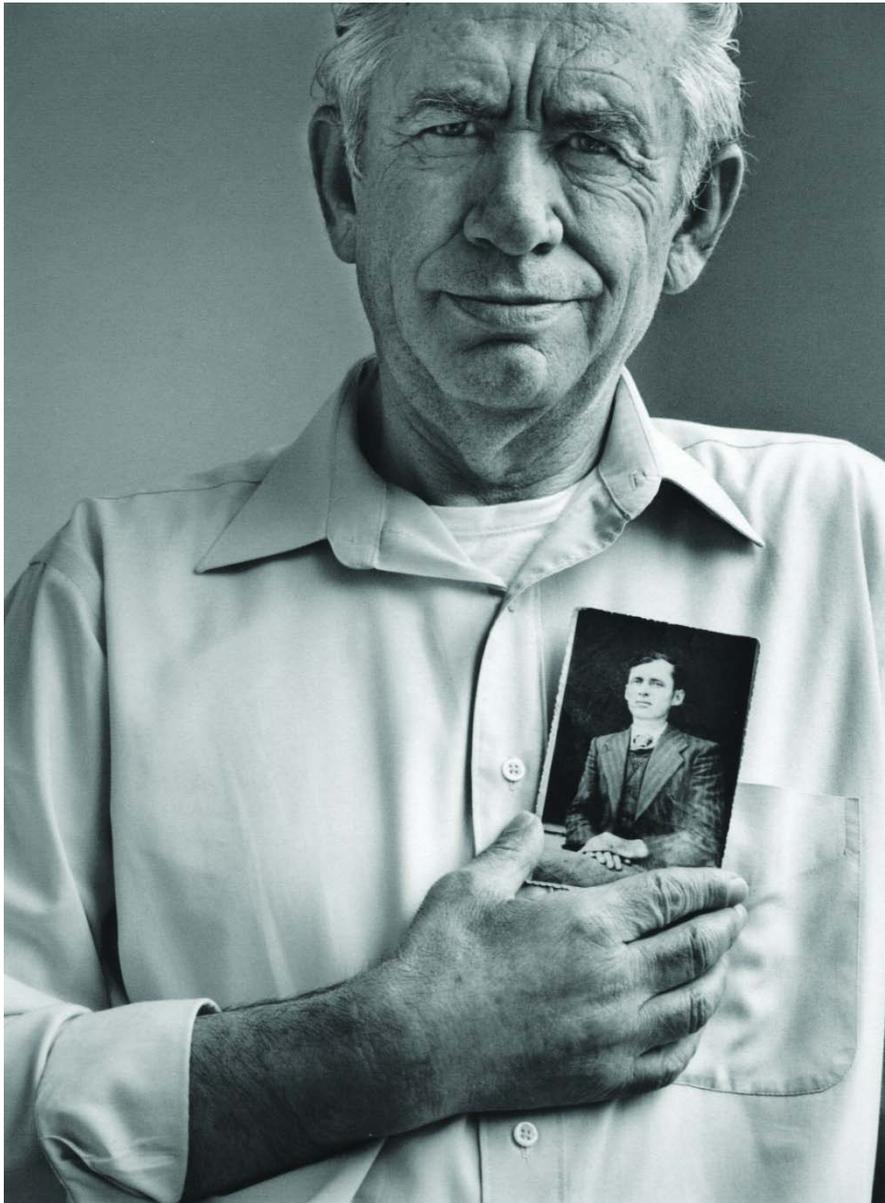
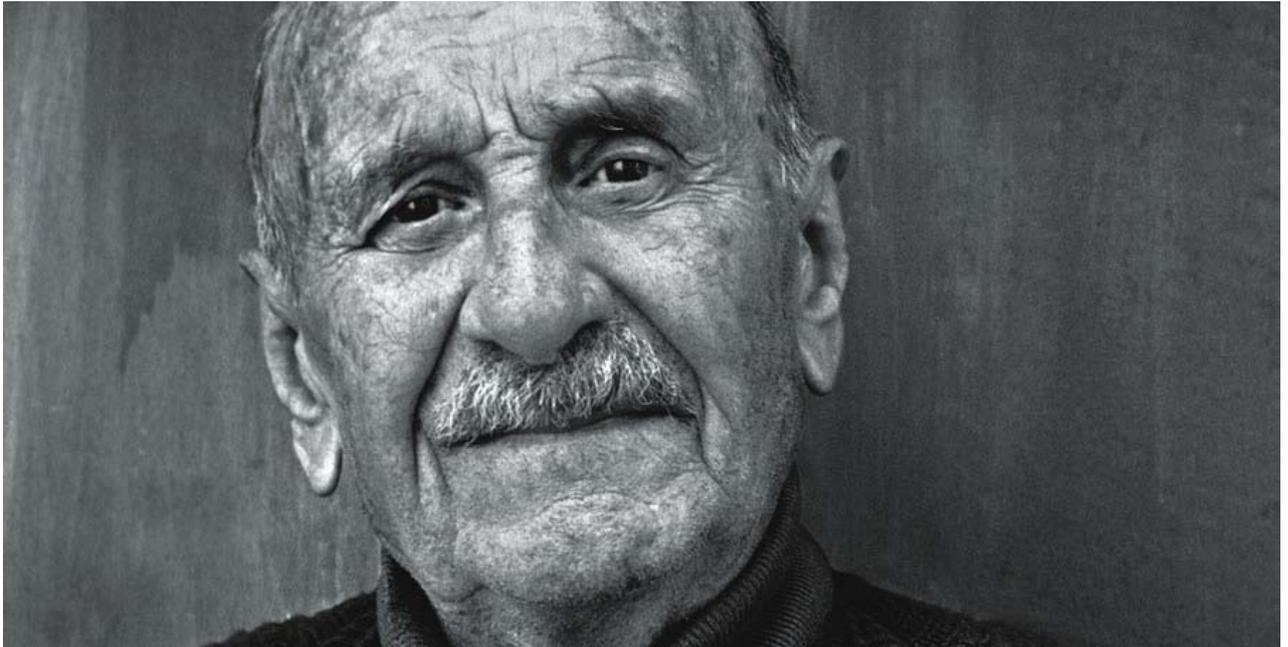


