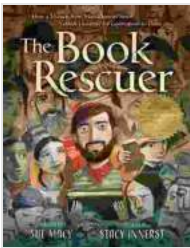


How This Mensch From Massachusetts Saved Yiddish Literature For Generations To Come

In the heart of the Pioneer Valley, surrounded by the rolling hills and quaint towns of western Massachusetts, a remarkable man named Aaron Lansky embarked on a mission that would forever change the course of Yiddish literature.

Born in Boston in 1944, Lansky grew up in a Yiddish-speaking home, immersed in the vibrant culture and traditions of his ancestors. As a young man, he witnessed firsthand the gradual decline of Yiddish, a language spoken by millions of Jews throughout Eastern Europe for centuries.



The Book Rescuer: How a Mensch from Massachusetts Saved Yiddish Literature for Generations to Come

by Sue Macy

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 27637 KB

Print length : 48 pages

Screen Reader : Supported



Determined to preserve this rich heritage, Lansky founded the National Yiddish Book Center (NYBC) in 1980 in Amherst, Massachusetts. With a shoestring budget and unwavering enthusiasm, he set out to collect, catalog, and preserve every Yiddish book he could find.

A Treasure Trove of Jewish History

Over the decades, Lansky's tireless efforts have resulted in an extraordinary collection of over a million Yiddish books. The NYBC's shelves are lined with rare first editions, forgotten classics, and personal journals that offer an unparalleled glimpse into the lives, culture, and beliefs of Yiddish-speaking Jews.

One of the most prized possessions in the collection is a handwritten manuscript of “The Dybbuk”, a renowned play by S. Ansky that explores the themes of possession, tradition, and Jewish identity.

Another highlight is a collection of children's books that showcase the vibrant Yiddish language and culture through enchanting stories, playful rhymes, and colorful illustrations.

A Legacy of Preservation and Education

The NYBC is not merely a library; it is a living, breathing center where Yiddish language and culture are celebrated and nurtured.



The center hosts a wide range of educational programs, including workshops, lectures, and exhibitions. It also offers a master's degree in Yiddish studies in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Through these initiatives, the NYBC has inspired a new generation of Yiddish enthusiasts, scholars, and writers.

A Mensch for the Ages

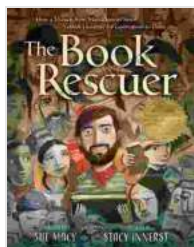
Aaron Lansky's unwavering dedication to preserving Yiddish literature has earned him the admiration and respect of the Jewish community and beyond.

He has received numerous awards and accolades, including the National Medal of Arts in 2019. In 2022, he was inducted into the Yiddish Wall of Fame at the Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv.

Lansky's legacy as a "mensch" - a person of integrity, kindness, and compassion - extends far beyond the Yiddish-speaking world. His mission to save a language and culture has touched countless lives and enriched our collective understanding of history.

Aaron Lansky's extraordinary journey is a testament to the power of one person's passion to make a lasting impact on the world. Through the National Yiddish Book Center, he has ensured that the rich tapestry of Yiddish literature will continue to inspire and educate generations to come.

As Lansky himself has said, "Yiddish is more than just a language. It's a bridge to the past, a key to understanding our present, and a guide for the future."



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