

STOP 5:

PAUL MUNI



STOP 4:

MALKA HEIFETZ-TUSSMAN



STOP 3:

LAMED SHAPIRO



STOP 2:

CHAIM SHAPIRO



STOP 1:

LABOR ZIONIST FOLKSHUL



HOME:

UCLA HILLEL



STOP 6:

PERETZ HIRSCHBEIN
60TH BIRTHDAY
JUBILEE



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Yiddish STAR Tour
SUNDAY, DEC. 8 1PM
MEET AT UCLA HILLEL
UCLA CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES 20 YEARS

STOP 1:

LABOR ZIONIST FOLKSHUL



Formed after a meeting in 1908, the "National-Radical Club" was the first formal Yiddish organization in Los Angeles, and included veterans of the Labor Zionist movement, a movement that wed the territorial ambitions of Zionism with the revolutionary ideals of socialism. The Club was later reorganized as a mutual-aid, fraternal organization, *Poalei Tzion*, in 1912, and began raising money to build its own social center on Soto Street in Boyle Heights. The building housed the city's first Yiddish folkshul ("people's school") for the neighborhood's children, with Chaim Shapiro serving as its first principal and local writers Shia Miller and Rachel Schwab, serving as teachers. At the school, traditional Talmud Torah curriculum was replaced with lessons on the principles of socialism, secular philosophers, and Yiddish literature, folktales and folksongs. The folkshul also hosted speakers from across the country and served as an important meeting place for local unions and Yiddish organizations.

STOP 2:

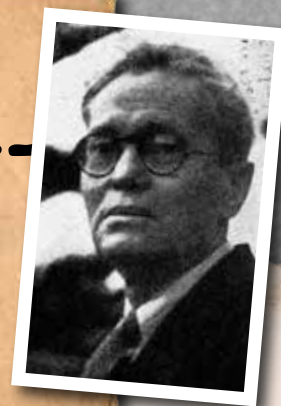
CHAIM SHAPIRO



Shapiro was born in 1886 in Krementshug, Russia (present-day Ukraine) and raised in Kharkov, an industrial city near the Dneiper River. As a teenager, he joined the National-Radical Movement, a movement which combined the territorial ambitions of Zionism to the revolutionary ideals of socialism, and helped to organize the Jewish population in Kharkov to defend themselves against an impending pogrom. He came to the United States in 1906 after serving six months in prison for his involvement in a strike, and moved to Los Angeles two years later to attend law school at the University of Southern California. There he became involved in almost every aspect of Yiddish cultural life and the socialist movement, and became well known as a "folks-redner" (people's orator) on behalf of the Yiddish-speaking community in Los Angeles and throughout the world.

STOP 3:

LAMED SHAPIRO



Lamed Shapiro was one of the most significant modern Yiddish writers. He was also an Angeleno. Born in near Kiev in 1878, by the time he settled in Los Angeles (for the first time), he had already lived in Warsaw, London, New York, and Chicago. He spent much of the 1920s in Los Angeles and returned for good in 1939, staying until his death nine years later. He spent years in the 20s developing a method for color film development, although it had already been invented; he died in a friend's back-house; his gravestone in East L.A. (rediscovered by Robert Adler-Peckerar of *Yiddishkayt*) is toppled over and broken. But he wrote a body of work that stands at the pinnacle of Yiddish modernism. His best known works, a group of short stories, probe the psychological impact of pogroms and depict the violence in a way that foregrounds the rupture it caused in communal life and the irrationality that seemed to surround it.

STOP 4:

MALKA HEIFETZ-TUSSMAN



Malka Heifetz-Tussman was one of the greatest Yiddish poets of the twentieth century. Born in Volhynia (present-day Ukraine) in the mid 1890s, she immigrated to the United States in 1912. After stays in Chicago and Milwaukee, she eventually settled in Los Angeles in 1941 and remained a Californian until her death in 1987, although her last 15 years or so were spent in Berkeley. Tussman worked as a Yiddish teacher, both for the Workmen's Circle and for the University of Judaism. She was also a prolific writer, publishing in many of the leading Yiddish newspapers and journals around the world as well as releasing six volumes of poetry. Records show at least three addresses for Heifetz-Tussman over her years in Los Angeles; this quiet street was perhaps not as elegant a sanctuary as the home in the hills of her fellow poet Esther Shumiatcher-Hirshbein, but Heifetz-Tussman's seeming itinerancy and modest homes are not reflective of her reputation as one of the most consistent and important Yiddish poets of the post-War period.