MISSING PAGES



Exploring Islam
Foundation

The Campaign



Missing Pages is a nationwide campaign to voice unity with Holocaust Memorial Day. It highlights the untold stories of solidarity, friendship and compassion between Muslims and Jews – stories of hope that are a beacon for our future.

The campaign aims to nurture a greater bridge of understanding and harmony between two great faith communities. In line with Holocaust Memorial Day's theme of 'Untold Stories', Missing Pages sheds light on the largely unknown accounts of solidarity between Muslims and Jews. It is through these historic stories that we may encourage hope for our future.

The main focus of the campaign is the hosting of American Jewish photographer, Norman H Gershman, as he tours the UK to talk about his book "Besa: Muslims who saved Jews in WWII". Norman will undertake an exclusive university campus tour every day during the week of 24th – 28th January 2011, when student Islamic and Jewish societies will come together to co-host the event.

Norman H Gershman



Norman H Gershman is an American Jewish photographer and Founder of the Eye Contact Foundation which promotes understanding and tolerance through portrait photography. Norman travelled to Albania to photograph Muslim families who rescued Jews in WWII. His six year odyssey pays tribute to those who fulfilled 'Besa' – a code of honour in Albania that instructs them to protect others from danger at all costs.

Norman's photographic book 'Besa: Muslims Who Saved Jews in World War II', features poignant images of Albanian Muslim families who sheltered Jews from the Nazis. Each image is accompanied by a powerful story told by the person in the photograph.

A book launch will form part of the event at the City Circle on Friday 28th January where Norman will be signing personalised copies of his work. The event will take place at 6.45pm at 45 Crawford Place London W1H 4LP.

Exhibition at the House of Commons



Exploring Islam Foundation and Yad Vashem, the Holocaust museum in Israel, have sponsored the exhibition "BESA: A Code of Honour – Muslim Albanians who Rescued Jews during the Holocaust" to come for the first time to the UK.

