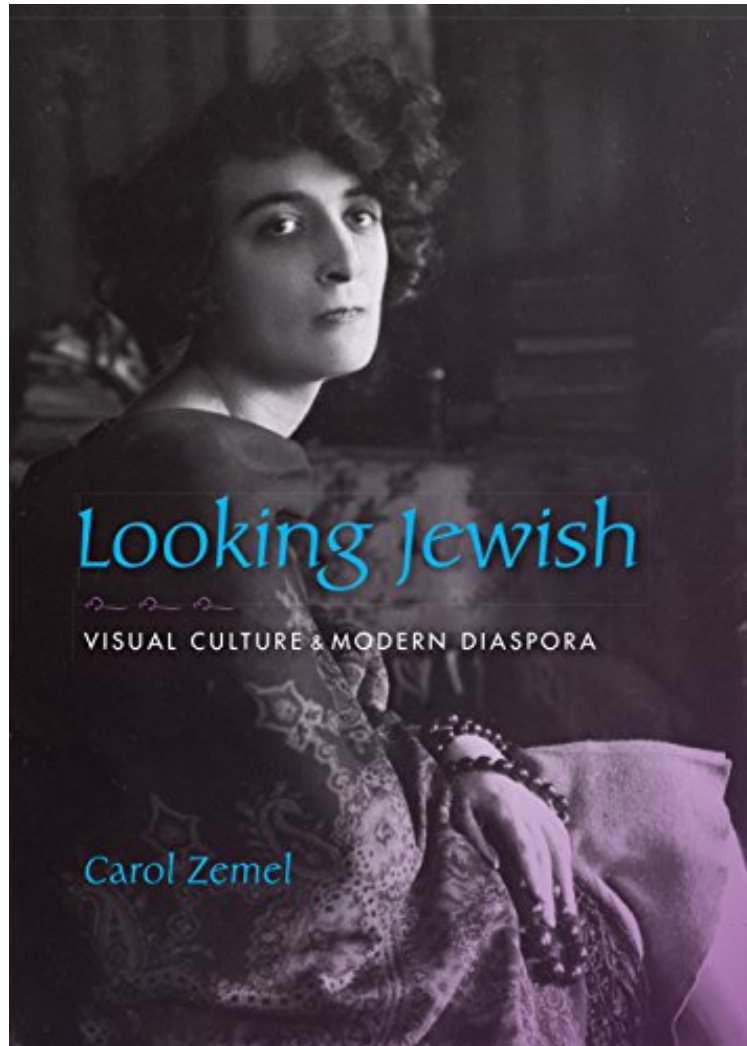


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Looking Jewish: Visual Culture and Modern Diaspora

Carol Zemel

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Carol Zemel : Looking Jewish: Visual Culture and Modern Diaspora before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Looking Jewish: Visual Culture and Modern Diaspora:

Jewish art and visual culturemdash;art made by Jews about Jewsmdash;in modern diasporic settings is the subject of Looking Jewish. Carol Zemel focuses on particular artists and cultural figures in interwar Eastern Europe and postwar America who blended Jewishness and mainstream modernism to create a diasporic art, one that transcends dominant national traditions. She begins with a painting by Ken Aptekar entitled Albert: Used to Be Abraham, a double portrait of a man, which serves to illustrate Zemel's conception of the doubleness of Jewish diasporic art. She considers two interwar photographers, Alter Kacyzne and Moshe Vorobeichic; images by the Polish writer Bruno Schulz; the pre-

and postwar photographs of Roman Vishniac; the figure of the Jewish mother in postwar popular culture (Molly Goldberg); and works by R. B. Kitaj, Ben Katchor, and Vera Frenkel that explore Jewish identity in a postmodern environment.

"Zemel's work is an important contribution to theoretical conceptions of diaspora. Additionally her work is significant for those working to expand attention given to visual culture in Jewish life and to rethink Jewish art history, offering astute case studies of images of and by Jews in several different contexts." ?H-Judaic"Adds to a growing literature on a neglected and misunderstood area in Jewish Studies and Art History, and as such, is a contribution to both and to the newer field of Visual Studies.... Zemel focuses on an understanding of diaspora that reveals the ways that Jews have negotiated their situation and acculturation through art and visual culture." ?Catherine Soussloff, University of British Columbia"A series of reflective essays animated by a concern with Jewish modernity's through the lens of diaspora and assimilation... written by an art historian of great visual intelligence in the analysis of images and exceptional clarity in communicating that visual analysis in words." ?Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, New York University"Zemel models a thoughtful, clear, and concise academic style without losing the reader in jargon, and she provides plenty of context and definitions to make the text accessible to readers unfamiliar with Jewish terms and concepts. The book is nicely produced and pleasant to read, with good black-and-white reproductions that illustrate the text well. Thorough endnotes, a detailed index, and an extremely rich bibliography further enhance the book's usability.... Highly recommended." ?ARLIS/NAAbout the AuthorCarol Zemel is Professor Emerita of Art History and Visual Culture in the Department of Visual Arts at York University, Toronto.