

Digital Images Available at spertus.edu/news-form

For Immediate Release — January 20, 2014

For information contact: Betsy Gomberg
bgomberg@spertus.edu
312.322.1756

Brian Zimmerman
bzimmerman@spertus.edu
312.322.1724

KABBALAH IN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

**Alexander Gorlin's stunning new book wins the National Jewish Book Award for Visual Arts.
He will discuss the book and sign copies on Tuesday, February 4
in Highland Park, IL, as part of "Spertus in the Suburbs."**

(Highland Park, IL) Late last week [January 15, 2014], the Jewish Book Council announced its new slate of National Jewish Book Award winners. **Alexander Gorlin's *Kabbalah in Art and Architecture*** (distributed in the U.S. by Pointed Leaf Press) was selected as the best book of 2013 in the Visual Arts category. In this stunning publication, Gorlin draws on a wide array of historical materials along with wide-ranging examples from contemporary painting, sculpture, and architecture to illustrate how Kabbalah has left an unmistakable mark on our civilization. In the book, Gorlin features works by artists including Anselm Kiefer, Sigmar Polke, and Anish Kapoor, and architects including Louis Kahn, Norman Foster, and Daniel Libeskind.

On Tuesday, February 4 at 7 pm, Gorlin, a noted architect and design critic, will discuss the book and share some of its remarkable illustrations and photography. The program takes place at **Lakeside Congregation for Reform Judaism, 1221 County Line Road in Highland Park**. It is presented by Chicago's **Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership** as part of its "Spertus in the Suburbs" programming.

Gorlin will be joined by scholar David Shyovitz for a discussion likely to span from ancient Jewish texts to the use of light and geometry in design. Following the program, Gorlin will sign books, which will be for sale onsite. The program is free and open to the public. Advance reservations are requested at spertus.edu/kallah.

Kabbalah is a Jewish mystical tradition that stretches back at least 3,500 years. It views the universe as a vast interconnected system of forces in which the actions of God and mankind reverberate in mysterious ways.

Alexander Gorlin is an architect, critic, author, and scholar. Among the specialties of his internationally recognized firm — Alexander Gorlin Architects — is the design of religious institutions. He has taught at the Yale School of Architecture and was a Rome Prize Fellow at the American Academy in Rome.

David Shyovitz is an Assistant Professor of History at Northwestern University, with a joint appointment at the Crown Center for Jewish and Israel Studies.

Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership offers dynamic learning opportunities, rooted in Jewish wisdom and culture and open to all. Graduate programs and workshops train future leaders and engage individuals in exploration of Jewish life. Public programs—including films, speakers, seminars, and concerts—take place at the Institute's Michigan Avenue facility, in the Chicago suburbs, and online. For more information, please visit spertus.edu.

*This program is part of **Kallah**, a series of free Jewish adult education courses available on the Northshore in February. Spertus Institute is proud to again partner with the North Shore Chavurah of Rabbis as a Kallah co-sponsor.*

Spertus Institute is a partner in serving the community, supported by the JUF/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.

Kabbalah and Western Art and Architecture. Embedded in the Jewish mystical tradition of Kabbalah is a strong connection with the primal concepts of architecture; space, light, and geometry. However, in the late Renaissance, an interest in Kabbalah among Christian philosophers helped circulate images and ideas that eventually found their way into intellectual circles late in the 19th century. These included the Theosophical Society, of which Piet Mondrian was a member, William Yeats and his interest in the Order of the Golden Dawn, and the Russian mystic Georgi Gurdjieff and his pupil, Olgivanna Wright. It is exactly this lineage that explains why the architectural implications of Kabbalah have long been suppressed.