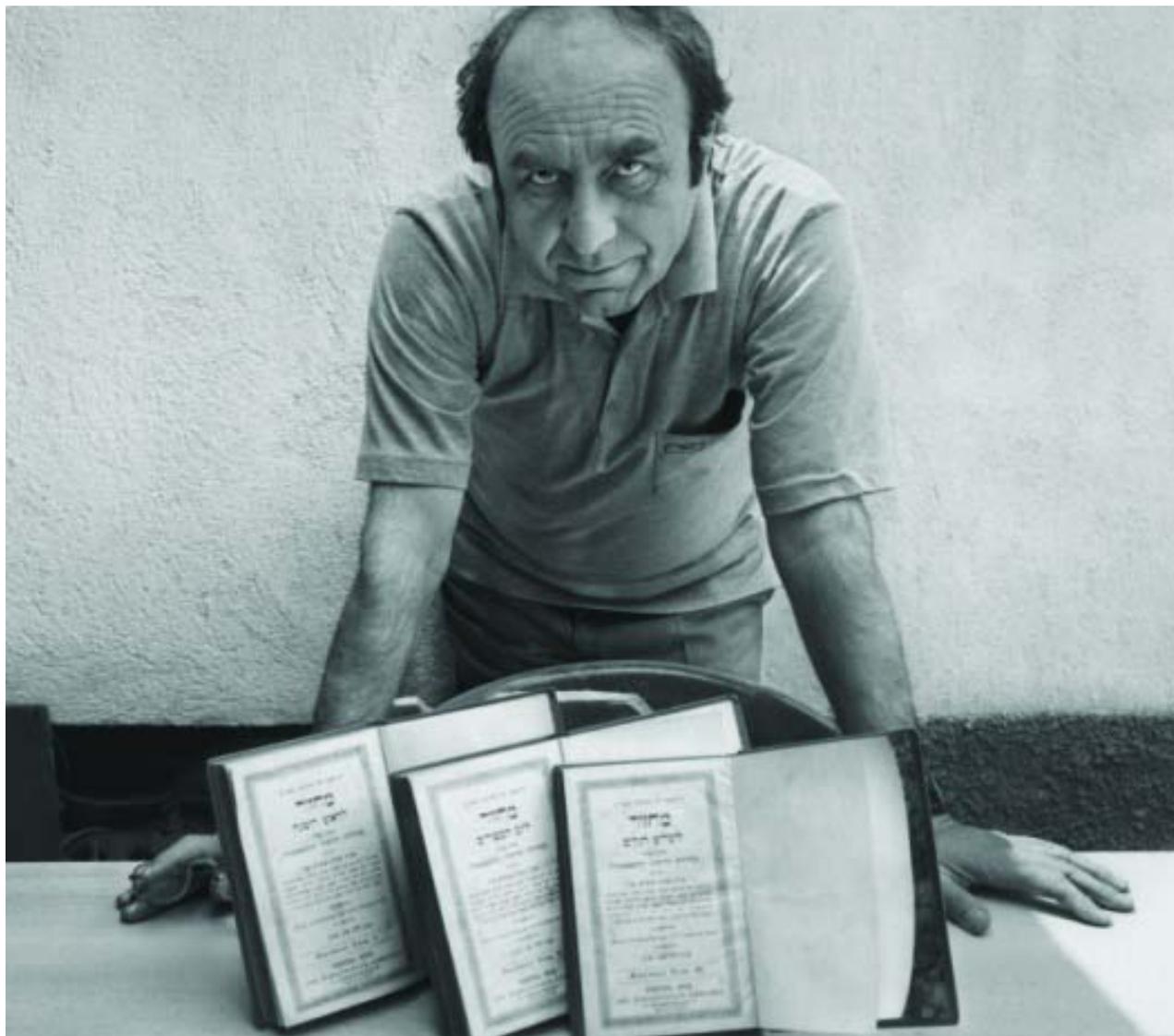
This travelling exhibition features a selection of poignant images by Norman Gershman and the powerful stories behind them.

The Besa exhibition has been on display in more than seventy five exhibitions all over the world including the UN, The Council of Europe and was shown for the first time in Britain at the House of Commons.

The opening ceremony took place on Monday 17th January at 11.30am in the Upper Waiting Hall of the House of Commons with guests from the Muslim and Jewish communities.

The exhibition will then travel to the London Jewish Cultural Centre from 26th January – 1st February, and then to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire from the 2nd February onwards.

Film – Besa: The Promise



An exclusive trailer of the feature documentary entitled “Besa: The Promise” will be shown throughout the tour, starting with the launch at House of Lords. The film reveals the untold story of the people of Albania who saved the lives of nearly two thousand Jews during World War II. Witness accounts, personal photographs and archival film are intertwined through the verité journeys of two men: Norman H Gershman, the American Jewish photographer determined to honour Albanians who defied the Nazis armed only with their honour code of besa; and Rexhep Hoxha, a Muslim-Albanian toy shop owner who must fulfil his father’s besa to the Jewish family his father sheltered sixty years before – by returning three precious books entrusted to him by the Jewish family. With its powerful message of courage and unity, “Besa – The Promise” challenges the prevailing narrative of Jewish-Muslim relations by revealing an authentic yet almost unknown history of comity and mutual respect.

