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College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
In candidacy for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts

**L'Dor VaDor: Remembering the Cleveland Jewish Immigration Experience**
By Roxanne Feldman
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# Abstract

Jewish people heavily contributed to the growth and development of the city of Cleveland. Their impact extended from creating major businesses to influence in education and culture. Jewish immigration, an integral piece of Cleveland's history, offers many memories that constitute an interactive, educational, and engaging exhibit.

The goal of this interactive project is to inform users about what life was like as a Jewish immigrant or resident in Cleveland by sharing stories of individuals in the community and in my family. Through exploration of photographs, videos, and an interactive map, users will be able to identify noteworthy businesses, organizations, and people and follow the expansion of the Jewish community in the Cleveland area. Understanding how Jewish people have contributed to the growth of the city will allow visitors to gain an appreciation for the diversity and overall impact of Jews across the country.

KEY WORDS: Cleveland, Jewish history, Jewish immigrants, interactive multimedia, technology enhanced learning, interactive exhibit, American history, Jewish culture.

# Acknowledgments

Creating L'Dor VaDor has been the most challenging project I have ever undertaken. Originally when I was brainstorming this thesis, I was not confident that I could take my vision and make it something tangible. L'Dor VaDor encouraged me to integrate my technical and creative skills in every aspect of design to create a unique and engaging visual experience. I began this thesis in November 2006 and the first version was completed in October 2007.

**Thank You**

This thesis would not have been possible without the generous support of the following people and organizations. Thank you for your contributions, kindness, and dedication to this project. I would first like to thank my mother, for inspiring me to do this thesis. I would also like to thank my family for preserving the wonderful photographs and artifacts that document our family history. I would also like to recognize and thank Adam Smith for taking the time to teach me about advanced texturing in Cinema 4D. Thank you to Chris Jackson, Marla Schweppe, and R. Roger Remington, my thesis committee, for your guidance and encouragement.

I would also like to extend a special thanks to those in the Cleveland Jewish community who participated in sharing their family stories for this project: Betty Gold, Mary Klein, Jack Kleinman, and Phil Wayner. Thank you also to the Cleveland Jewish News for placing my advertisement in your publication and to the Cleveland Public Library for permission to use imagery from your collection in my project.

I am very grateful for the support of Dr. Sean Martin and The Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland for granting me volunteer privileges and allowing me to use images from the Jewish archive for this project. Thank you for giving me permission to use materials in your archive and for supporting my thesis.

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# I. The Idea

When I began brainstorming ideas for my thesis project, L'Dor VaDor was not one of them. I feel it is necessary to share the struggles I faced prior to its conception and how it was that the idea came about.

The summer before I was to enter my second year as a graduate student in the Computer Graphics Design program, I began conceptualizing potential thesis ideas. One thing I found myself constantly thinking about was why I had chosen to attend graduate school. After receiving my undergraduate degree in Biomedical Photographic Communications, I decided that I did not want to pursue a career as a "shooter", re-toucher, or assistant. Blending my background in photography with computer graphics seemed natural. I decided to look to my roots in photography for inspiration for thesis ideas.

From the beginning, I knew I wanted to create an interactive project that was educational. I began brainstorming potential photo-related topics and remembered that I really enjoyed taking pictures through microscopes. My original thesis idea was to create an interactive 3D microscope to teach people photomicrography. The goals of the project would be to educate users how to operate a microscope, photograph different types of specimens, and use basic lighting techniques. The topic seemed to lend itself well for my project, as there was a great deal of information that could be taught through interactivity.

I wrote my proposal and my thesis was approved. I began researching information and received some resources from a friend who worked in the industry. Everything seemed to be going as it should, but a bad feeling developed. I found myself liking my thesis some days, and not even wanting to think about it the next. I frequently felt so anxious that I found I was not excited about the project.

One night I called my mom in hysterics. I told her about the terrible feeling and that I felt my project had a heavy emphasis on the 3D model of the microscope. I was concerned that the topic was overall too technical and would only be useful for a select number of people. I wanted to create something many people could look at and relate to. My mom suggested that if I was not psyched about my project, I should consider pursuing a new idea.

That night I decided to change my thesis. The bad feeling I had been experiencing vanished, but I felt upset knowing that I had to go through the entire process of proposing a new thesis. My thesis committee was surprised but was very supportive of my decision to change my project.

Right away I began brainstorming new ideas for my thesis project. I still wanted to create something that would be educational, but had to pick a new topic. Since high school my favorite subject was history, so I started thinking of major events, places, or things that interested me. One idea I had was to research the famous sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald. There would be information on it I could research and it was relatively close to me to visit. Then my mom suggested I visit the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage in Cleveland for inspiration. She told me she had recently visited the museum, which explores the history of Jewish people in the city of Cleveland. I have to admit I was a bit stubborn about considering a religious related topic for my project, but decided to visit the museum after hearing many positive things about it.

The next time I came into Cleveland I visited the museum with my mom. The museum shared different aspects of Jewish life in Cleveland from early settlers and Jewish newspapers, to businesses and famous celebrities. Afterwards, I began thinking a lot about the Jewish immigrants and why people chose to settle in Cleveland. The subject was something I was interested in learning about, and thought it might appeal to others, especially in my community. Most importantly, I felt I could relate and connect with the topic through researching the history of my family and hometown.

I wrote my new proposal over fall break, and presented it week three of the winter quarter. My new idea was approved and I was very excited to begin my thesis. I knew had done the right thing by changing my project.

## II. Research

The process of accumulating information and imagery for L'Dor VaDor was very difficult because I was a full time student in Rochester, New York trying to research material that was for the most part only available in Cleveland, Ohio. I began my research the day of my first visit to the Maltz Museum. I picked up resources, established contacts, and started organizing information. This section will examine my methodology for gathering content and assets for this project.

**The Maltz Museum**
When I first visited the Maltz Museum, I brought a small notebook to take notes on the exhibits and to write down any possible ideas I had for my project. I noticed that there were a few interactive exhibits, but nothing as intensely interactive as what I planned on creating. For example, one was a quiz that asked questions immigrants would have been asked when arriving on Ellis Island. Another exhibit consisted of a large map of Cleveland on the wall, with little lights placed all over the map. A

user could view the progression of the temples in the Cleveland by interacting with buttons on a timeline. The temples that were in existence during those years had a light that lit up on the map. I appreciated what was being shown, but found it frustrating that I could not see the specific location of where the temples had been located because the map was high up on the wall and the streets were so small. This exhibit inspired me to build upon this idea, which is the progression chapter of my thesis.

My experience at the museum was very inspiring. While viewing all of the old photos and artifacts I thought about sharing stories of the early immigrants. I was also interested in researching major Jewish businesses and people who became well known across the country. My ideas were vague and I needed to narrow down my content, but first I had to see what resources were available.

