

The Charlotte JEWISH news

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JCRC Fall Lecture: Shadi Abu Awwad and Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger Transforming Enemies into Partners: How Dialogue Is Creating Peace Between Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank

November 14, 7 PM, Sam Lerner Center for the Cultural Arts

Palestinians and Israelis in the West Bank/Palestinian Territories/Judea and Samaria often live in geographical proximity but have no real human contact and view each other with suspicion and fear. However, in 2014, a group of Orthodox Jewish Israelis from the Gush Etzion settlements met with a Palestinian refugee family in a nearby village. Over the course of several conversations, both peoples shared their fears, anxieties, pain, and desire for a better future. In time, they began to see each other as partners in peace by mutually recognizing each other's connection to the Land, and found a path towards solidarity despite ideological differences.

These same Palestinians and Jewish settlers founded Roots, "a grassroots movement of understanding, nonviolence and transformation among Israelis and Palestinians." Since its creation,

Roots has brought hundreds of West Bank area Israelis and Palestinians together for language and nonviolence workshops, summer camps, young adult programs, mediation, and so much more.

Join us as we hear from two leaders who are at the forefront of this inspiring work:

Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger, Co-Founder and Director of International Relations

Hanan moved to Israel at the age of 20 and has lived the majority of his life over the Green Line. Professionally, he teaches Jewish studies in colleges and seminaries in Jerusalem, Florida, and Texas. While teaching in Texas he became passionately involved in interfaith work. After co-founding Faiths in Conversation, a framework for Jewish – Christian – Muslim theological dialogue, he was inspired to build personal relationships with his Palestinian neighbors, something he had not attempted to do in over 33 years.

Shadi Abu Awwad, Youth Director

Born into a family that took a major leadership role in the First Palestinian Intifada/uprising, Shadi was taught to hate all Israelis at a young age. He had a moment of profound transformation when his brother was nearly killed by an Israeli soldier - only to be healed by an Israeli doctor that same day. Confounded by the contradiction, Shadi began a journey that ultimately brought him to see a human being and a partner on the other side. He eventually created Roots' youth program, which empowers Palestinian and Israeli teenagers to acknowledge each other's humanity – molding them into leaders who can work together to create a better future for their peoples.

We invite you to join Hanan and Shadi as they share their personal, interconnected stories and present the groundbreaking and challenging grassroots work of Roots. In these divided times



Shadi Abu Awwad and Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger

such as these, there may be strategies from Roots that could be applicable in our own communities and beyond.

This event is free and open to the public. RSVP is requested at www.jewishcharlotte.org. For more information, please contact Laurel Grauer, Director of

Community Relations and Israel Affairs, 704-944-6751 or laurel.grauer@jewishcharlotte.org.



Charlotte Jewish Film Festival Fall Flicks

An Evening with Peter Riegert, Sunday, October 27, 7:15 PM

Also Includes Surviving Birkenau: The Susan Spatz Story, Saturday, October 26, 7:15 PM

Charlotte Jewish Film Festival Fall Flicks will present two films and a special guest. First, on Saturday, October 26, at 7:15 PM,

there will be a screening of *Surviving Birkenau: The Susan Spatz*



Peter Riegert

Story, in Gorelick Hall. Tickets are \$8 and are available at charlottejewishfilm.com.

On Sunday evening, along with a showing of *Crossing Delancey*, the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival will have as its special guest, Peter Riegert, star of *Crossing Delancey*, *Animal House*, *Local Hero*, and many other films and television shows.

As a lead up to his arrival in Charlotte, Riegert spoke with *The Charlotte Jewish News* about his

life and career. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

CJN: The majority of your roles have been playing obviously Jewish characters, yet each some seems so different from the others. How do you feel about portraying Jews and where do you get the inspiration to make them so distinctive?

PR: Of all the stuff that I've done, I don't know what percentage is Jewish characters, but to me ... I just look at the material.

In other words, it raises an interesting question: what's a Jew? So, we all have our biases of what we think people are, and what they are for me as an actor first is human. Now they could respond to being Jewish, because that's the fact of their life, I wouldn't say I go out of my way to act Jewish. ... The material dictates the Jewishness. But each character is different because each movie or play or TV show is different. ...

(Continued on page 18)

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