JOHN

WORLD PREMIERE SCREENING

MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE -
A LIVING MEMORIAL TO THE HOLOCAUST
36 BATTERY PLACE, NEW YORK CITY

REGISTER TO ATTEND THE EVENT
IN-PERSON OR VIA LIVE-STREAMING:
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

OCTOBER 19, 2023 | 7:00 PM EST

The SH'MA Project

Official Selection Best Indie Film Award 2023
Official Selection Home World Cinema Fest 2023
Official Selection Anti-War International Independent Film Festival 2023
Winner New York Independent Cinema Awards 2023
Nominee Philadelphia Jewish Film and Media Awards 2023
Nominee Chicago Indie Film Awards 2023
Nominee Berlin International Film Festival 2023
Nominee Cannes Arts Fest 2023

Sh'ma: A Story of Survival Premier on October 19

“The international resurgence of fascism and anti-Semitism has spurred me to re-envision the choreodrama Sh’mā as a film. We took the iconography and costumes out of the past in order to create a ‘timeless’ look,” said Dr. Suki John. “The reasoning is that audiences—young people especially—will be less likely to dismiss the story as familiar old tropes, something that happened long ago and far away. It is my hope that they will allow the languages of emotion to affect them in ways that words cannot.”

A \$10 suggested donation enables the Museum to present programs like this one. The Museum is free and open to all on Thursdays from 4:00 to 8:00 PM.

[Register: In Person](#) - [Register: Livestream](#)

About The Sh’mā Project

The Sh’mā Project is a three-part Holocaust and Human Rights arts and education initiative. It combines the film, Sh’mā: A Story of Survival, with free educational materials and Upstander Workshops designed to help young people contextualize history and create personal, empowering responses. Suitable for high schools, colleges, museums, places of worship, film festivals, artistic organizations, and distribution, The Sh’mā Project supports learning with pre- and post-screening workshops and The Enduring Resilience Project, a digital textbook by a team of renown international scholars. For more information, please visit The Sh’mā Project: Move Against Hate

About the Museum of Jewish Heritage

The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust is New York's contribution to the global responsibility to never forget. The Museum is committed to the crucial mission of educating diverse visitors about Jewish life before, during, and after the Holocaust. The Museum protects the historical record and promotes understanding of Jewish heritage. It mobilizes memory to teach the dangers of intolerance and challenges visitors—including more than 60,000 schoolchildren a year.

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