I contacted the Maltz Museum to inquire if research assistance was offered. I was put in touch with the executive assistant who ended up not being very helpful and after long slew of e-mails finally provided me with the contact information of someone who might be able to help. A phone conversation was arranged to discuss my project, but as I recall it never took place. By that time so much time had passed that I had little faith in receiving guidance from the museum and found other contacts on my own.

**The Western Reserve Historical Society**

One of the organizations that offered assistance was the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS). I began correspondence with Dr. Sean Martin, Associate Curator for Jewish History in November 2006. I was looking to use images from the archive in my project and met with him to discuss how I could go about obtaining rights to reproduce their materials. In the beginning, I was skeptical if I would be able to use the images because the archive did not have a procedure set up for someone like myself, a researcher who would be requesting many images. The archive had a reproduction fee for those in the public who wanted high resolution scans or photocopies. Since I was planning on using many images I was hoping to maybe receive a discounted rate.

Dr. Martin assured me that we would work out the details for permissions and access to images. There was a period of time when I was concerned how much I would have to pay for using images and how I would acquire them. The solution seemed simple, if I became a volunteer/intern I could have privileges to scan images and use them without paying for anything. The trade-off was that when my project was completed, I would give a copy to WRHS that would be placed on their website.

I also learned that the archive had only recently begun to digitize their collections. The online catalogue gave only a brief description of what was available and pointed to a reference resource, if available, in the library. Because no image previews were available online, I had to sort through boxes of photos and documents to find images that I wanted to use, and then request scans.

The process of actually receiving the scans was very frustrating. I feel I was a bit misled in to thinking I would be granted permission to scan the images myself. When I contacted WRHS to set up appointments to scan, I was rarely answered. Although I was very grateful I would not have to pay for any images, I had had to wait long periods of time before obtaining anything. The images I did receive were smaller then anticipated but I worked with them as best I could. Email correspondence was not always prompt, and I soon decided to use as little as possible from the archive as it was very difficult to coordinate the materials I needed.

Another factor that made working with WRHS challenging was my limited access to the archive while in Rochester. When I moved home to Cleveland to finish the project, I thought communication would become easier, but it wasn't. Even though I did not utilize as much as I had hoped, I did have the opportunity to view their collections.

While my volunteer/intern status was being processed, I purchased a one-year membership to the archive so I could visit the library without paying each time as a visitor. I mention this only because I feel it is important to share that I had to budget for additional expenses such as this.

**Books**

Although the Western Reserve Historical Society had an array of resources, I found myself looking for books that I would be able to take home for reference. I purchased *Merging Traditions* by Judah Rubenstein and Jane Avner and *History of the Jews of Cleveland* by Lloyd P. Gartner. I also obtained a copy of the first version of *Merging Traditions*, which is slightly different and was helpful because it was as a quick reference for images available at WRHS. *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, a highly detailed reference source, examines many facets and issues of early Jewish people in Cleveland.

**Cleveland Jewish News**

For the stories chapter of my project, I wanted to interview different individuals in Cleveland to share their family history. Finding people to participate was difficult as I was in Rochester and wanted to set up as many interviews as possible. My mom suggested placing an ad in the Cleveland Jewish News, a popular local publication that would target prospective participants. I was thrilled when I

found out the paper would place my ad as an announcement, which did not cost anything. My announcement ran for a few weeks, and I received four responses.



**Seeking Jewish family stories**

Local graduate student Roxanne Feldman is looking for Jewish individuals interested in sharing personal or family stories about immigrating or growing up in Cleveland. Her thesis project is to create a presentation examining how Jewish people have contributed to the growth of the city.

To contact Feldman (she will provide references), e-mail roxyfeldman@gmail.com or call 440-223-7022.

*Announcement for my thesis in the Cleveland Jewish news*

## Additional Organizations

During the beginning of my research, I contacted many organizations that I thought might be able to help me attain images or information for my thesis. The following organizations were not utilized in the end for my project, but I did correspond with them:

1. Special Collections, Cleveland State University Library
2. The American Jewish Archives
3. Cleveland Jewish Genealogy Society

*Note: Please see the Appendix for select correspondence.*

## Family Resources

After I began my research, my committee suggested I investigate my family heritage to see if there were any personal touches I could incorporate into my thesis. Little did I know that there was a wealth of family resources that had been saved and passed down from generation to generation.

All of the family resources in L'Dor VaDor are taken from my mother's side of the family, as my father was not originally from Cleveland. Naturally, my mom was the first person I asked about our family history. She reminded me that my great grandmother, Dorothy Feldman, was very influential in Cleveland's Jewish Community and helped establish Community Temple. She suggested I contact my cousin Esther, who had previously done genealogical research on our family.

I got in touch with Esther and told her about my thesis project. She was very generous and offered to help me in any way possible. I made copies of her research materials, and digitized old family images and documents that she inherited from her mother.  During my visits with her, I had the opportunity to see early nineteenth century clothes, candlesticks, and handmade items that were kept in the family.

It was important to me to also gather information and stories from my grandparents to learn what it was like growing up Jewish in Cleveland. My grandmother showed me her old scrapbooks and my grandfather and I watched old 8mm family movies on the old projector in the basement. Since my grandfather was unable to find his old photos, he recommended I contact his brother, Eddie. I had not seen him since I was very young, but was told he had a great deal of family artifacts.

At this time I had begun to archive many family photos and letters and was interested to see what was in Eddie's collection. I decided to drive to Bethesda, MD with my laptop and a scanner, to visit my great uncle and digitize his family artifacts. Eddie and his wife Tommy were very welcoming and described everything they knew about each image.

I am surprised how many family resources I have and feel very lucky that I have been able to uncover a visual history of my ancestors. I now have knowledge of my family genealogy, what people's lives were like, where they worked, and most importantly, why they came to Cleveland. Collecting and digitizing these images has been an invaluable experience for me, and I'm happy to be able to integrate my family history into my thesis.

**Interviews**
After researching other educational, interactive projects, I found myself drawn to the idea of gathering video interviews for L'Dor VaDor. Listening to people tell stories about their past and life experiences was something I believed people would find interesting.

During the winter quarter as a second year graduate student, a digital video course was offered and I decided that it would be essential for me to register in it. Although I had some experience with video, I wanted to learn to use the latest technology. The course taught me basic lighting techniques, how to capture and edit video in Final Cut Pro, and how to use the video cameras available at RIT.

During my spring break I borrowed a video camera and lighting equipment from RIT.  I knew that the built in camera microphone would pick up ambient noise during the interview but RIT did not have

any external microphones available for checkout.  Instead, I rented a lavaliere microphone from a local video company in exchange for doing some freelance work. It was very important to me to strive for high quality, crisp audio for the project because without a good recording, the interview would be inaudible.