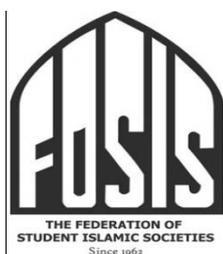
This edit in progress will be shown at the School of Oriental and African Studies on Wednesday 26th January 2011, co-hosted by the student Islamic and Jewish societies.

Nationwide Campus Tour

The campaign is taking Norman H Gershman across the UK for an exclusive campus tour at selected universities where he will talk about his book “Besa: Muslims Who Saved Jews in WWII”. During the week, Norman Gershman will take the audience about his journey to Albania and his experiences of meeting the Muslim families who sheltered Jews during World War Two. For the first time, Islamic and Jewish student societies from each university will come together to co-host events.



Nabil Ahmed, President of the Federation of Student Islamic Societies



“We learn so much today from those Muslims who risked their lives in fulfilling a human responsibility to protect their Jewish sisters and brothers. I am inspired by the message of the Missing Pages campaign, which relates the Islamic ethos of mercy, compassion and coexistence. I hope that students across the UK will join me in paying tribute to those heroes and I pray that together we can acknowledge the sense of brotherhood between our faith communities.”

Alex Dwek, Chair of the Union of Jewish Students



“The Holocaust was a period of darkness in history that scars the whole of humanity, not only its Jewish victims. This is why the Exploring Islam Foundation’s Missing Pages Campaign is a needed and essential one. The act of remembering the Holocaust is the responsibility of all people, regardless of faith, background or religion. The act of remembrance must serve as a reminder to all about the perils of evil and the danger of creating division. We welcome the Exploring Islam Foundation's campaign as proof of the potential for coexistence, and how the values of respect, toleration and understanding can be enshrined in modern society.”



A dedicated and dynamic campaign website hosts information on the role played by Muslims in helping Jews escape persecution. It includes positive examples of co-existence through history, shared beliefs of Islam and Judaism, the Quranic and Prophetic legacy of pluralism, and Islam's stance on anti-Semitism.

The website also relays messages of support from leading members of the Muslim, Jewish and wider communities, including the Chief Rabbi and Leader of the Labour party Ed Miliband.

Messages of Support

Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks

"The theme of this year's Holocaust Memorial Day is 'Untold Stories'. I am therefore delighted that the 'Missing Pages' project will highlight the stories of Muslims who sheltered and saved Jews during the Second World War.

As we commemorate the millions who suffered and died in the Holocaust, we will also remember those who risked their lives for the sake of others.

He who saves one life, saves the world entire."



Ed Miliband, Leader of the Labour Party



"The Exploring Islam Foundation does important work in raising awareness of Islam, and in fostering harmony and respect between the many communities and faiths of Britain. The Foundation's work helps to inform us all about the beliefs, cultures and history of this great religion and its people – in the UK and all over the world. It challenges misconceptions about Islam; it highlights the diverse contributions of Muslims to our world; and it brings people of various

backgrounds together in this country in solidarity and understanding. That is vital if we are to build bridges between faiths and communities in Britain and around the world.

I am particularly excited about the prospect for the Missing Pages initiative. Launching on Holocaust Memorial Day, this new campaign focuses on the many positive and peaceful interactions between Jews and Muslims throughout history. We all know about the challenges we face in our time – those are widely reported and well-known. But those great challenges are not intractable if we focus on what unites us in this world, rather than what divides us. By highlighting what we as people have in common, what we share and how humanity can come together to do good and to build progress, we can build a more peaceful, more hopeful world for our children.

I congratulate the Exploring Islam Foundation for their vital work, and I wish them every success in their new Missing Pages campaign."

Abdal Hakim Murad, Chair of the Anglo-Muslim Fellowship for Eastern Europe

"The role of Muslims in protecting Jews during the Second World War is certainly one of history's forgotten stories. The Exploring Islam Foundation is to be saluted for its contribution to the holy act of remembrance."



Professor Nasser David Khalili KCSS KCFO, Chairman of the Maimonides Foundation



"Since 1995 The Maimonides Foundation has fostered understanding and co-operation between Jews, Christians, and Muslims through cultural, academic, and sporting programmes. The foundation is committed to creating opportunities where these communities can meet and interact because we believe that dialogue is the only positive means of living in a harmony in a multi-religious and multi-cultural society.