STOP 5:

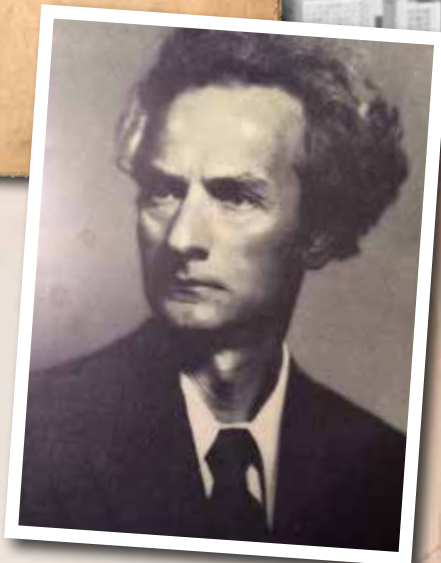
PAUL MUNI



Paul Muni (nee Frederick Meshilem Meier Weisenfreund) was born in Lemberg, Galicia in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1895 and immigrated with his family to the United States at the age of six and settled in Chicago. Muni followed his parents into the Yiddish theater world as a teenager, and became well known for his talent in transforming himself into much older characters. He moved to New York in 1926 to star in his first English-language production and three years later was signed by Warner Brothers and came to Hollywood. Over the course of his years in Los Angeles, Muni was nominated for six Academy Awards and starred in almost thirty films, and also won a Tony for his stage acting. But Muni also remained deeply committed to social causes and was a vocal leader in the fight against anti-Semitism and a powerful advocate for civil rights.

STOP 6:

PERETZ HIRSCHBEIN 60TH BIRTHDAY JUBILEE



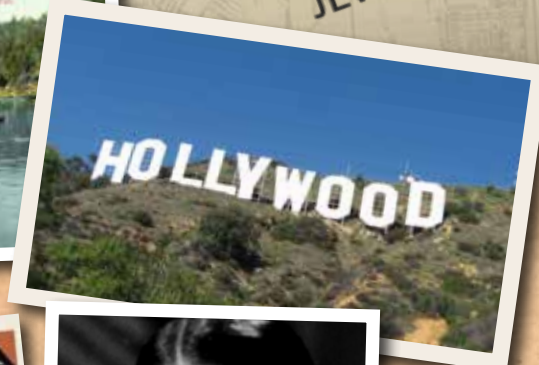
Peretz Hirschbein was a writer best known for his dramatic work. Born in northeastern Poland (Jewish Lithuania) in 1880, Hirschbein moved to America in 1912 in the midst of his period of greatest productivity, during which he wrote his most famous plays *Grine felder* (Green Fields) and *Di puste kretshme* (The Deserted Inn). He moved to Los Angeles around 1940 at the age of 60 to attempt (it almost goes without saying!) to break into "the industry". He ultimately had one screenplay produced in Hollywood—the anti-Nazi film *Hitler's Madman*, a dramatization of the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, Nazi commander of the Czech Protectorate. Even though Hirschbein moved to Los Angeles as a neophyte in Hollywood, his reputation as a popular and beloved playwright preceded him. His stature was such that his supporters organized a gala at the Wilshire Ebell Theater to celebrate his 60th birthday, and issued an accompanying tribute book (from which the above picture of Hirschbein was taken).

BOYLE HEIGHTS



Yiddish-speaking Jewish immigrants began arriving in Los Angeles at the turn of the century, most coming from the industrial cities of the East and Midwest where they spent years before making their way west. The poorest of these new arrivals settled in neighborhoods downtown near Temple Street and Central Avenue, but by the late 1910s, an increasing number of new arrivals settled in Boyle Heights, just east of the Los Angeles River, where land and rental properties were affordable for wage-earners and professionals alike. Jewish settlement in the area accelerated after two institutions relocated there: Congregation Talmud Torah, the city's largest Orthodox congregation, which erected a large new synagogue on Breed Street and attracted a large population of religiously observant Jews, and Kaspere Cohn Hospital, which offered treatment to those suffering from tuberculosis (it later became Cedars of Lebanon) and attracted many residents seeking health and care for their loved ones. By the 1920s, Boyle Heights became the epicenter of Yiddish public culture in Los Angeles, home to Yiddish-based fraternal organizations like the *Arbeter Ring* and *Poalei Tzion*, the headquarters of the city's Jewish unions, the local offices of Forverts and the Pacific Cooperative Press, Yiddish reading circles and choruses, kosher butchers, delis and bakeries, and some 6,000 Jewish households. But even at its peak in the 1930s, when the Jewish population exceeded 35,000 residents, Boyle Heights was also home to a diverse group of residents, including those of Mexican, Japanese, Armenian, Russian Molokan, and African American descent. Yiddish public culture helped to give the neighborhood its Jewish flavor, and construct a distinct ethnic community within the multiethnic neighborhood. And the Yiddish-based institutions and organizations in Boyle Heights continued to draw Jews to the neighborhood to attend meetings and social events, and to eat, even as they settled in more affluent parts of the city.

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Featuring Tali Tadmor In Concert as "ELLA FITZGERALDBERG"