Before conducting the interviews, the lavaliere microphone, video camera, and lighting equipment were tested in a mock interview. A list of questions for the interview was prepared and I figured out how I would conduct the interview. A more detailed examination of how the video interviews were conducted may be found in the Video section.

**Proposal Modifications**

Initially when I wrote my thesis proposal, I had planned on creating an educational project about the history of Jewish immigrants and their influence on the growth of the city. As I began researching, my committee suggested incorporating some personal family history into the project. Initially I was not sure how much material I could gather. After hearing such rich family stories from relatives it seemed like a great way to showcase my family as an example of what life was like for many people. However, integrating my family history with an overview of Cleveland's Jewish history seemed to be taking on too much. I hoped to discuss pioneers, famous businesses, celebrities, immigration, and my family story. A difficult decision had to be made on how to balance the content in the project.

I chose to pick the best of both worlds. I decided to not incorporate the early Jewish pioneers, celebrities, and famous businesses, as I believed if somebody was interested in learning about these topics, they could utilize resources that already existed in Cleveland. I chose to make the focus of my project more on sharing family stories about growing up Jewish in Cleveland, and examining why people's families came to the city. Telling the stories of people in my family would put a personal touch on the project, and finding other residents' stories would add diversity.

I also wanted to keep some information about the progression of the Jewish community in the project. The exhibit at the Maltz Museum showing the eastward progression of the Jewish community was something I thought I could build on. In addition to showing where the temples were, I would provide information about them, as well as other Jewish community and family landmarks.

After choosing to focus on stories, I needed to organize the content to balance the history of my family and progression of the community. The stories section was going to feature some members of my family and some individuals from the community. The progression section would focus mostly on

temples in the community. To honor my family and showcase our history, a scrapbook was created to allow visitors to explore my family's impressive collection of photos and artifacts.

In addition to the main sections, I wanted to have a way for viewers to give me feedback about the project, and contact me if they wanted to have their story documented. The share section provides a small form for the user to send questions and comments about the project.

I feel that changing the content for my project was a positive step in creating a unique thesis, as I was able to switch the focus from general content that is available in the museum to personal stories that would otherwise go unheard. I am very proud and grateful that I have had the opportunity to meet the wonderful people who shared their stories for this project, and hope that those who view my project will gain a new perspective on Jewish life in Cleveland.

# III. Information Design

The information in this thesis was outlined as I researched content. This section examines my process to organizing the information for L'Dor VaDor.
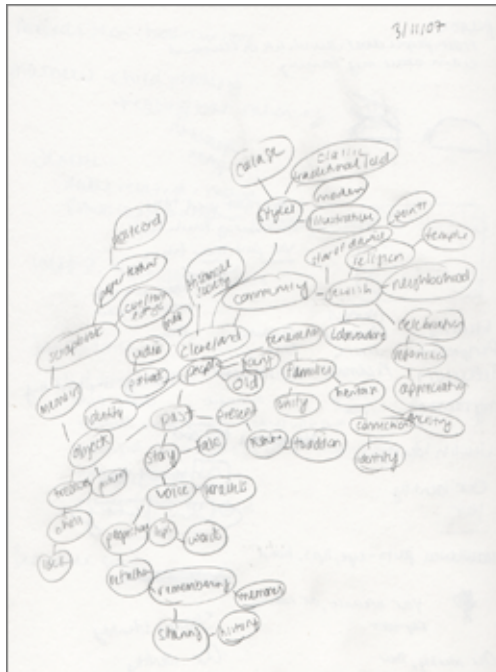
**Objectives**

Early on in my research process, I was advised to write some goals and objectives to help me organize the content that would go into my project. Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide to organizing the goals and objectives, I created a short of list of everything I wanted to include in the project. What I found was that I had a large amount of information I wanted to cover. By narrowing my the scope of my thesis to focus on stories, my family history, and an overview of the progression of the community, I was able to produce three engaging and informative chapters in the project instead of trying to squeeze every detail into a less coherent piece. Below is an example of a goal and objectives on how the goal would be achieved.
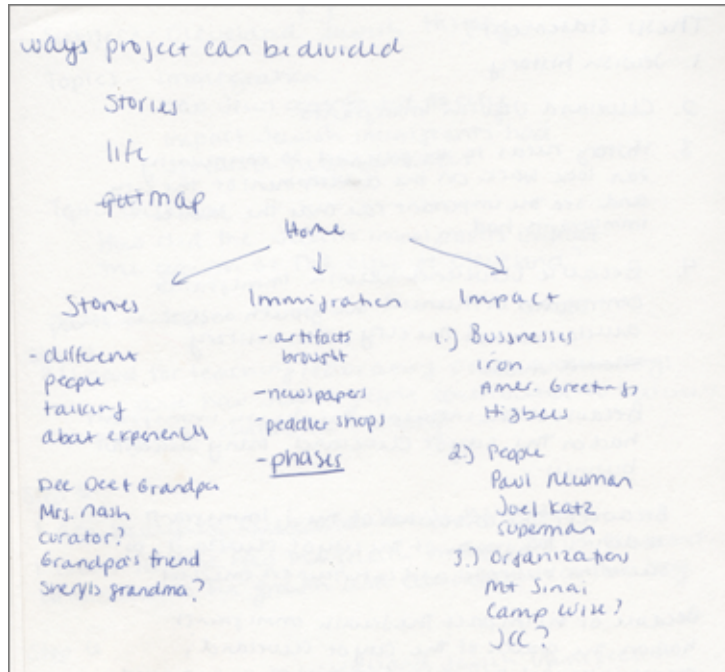
Goal: To provide an opportunity for viewers to learn about the Feldman family and their contributions to Jewish life in Cleveland.

Objective #1: A viewer should be able to recall accomplishments of Dorothy Greenberger Feldman, my great grandmother, from the Scrapbook and Video interviews in the project.

Objective #2: A viewer should be able to identify the two stores that were owned by the Feldman family and recall some information about each from the Scrapbook section.

Objective #3: A viewer should be able to recall what life was like for the Feldman family members as stated in the Stories section of the project.

**Brainstorming**

My brainstorming process for this project included techniques such as making flow charts, mindmaps, and lists. I kept a small notebook for ideas with me at all times and looked for inspiration in books, magazines, people, and interactions that I admired on other websites. Most importantly, I tried to imagine there was no limitation to what the project could become. The following images are some examples of brainstorming sketches from my thesis notebook.



*A flow chart of my original plan for my thesis. My committee recommended I dramatically reduce the amount of content for the final project. I ended up using key concepts to create the three main chapters of the final piece, Stories, Progression, and Scrapbook.*

*Mindmap exploration.*                    *A flowchart developed during the planning stages,*

**Navigation**

One of the most important things taken into consideration when designing L'Dor VaDor was planning the navigation structure. The objects in the trunk are buttons that open a chapter in the project. To accommodate viewers who might prefer to have simple text links, global navigation was placed at the bottom of each screen. The use of layered animation and graphics made it challenging to create consistent navigation in the negative space as it varied throughout the sections.  A "home" button for the users to return to the main navigation, or trunk scene, was created as an option for users who did not wish to use the global navigation links to instantly jump from section to section. The button that takes the user back to the main navigation is a trunk graphic that animates when rolled over.