I offer my support to Missing Pages and hope that this project which aims to further improve relations between Jews and Muslims and helps to alter misconceptions will be a success. As I often say, there is far more that unites the three religions than divides them. With my best wishes for a successful campaign!"

About Exploring Islam Foundation

Exploring Islam Foundation specialises in creative resources and high profile media campaigns to challenge misconceptions about Islam and Muslims. The Foundation is managed by a board of British Muslim professionals from a diverse range of expertise – strategy consultants, magazine editors, journalists, authors, public-relation experts, and art directors. The patron is **Lord Adam Patel** of Blackburn.



EIF was established in 2009 to fulfil the following aims:

- Challenge misconceptions surrounding Muslims and Islam
- Raise awareness about the belief, practice, history, and cultures of Islam
- Collaborate with organisations in raising awareness on humanitarian issues
- Highlight the contribution of Muslims to society

Our Vision

Our vision is of establishing a Foundation that combats the damaging stereotypes about Islam through the medium of creative resources. These information packages will provide a comprehensive insight to the faith. We envisage working across the spectrum of media outlets, from traditional print media to innovative e-media. We expect to build strong coalitions with like minded organisations and campaigns that are addressing global challenges in which we have a common aim.

Our Ambition

At EIF we appreciate that the relationship between Islam and various aspects of modern life are continually under scrutiny. We want to play an active part in that debate and discuss the place of Islam in 21st century Britain. Our ambition is to engage in stimulating and thoughtful discussions on a spectrum of issues from economics, politics and social customs to history, art and spirituality.

Crucially, we want to dispel the common stereotypes and myths about Islam and Muslims by using strategic media campaigns and creative resources. We understand the immense value of tailoring the style of communication to suit and address the information needs of distinct user groups.

Inspired by Muhammad: Media Campaign 2010

In June 2010, EIF launched its first awareness campaign across media platforms in London. The Inspired by Muhammad campaign was designed to improve the public understanding of Islam and Muslims. The campaign coincided with a national poll

conducted by YouGov which found that 69% of people believed that Islam encourages the oppression of women, that just 6% of people associated Islam with justice and that a mere 6% believed that Islam promotes active measures to protect the environment. Overall, nearly half of all people in the UK believed that Islam does not have a positive impact on British society.

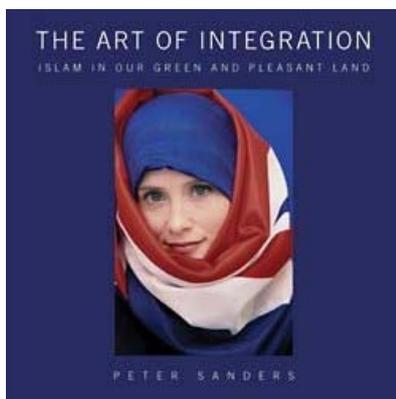


It showcased Muslims in Britain demonstrating how Muhammad inspires them to contribute to society, with a primary focus on women's rights, social justice and the environment. The vibrant poster-led campaign featured three Muslim individuals linked with each area. The info-ads were placed in key locations on London transport: in underground stations, at bus stops and a fleet of the capital's iconic taxis. Tube stations featured in the campaign included Oxford Circus, Westminster, Bank, and Leicester Square.

The posters led onlookers to a unique website www.inspiredbymuhammad.com which gave further information about other areas promoted by Muhammad: charity, human rights, education, healthcare, animal welfare, and coexistence. It also related the life of Prophet Muhammad, and provided bite-size information about the basics of Islam.

The campaign generated a high level of media interest and was covered by Sky News, the BBC, Al Jazeera, MBC, Al Hurra TV, Voice of America, and hundreds of newspaper and online articles including The Times, The Independent, The Metro, and The Guardian.

Past Projects



Prior to the success of *Inspired by Muhammad*, EIF launched 'The Art of Integration', a book by internationally renowned photographer Peter Sanders, at an event hosted by at the Royal Commonwealth Society in 2009, attended by Jack Straw MP and chaired by BBC anchorwoman Mishal Husain. Art of Integration is a collection of images from a cross-section of the British Muslim community. These beautiful, insightful and moving photographs capture the essence of the British Muslim identity and opens up a largely unseen world.

Contact

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For more information about the campaign contact Campaigns Director of Exploring Islam Foundation on remona@eifoundation.net.

www.missingpages.co.uk

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