Of the four parts of the project, only the stories chapter required local navigation. Since there are three sub-sections to the stories, typographic standards were used for consistency and clarity in understanding what part of the project was being viewed and what others were available. In addition to the text links, the user may click either of the paper graphics to view the videos or biographies.

The final aspect of the navigation was creating a link to the very beginning of the project, where the user clicks the trunk to "open" it. I chose to make the title a link to return to the opening animation.

# IV. Visual Design

The visual design, or look and feel of L'Dor VaDor came to life as soon as I began collecting imagery from my family. I chose to use neutral colors and a photorealistic visual style to set the mood of looking through a family heirloom. I wanted to create a unique experience using a metaphor for the overall design that would evoke an interest to explore the project (See Appendix for select project comps).

### Metaphor

When I began to visualize my project, I knew I wanted to create my navigation and interface structure around a metaphor. My goal was to create an experience as if a user was rummaging through images and objects in the project. I wanted to design the project around somewhere that these objects would actually be kept. Early ideas I thought of were an old suitcase and a hallway with pictures hung everywhere. Then it came to me - a trunk. My cousin Esther kept her old family photos in two old trunks that had been passed down in the family. I could not think of a better metaphor to use for my project. The concept of a trunk holding cherished family memorabilia was perfect for the aesthetic I wanted to achieve, and held significance to my learning about my family history from what was kept inside one.

### Sketches & Prototypes



*An early map interface idea.*



*An early sketch for the trunk concept.*

*Sketch with notes exploring interaction.*


*A sketch for a section cut from the final project.*


*Sketch with notes exploring interaction.*


*Interface idea for the project.*

**Typography**

I wanted to create a very clean, consistent typographic style throughout the project. This was important aesthetically, but also to create a distinct visual hierarchy for the viewer. I was instantly drawn to using Bodoni for its elegant strokes and beautiful serifs. For the main body copy, I knew a sans serif typeface would be best for legibility, and I wanted a font that had a variety of weights. Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk was chosen and many of its weights are used in the project. Originally, I wanted to use the old style numerals, which only are available in the light weight. When users told me they thought it was a little difficult to read, I resorted to using a heavier weight.

I was very concerned that viewers knew where they were in the piece at all times. I chose to use breadcrumbs that were integrated with the design to inform the user of what section of the project they are in. The breadcrumb graphic is located in the upper left hand corner on a worn paper graphic, with the chapter name in Bodoni. The consistency in the graphic's placement ensures ease for identifying one's location in the project.

**Imagery**

Many of the images I was using for my project were delicate, old, and weathered. Since the majority of photos were yellowed and had many dings and cracks in them, I decided to utilize the aged look throughout the project. Building upon the look and feel of the images and incorporating old objects and worn paper textures throughout the piece achieved this.

The objects inside of the trunk were all family objects that I photographed or scanned. I was very fortunate to have objects that connected well with the themes I was portraying in my project, such as an old 8mm video camera for the stories section, my grandmother's scrapbook for the scrapbook section, and a postcard for the share section. The rolled up map was created in AfterEffects from a scan that I received from the Cleveland Public Library.

In the stories chapter, the object photos for my family interviews were collected through a combination of my grandparents, great aunt and uncle, and cousin. Other images for those not related to me are personal images of the individual. I was very fortunate that almost each interviewee not in my family had photos I was able to use in my project. One individual, Mary Klein, unfortunately did not have resources on her family so I used images from the Western Reserve Historical Society to share the story of what it was like growing up in the Bellfaire Orphanage.

The trunk image and animation in the project is a 3D model that I created and animated in Cinema 4D. I textured the trunk using UV maps for precision. A UV map basically takes a model created in

3D and unwraps it too look like a flat image. This can be saved out of a 3D program and imported into Photoshop for textures and painting to applied. It can then be re-imported into a 3D application, and will "wrap" back around a model applying the texturing created in Photoshop to the corresponding planes of the image. When I began creating the trunk I had a lot of difficulty in creating the UV map, as I had never done it before. With some assistance I was able to precisely texture the trunk in Photoshop. This allowed me to create some water stains and a lining pattern on the trunk interior, and leather like texture on the exterior (Please see Appendix for select images).

## Animation

One of my favorite things about interactive projects is the ability to make graphics and information come to life. I wanted to create small animations that would add movement and energy to my design. Originally when I thought of using a trunk for my navigation, I thought it would be nice to give the user the feeling the trunk was opening for their exploration in the beginning of the project. After my trunk was modeled and textured, I animated it opening in Cinema 4D.  I thought the short introductory animation would spark interest in the user to have to "open" the trunk to see what is inside. I exported the animation as a frame-by-frame image sequence and then imported each picture into Flash. The most difficult part of the creating the animation was perfecting the camera moving towards the trunk.

Another challenge I faced when creating the trunk was figuring out how the objects would be inside the trunk when the trunk lid opened. The problem was that since I wanted the animation starting from a low view and coming up to a bird's eye view, the camera would catch a glimpse of the 2D photos of objects inside the trunk. Since I was not going to model each object to go inside the trunk in 3D, I had to light and move the camera animating in such a way that the viewer does not see the images as a flat plane when the camera is coming up and around to the top of the trunk while the lid opens.  Also, I needed to find a way to make sure the objects inside the trunk during the opening animation matched the last still frame, which had the buttons for each section of the project. To ensure everything lined up evenly, I mapped a picture of the objects onto a UV map of an invisible plane inside the trunk. Then each object was cut out of the final rendered frame and was imported into Flash on top of the final frame of the animation. Integrating the trunk with the rest of my project was very difficult, as I wanted a weathered, realistic feel that was challenging to create. I could have spent months perfecting a better UV map for the trunk, but I feel I did a good job considering I had never worked with UVs or animation in 3D before.

I also wanted to add motion throughout the piece to add life to the design. I decided that whenever a viewer clicked into a chapter of the project, the graphics would animate in. I tried to use animation

in even the smallest aspects of the project, such as the preloader animating in, and small movements when rolling over objects. It was important to me to create an engaging experience for the user that would encourage them to want to explore everything in the project.

**Video Interviews**

The visual look and feel of the interviews blended with my project by altering the original color of the video. Originally, I had hoped to keep everything in full color, but each had a different color cast due to being shot at different times in the day, and the colors did not all compliment my design. I decided that adding a sepia tone and vignette to each image would create unity and integrate with the earth tone color palette of the project.



*Original video color.*                                    *Final sepia toned video.*

# V. Video

Early in the planning stages, I proposed that the videos would be supplementary for learning about the history of Jewish life in Cleveland. As I began collecting information for the project, I soon discovered that I had a lot of family images and decided to pursue a more personal exploration for the project. I decided to shift my focus from a general perspective of Jewish life in Cleveland to sharing the experiences and stories of Jewish families.

I felt that the interviews were an important element that would be able to create a connection with the viewer. To ensure continuity throughout the interviews, each person was asked questions on their family history as well views about the Jewish community today. They were also asked to talk

about their life, major experiences, memories, and lessons that they would like to share. The following are some of the questions I asked during my interviews:

1. What type of household did you grow up in (i.e. Orthodox, Conservative, Reform)?
2. Did you learn to read, speak, or write in Hebrew?
3. How did being Jewish impact your experience in Cleveland? Did you go to certain schools? Did you face any discrimination?
4. How much of your social life was based on Jewish affiliations?
5. Are you currently active in Cleveland's Jewish community?
6. What do you think about the future of the Jewish community (i.e. assimilation, intermarriage, education)?

Due to trying to recruit people to participate and scheduling to travel to Cleveland, I did not have an anticipated number of interviews. I looked for prospective interviewees by placing an announcement in the Cleveland Jewish News and by word of mouth. Initially I gathered twelve contacts, 7 for community interviews and 5 for the family interviews. Unfortunately due to various conflicts only 9 were captured. I was very pleased as I felt I had a range of material.

I knew that main difficulty with the video would be achieving a consistent look and feel, as each person was recorded in a different environment at different times of the day. One goal when capturing the interviews was to keep the head size in the frame and lighting consistent. This ensured a uniform look across the videos and to simplify the editing process. I also tried to shoot against a clean background to keep the viewer's attention on the person speaking.

After digitizing the mini DV tapes, I watched each video and took notes on key spots in the interview. I anticipated the final length of an interview to be around five minutes; however when I reviewed my edits the allotted time was dramatically exceeded.  I was pleased I had so much information to share but knew that the average attention span of a viewer would not be met. This required me to go through a second session of edits. The final clips are around 5-7 minutes each.

The final cuts were exported out of Final Cut Pro and imported into AfterEffects for color correction. I chose to use AfterEffects because the controls are similar to Photoshop, which I am very experienced with. I gave each image a sepia tone and slight vignette to suggest an older feel. Before saving out final clips, I experimented with different FLV settings in AfterEffects, as well as Sorenson Squeeze. Exporting directly from AfterEffects produced better results then Sorenson, possibly

because it was an older version. I built a custom video player in Flash that dynamically imports the Flash FLV's from an external XML file.

# VI. Development

Developing L'Dor VaDor was a labor-intensive process for me, as I like to consider myself a designer first, and a developer second. Programming a project of this complexity is quite an accomplishment for me. This section will provide an overview of the back end development of my thesis.

### Project Structure

L'Dor VaDor was developed using Adobe Flash. My primary goal when creating the project was to make it as dynamic as possible, meaning that if I ever wanted to add anything, it would be very simple. This meant that all the main assets in the project: photos, videos, and text, are all externally loaded into the project. Benefits to creating the project in this way include smaller file size, easy updating, and showing off my programming skills as a designer.

The project structure includes a main interface, or shell, which loads each chapter for the project. Being modular makes loading times faster and breaks up the content into manageable amounts. The main container file in L'Dor VaDor only holds the introduction animation and main trunk navigation for the project. When a user clicks a section of the project, another file loads into the shell. Each section that is loaded has its own Flash and XML file. This structure allowed me to keep all of the content and paths to each chapter organized.

### Programming

This thesis was programmed using Flash Actionscript. Due to the dynamic nature of the project, all animations are code based. The Flash project files consist of one or two frames and which hold the placeholders for all of the content that is loaded in. Many of the built in classes that are frequently used are the tween class, movieclip loader class, and bitmap data class.

Most of the code in the project was written myself or adapted from past projects. I also subscribed to the tutorial site Lynda.com to learn how to create a custom video player.  The project was developed with the intent to be played on a local hard drive, however I strived to make it also viewable on the Internet. Without utilizing XML to dynamically load content, this project would likely be too large to be viewed on the web.

**User Testing**

Throughout the creation of the project I did user testing. It was important to me to see how people interacted with the project. I would ask people if animations were too long, if text was readable, and if the navigation was intuitive. Constructive feedback was essential for small changes that I implemented. For example, one user suggested I make the text on the share postcard a little bigger and blur the graphic slightly around the text to make it easier to read. Another individual suggested ideas on changing the layout of the homepage. Having this type of feedback throughout the process helped to refine the look and usability of the project.

# VII. Thesis Show

L'Dor VaDor will be exhibited on November 2, 2007 at Rochester Institute of Technology. I was unable complete the project in time for the spring 2007 show, as I had originally only given myself ten weeks to complete the project. I also relied upon outside resources for imagery and information that delayed the finished piece. At this time, some of those assets still have not be acquired and I plan to work as best with what I have and will make do with what I can photograph myself. It has been a struggle yet great learning experience working with an archive and obtaining permission to use their resources. Originally I was disappointed I was not able to show in the spring, but I am happy to have had the extra time to put into this project.

In addition to the project being shown at RIT this fall, the Western Reserve Historical Society will receive a copy of the project to be placed on their website. I also plan on contacting the Maltz Museum to inquire if the project could be exhibited locally. L'Dor VaDor will also be submitted to numerous competitions for further recognition. I am very proud of this project as it showcases my talents not only as a designer and programmer, but commemorates my family and the Jewish community in Cleveland.

# VIII. Conclusion

I feel extremely proud and honored that I had the opportunity to create this thesis. Not only does this project exhibit my skills as a designer and developer, but also it shares the story of my family and Jewish community in my hometown. I would really love to continue to develop this project and continue to record people's stories of Jewish life in Cleveland. This project is not only praises my family, but others who have contributed to the local community.

I am very excited to show my thesis at RIT this fall, and hope I will have the opportunity to exhibit it at the Maltz Museum in Cleveland. Additionally, L'Dor VaDor will be showcased online courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society.

More then anything, I hope this project inspires people to think about their family history, and research their roots. There is nothing more fulfilling then learning about your genealogical roots and hearing stories that have been passed down in your family, from generation to generation.

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# X. Appendix

**Problem Statement**

Past events and their significance over time has relevance for everybody. Generally, people are interested in learning about their origins in family, culture, and traditions, yet may not be cognizant of the everyday individual participation in creating the world. The study of history offers appreciation of the past, its preservation, and an informed view towards the future.

Modern technology has improved the efficiency of sharing information around the world. Although many famous historical events are becoming preserved in multimedia, smaller, less famous niche stories, such as Cleveland's Jewish immigration experience, remain untold. One might propose that these often lesser famed stories might be as relevant in the world's history as much as those highly renowned. Smaller histories that lack recognition might benefit from exposure through interactive multimedia, as it is an economical alternative for making information accessible.

Interactive multimedia offers designers the opportunity to share content as rich, interactive experiences. By engaging in participation, a visitor is likely to have a more profound and lasting impact in comparison to being a passive recipient. People who have the desire to further explore their heritage need niche histories such as the Cleveland Jewish immigration experience to be easily accessible. It is also of equal importance for people to be knowledgeable of the impact these memories have on history as a whole.

This thesis will convey information about the history of the Jewish immigrants in Cleveland to show how their impact influenced the growth of the city. Visitors will discover people, businesses, and organizations that are the roots of the Cleveland Jewish experience. Stories of individuals recounting their memories will contribute to learning about what life was like. Users will also have the opportunity to explore images, artifacts, and participate in interactive activities to learn about the Jewish immigrants.

**Project Methodology**

This thesis will be an interactive Adobe Flash piece that will convey information about the history of the Jewish immigrants in Cleveland, Ohio. After exploring this educational project, the user will be able to identify people, businesses, and organizations that have roots from Cleveland Jewish immigration. By gaining knowledge about smaller parts of Jewish history, one can have an overall greater understanding of the world's history as a whole.

The project will have three major themes: Coming to America, Working in the City, and Impact on Cleveland. All sections will feature interviews from individuals in the Cleveland community

reminiscing about life in the old Jewish neighborhoods. These personal accounts will support the material in the project and establish a more intimate relationship with the viewer.

In Coming to America, users will learn about why immigrants came to Cleveland, and what life was like as an immigrant in the city. The thriving garment industry will be explored in Working in the City. The stories of major businesses and shops such as American Greetings, Higbees, and Halle Brothers Company, founded by Jewish immigrants, will be examined.  Lastly, the Impact on Cleveland section will examine the progression of the Jewish neighborhoods in the city and share information about the Jewish community today.

Visitors will be able to interact with old documents, photos, and memorabilia throughout the project. This will provide a visitor with the unique opportunity to examine the historical objects without visiting a museum or archive. Many artifacts will be from my family's history to give the project a personal touch and provide a context that the user can relate to.

The software necessary to complete this project includes but is not limited to: Adobe Flash, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Final Cut Pro.  Imagery for the piece will use photographs acquired through archives, family photos, personal documentation and vector illustrations. Resources for obtaining visual content may include The Western Reserve Historical Society, The Maltz Museum, Cleveland State University Library Special Collections, The American Jewish Archives, and synagogues in the Cleveland area.  The design style for the piece will be photorealistic and will utilize vector illustrations for maps and supporting graphics.

This project will be given a budget of $1000 for printed materials, CDs, image fees, and travel expenses. Limitations of the project include resources available through archives, budget, individuals willing to be interviewed for the project, and time necessary for distribution into the marketplace. The final limitation is the amount of time necessary to program the required components in Adobe Flash. Additional time outside of project development must be considered for informing museums and archives about the availability of the project.  The final product is expected to take 20 weeks to complete, and is anticipated to be fully functional by May 25, 2007.

A user-testing group will be utilized to ensure effective presentation, information, and understanding of the material. Experts in Jewish history, design professionals, and members of the community will be consulted throughout the course of the project. Individuals participating in testing will be given materials at checkpoints indicated on the timeline proposal to guarantee feedback at appropriate

benchmark points. The results will be discussed with each thesis committee member and will be assessed and incorporated on an individual basis.

**Target Audience**

This project's targeted audience is people interested in Cleveland history, immigration, or Jewish history. This project will require understanding of the English language, moderate visual acuity, and will be appropriate for individuals of varying ethnic descent. Economic status should not be a factor at the individual level, as the project would most likely be exhibited in a museum or on a website. Users should have intermediate computer skills and basic knowledge of American history.

This project will be delivered by CD-ROM or DVD-ROM, and may be available on the Internet depending upon final project size. Software requirements for viewing this thesis will include:

Operating System: Mac OSX / Windows XP
Memory: 512 MB of RAM
Software: Adobe Flash Player 8 or higher

**Literature Review**

The focus of my research includes interactive multimedia education and Jewish history. I am creating an interactive project about the Cleveland Jewish immigration experience to show how their contribution to the growth and development of the city has impacted history as a whole.

The following sources were obtained through the Wallace Library, online databases subscribed to at Rochester Institute of Technology, and personal books. It has been to my advantage to capitalize on the excellent resources at the Wallace Library. Sources in usability testing, screen design, instructional learning, and information architecture have contributed to my success in preparing for this project. I am grateful that the Wallace Library has such an extensive array of materials and provides students the opportunity to search other university catalogues and library collections across the country.

**Books**

**Becker, T. G. (2004).** *Images of America: Cleveland 1796-1929*. **Chicago: Arcadia Publishing.**
This resource offers photographic references of architecture, social and political events, entertainment and other images that capture the evolution of Cleveland.

**Berg, G. A. (2003). The knowledge medium: Designing effective computer-based learning**

environments. Hershey, PA: Information Science Pub. Retrieved October 8, 2006, from ebrary electronic books database: http://albert.rit.edu/record=b1885196

This resource suggests effective techniques for creating interactive learning environments. The first section of the book discusses issues in human computer interaction, navigation, and computer tools while the second half focuses on the computer as a medium. I think this source will be useful for my research in learning technology as it examines issues in creating these applications.

Brown, A. M. (1989). *The Camp Wise story 1907-1988* (D. B. Guralnik & J. Rubenstein, Eds.). Cleveland: The Jewish Community Federation in cooperation with The Western Reserve Historical Society.

This book explores the history of Camp Wise, a Jewish camp in Cleveland, Ohio that was established to promote healthy and engaging activities for underprivileged children of immigrant families. It is a great reference for learning about what life was like for Jewish immigrants and shares many images throughout the camp's history.

Donnelly, D. (2000). *In your face too!* Gloucester: Rockport Publishers Inc.

*In Your Face Too!* is an inspirational resource that is a collection of interface designs for CD-ROM, websites, kiosks, and DVDs. This resource proves to be a valuable asset for my review as each selection has different a different visual style yet is functional and appropriate for the information being presented. A CD-ROM is also included with the book that provides an excellent opportunity for personal investigation of the acknowledged interfaces. I feel this resource will be beneficial for my development of my project's visual aesthetic and navigational device.

Earnshaw, R., & Vince, J. (Eds.). (2001). *Digital content creation*. London: Springer.

This book is comprised 23 short chapters, each written by a different individual on the topic of digital content creation. Chapters that appear to be noteworthy for my project research include *Access and Retrieval of Digital Content, Virtual Education − Pancea or Pandora's Box, and Virtual Heritage: Challenges and Opportunities*. I believe that these short essays will provide insight as to how the content in my project will be understood and received by my target audience.

Gartner, L. P. (1978). *History of the Jews of Cleveland*. United States of America: The Western Reserve Historical Society and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

This resource explores the history of Jewish immigrants in Cleveland from 1836 to the end of the Second World War. The author examines three different periods of immigration and the social and cultural impact of the Jews in the city. This rich, historical book will contribute to my project as a main source of my content.

**McCarthy, J., & Wright, P. (2004).** *Technology as experience.* **Cambridge: The MIT Press.**
Understanding the user experience and how human beings live and interact with it is explored in *Technology as Experience.* I feel this resource supports my research in instructional multimedia by examining issues in human computer interaction.

**Mishra, S., & Sharma, R. C. (2005).** *Interactive multimedia in education and training.* **Hershey: Idea Group Publishing.**
Instructional multimedia is a recent development in educational training that has grown as a result from advances in computer technology. *Interactive Multimedia in Education and Training* is a remarkable resource comprised of short essays about educational training and instructional technology. The book focuses on planning and design considerations, pedagogical issues, and application and case studies. I believe this book will help me in my brainstorming and development phases and guide me in creating my project.

**Redmond-Pyle, D., & Moore, A. (1995).** *Graphical user interface design and evaluation (guide): A practical process.* **London: Prentice Hall.**
Designing a graphical user interface (GUI) is a challenging task, as one must consider choices of color, user interaction, layout, and application structure. Creating an effective GUI is essential for communicating to a user how to interact with an application. *Graphical User Interface Design and Evaluation* provides a detailed examination of techniques and factors one must consider when developing a system for human computer interaction. I feel this book is a critical resource for my project as the navigational device and interactive structures must be well organized and intuitive for a user. This reference outlines the process of creating a successful interface and also introduces techniques for usability evaluation.

**Rubenstein, J., & Avner, J. A. (2004).** *Merging traditions: Jewish life in Cleveland* **(Rev. ed.). Kent State University Press.**
*Merging Traditions* celebrates the contribution of Jewish immigrants and their impact on the city of Cleveland. The book shares many images and documents of early Jewish pioneers and the expansion of the community.

**Thissen, F. (2004).** *Screen design manual: Communicating effectively through multimedia.* **Berlin: Springer.**
This book is a great reference for issues in screen design. Covering topics such as navigation, layout, interaction, emotion, and intercultural design, I am confident it will be a valuable tool for the development of the visual style of my project.

**Ware, C. (2004*). Information visualization: Perception for design* (2nd ed.). Amsterdam: Morgan Kaufmann Publishers.**

*Information Visualization: Perception for design* analyzes the human perception and suggests effective techniques for presenting information. Gestalt principles, visual and spoken language, and interacting with visualization are key topics in this resource that I plan to reference for my project.


**Websites**

**American Jewish Archives. (n.d.). *American Jewish Archives online exhibits*. Retrieved December 1, 2006, from http://www.americanjewisharchives.org/aja/exhibits/index.html**

The American Jewish Archives website has two online exhibits that feature biographies and the history of Hebrew Union College. As very few interactive, educational sites exist on Jewish history, this site provides an opportunity for me to examine characteristics of past projects.


**Terra Incognita Productions. (2005, June). *Churchill and the great republic*. Retrieved December 2, 2006, from Terra Incognita Productions Web site: http://www.terraincognita.com/productions.php**

*Churchill and the Great Republic* is an interactive, online exhibit developed to share the life and achievements of Winston Churchill. This learning resource is an excellent reference of intelligent organization of educational content and simple interface design.


**Journals**

**DeLarge, C. A. (2004). Storytelling as a critical success factor in design processes and outcomes. *Design Management Review*, 15(3), 76-81. Retrieved December 4, 2006, from Wilson Web database.**

This article discusses the art of storytelling and how it can be an effective tool for designers when brainstorming design solutions.


**Parrish, P. (2006). Design as storytelling. *TechTrends*, 50(4), 72-82. Retrieved December 4, 2006, from Wilson Web database.**

This article examines how interactive designers can utilize storytelling in the design process and shares guidelines for developing a strong story. The author illustrates how storytelling is an effective communication tool for the end user and designers in the creative process.

**Marketing Plan**

The completed project will be submitted to various interactive design competitions at a national and international level. The final piece will be submitted to the following competitions at the next available opportunity:

SIGGRAPH Student Interactive Competition

Adobe Design Achievement Awards

Communication Arts Interactive Annual

Print Interactive Annual

I.D. Annual Design Review

HOW Magazine Annual Interactive Design Awards

Horizon Interactive Awards

American Design Awards Semi-Annual Design Contest

STEP Best of Web Design Competition

STEP Inside Design 100

Good Design Awards

The IF Concept Award

**Final Thesis Flow Chart**
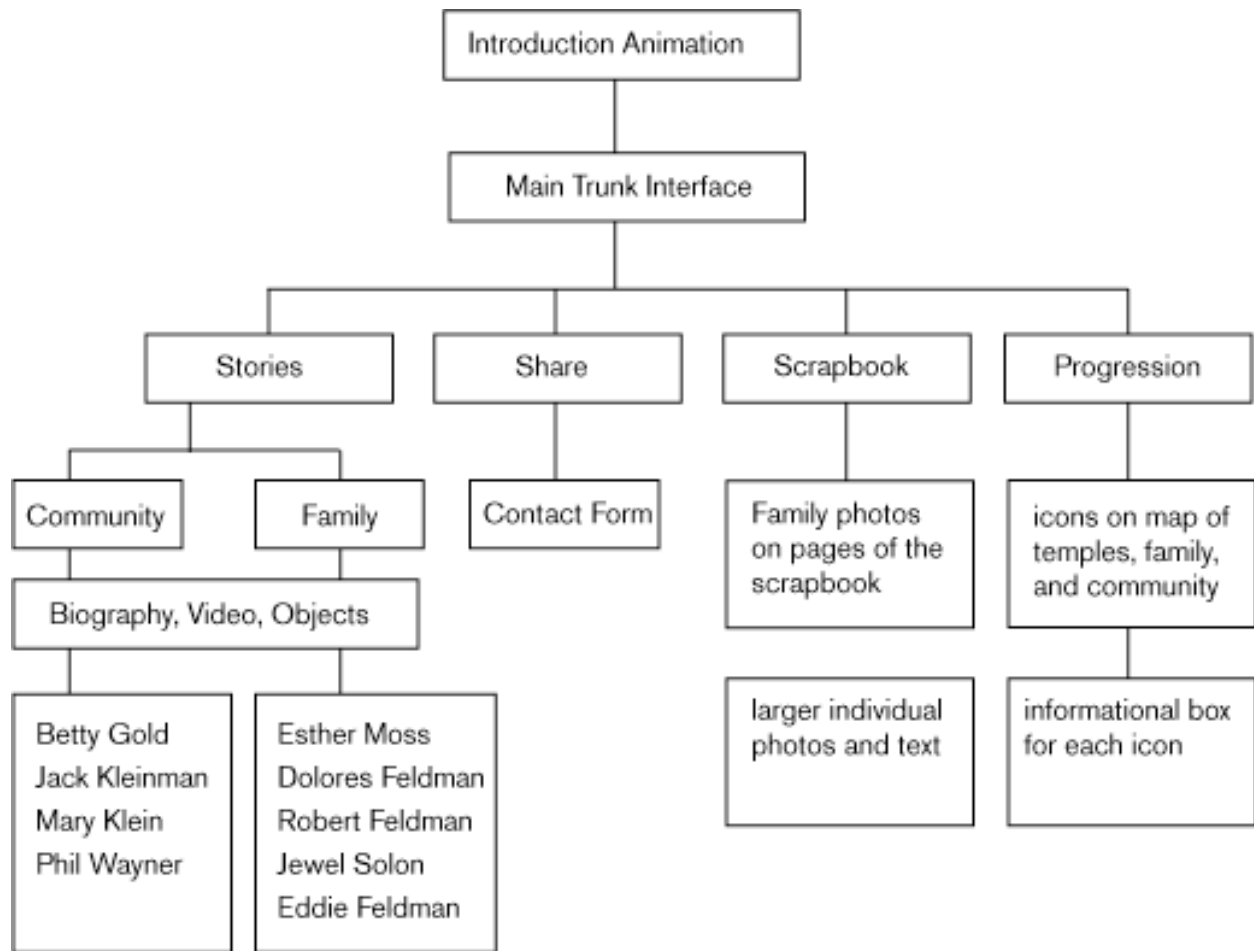


**Western Reserve Historical Society Membership Card**

## Western Reserve Historical Society Letter

10825 East Boulevard
Cleveland, OH 44106
Phone: 216.721.5722
www.wrhs.org

THE WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Smithsonian Institution
Affiliations Program

April 5, 2007

Roxanne Feldman
Rochester Institute of Technology
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

Dear Roxanne Feldman,

The Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) has been pleased to have you as an intern while you work on your thesis project, "Remembering the Cleveland Jewish Immigration Experience", for the Rochester Institute of Technology. We appreciate your interest in area history and are happy to cooperate with you in making this history known to a wider public.

The Society has no objection to your request to use images from WRHS on the website you have designed for "Remembering the Cleveland Jewish Immigration Experience". It is our understanding that ""Remembering the Cleveland Jewish Immigration Experience" can be placed on the WRHS site and/or linked to from our own website. The images have been provided only for the purpose of your thesis project; they can be included as a part of "Remembering the Cleveland Jewish Immigration Experience"on your own personal site, www.roxyfeldman.com, but should not reappear on any other sites.

Sincerely,

Sean Martin, Ph.D.
Associate Curator for Jewish History

Building a New Future for the Past

**American Jewish Archives Letter**

*The Jacob Rader Marcus Center*

*of the*

**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

3101 Clifton Avenue • Cincinnati, OH 45220-2488
(513) 221-1875 • Fax: (513) 221-7812

Ms. Roxanne Feldman
15 Granger Place Apt 2
Rochester, NY 14607

December 13, 2006

Dear Ms. Feldman,

Enclosed are copies of the catalog cards for Cleveland. You should also look at our online catalog since that contains everything we've acquired since 1996 (paper version is pre 1996). Do a subject search for Cleveland and see what comes up. Let me know if you are interested in having copies of anything or have any questions.

Sincerely,

Christine A. Schmid
Associate Archivist
513-221-7444 x3319
cschmid@huc.edu

Located on the Cincinnati Campus of the
HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

Marcus Center Web Site: www.huc.edu/aja

**3D Assets**

UV Maps rendered out of Cinema 4D and painted in Adobe Photoshop



*Trunk Color Map UV*
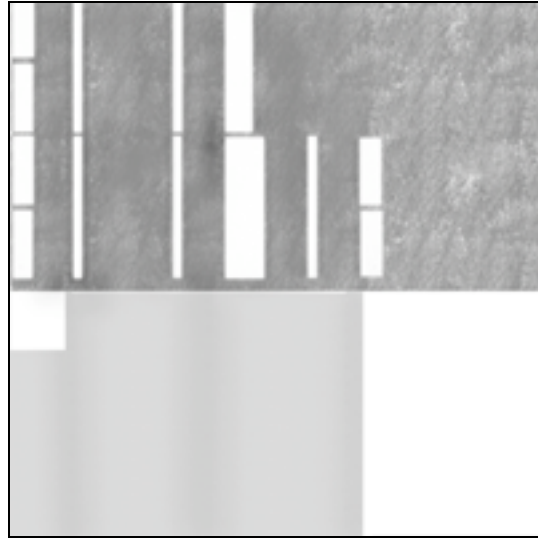


*Trunk Bump Map UV*
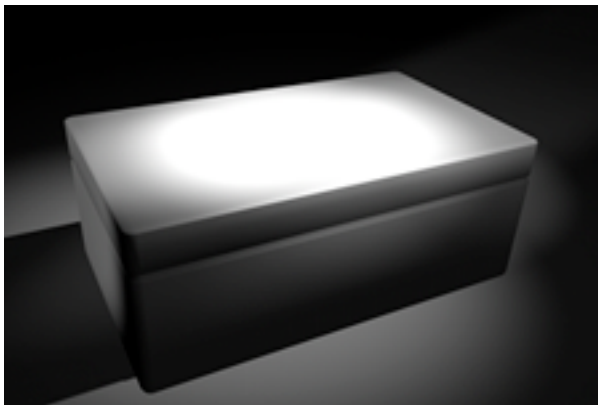


*Trunk model with no textures*



*Textured trunk using UV maps*

**Early Project Comps**



L'DOR V'DOR
pronounced luh door vah door

translation
In hebrew, l'dor va'dor translates to from generation
to generation. This project documents my family as
well as others stories. This is a hebrew word that
would be good for my title.



video · biography · objects

**Community**

Betty Gold
Jack Kleinman
Phil Wayner
Mary Klein

**Betty Gold**
BIOGRAPHY

Betty Gold was born in 1920 in Trochenbrod,
Poland. At age nine, Ms. Gold went into hiding
during the Nazi regime.

Ms. Gold and her family emigrated to the U.S. in
1946. Today, Ms. Gold is dedicated to teaching the
Holocaust is and is a docent at the Maltz Museum
of Jewish History in Cleveland, Ohio.

A documentary film will be nationally released
in June 2007 and will showcase her story.

**Final Project**

**Final Project Continued**

**Final Project Continued**