

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—APRIL 15, 2024

**SKIRBALL CULTURAL CENTER DEBUTS
LATER IN LIFE: ADULT B'NAI MITZVAH BY
VISUAL ARTIST AND FILMMAKER SABRINA GSCHWANDTNER**

**Site-specific Video Installation Commissioned by
the Skirball Cultural Center On View Beginning April 30, 2024**

LOS ANGELES, CA—The Skirball Cultural Center is set to debut *Later in Life: Adul B'nai Mitzvah*, an original multiscreen video installation by internationally recognized visual artist and filmmaker Sabrina Gschwandtner. Commissioned by the Skirball, the work spotlights six Los Angeles adults who recently completed their B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies, the process through which one becomes an adult in the Jewish religion. On view from April 30 through spring 2025 and becoming a permanent part of the Skirball's collection, *Later in Life* explores what it means to take part in this significant Jewish coming-of-age ritual—traditionally performed at age thirteen—as an adult.

“Sabrina’s piece takes an inclusive approach to Jewish identity in Los Angeles today, which feels both deeply personal and strikingly fresh and relevant,” said Sheri Bernstein, Vice President and Museum Director at the Skirball Cultural Center. “For the Skirball, as a cultural center guided by traditions of Jewish welcome, community, and learning, Sabrina—who sees her work in the tradition of quilting and thus embraces the bringing together of disparate visual and storytelling elements—is a dream artist to engage with on a project like this. We are excited as well that in addition to the eight-channel version of the installation created specifically for the Skirball’s Kaleidoscope gallery, single-screen versions of this Skirball-commissioned video will be able to enter other museums’ collections.”

Gschwandtner, who is both one of the subjects featured in the work and its director, was inspired to undertake this project by her son’s B'nai Mitzvah studies. “Learning Hebrew, studying my Torah portion, contending with my family history, and committing myself to combating antisemitism,” Gschwandtner explains, indelibly impacted her life and her artistic practice.

Other participants include actor, writer, and literary translator Ya’akov Ronnie Britton; real estate agent Geoff Martin; playwright and actor Shanti Reinhardt; political and social activist Joyce Rubin; and Emmy-winning artist, activist, and filmmaker Joey Soloway.

With a runtime of approximately thirty-three minutes, each participant in *Later in Life* addresses their unique ancestry, upbringing, and why they chose this rite of passage in adulthood, simultaneously revealing the diverse nature of contemporary Jewish experience that includes Jews-by-choice, interfaith families, and individuals of various identity positions and political perspectives. Composed of personal stories alongside images of local Los Angeles synagogue architecture and design, the circular installation showcases the profound meaning created through intergenerational connection, choosing one's own family, and forging and sustaining Jewish identity in today's world.

About the Artist

Born in Washington, DC and now living and working in Berkeley and Los Angeles, Sabrina Gschwandtner is a visual artist and filmmaker whose practice engages histories of feminism, handcraft, and textiles. Her work has been exhibited and screened internationally, including at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Walker Art Center, and the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. In 2022-2023, the Skirball featured Gschwandtner's "film quilt" made from filmstrips as well as a "video quilt" in the exhibition *Fabric of a Nation: American Quilt Stories*. Gschwandtner received a BA with honors in art/semiotics from Brown University, where she studied with media artist Leslie Thornton. She also studied video with avant-garde feminist artist VALIE EXPORT in Salzburg, Austria, and she received her MFA in film/video from Bard College.

About the Skirball

The Skirball Cultural Center is a place of meeting guided by the Jewish tradition of welcoming the stranger and inspired by the American democratic ideals of freedom and equality. We welcome people of all communities and generations to participate in cultural experiences that celebrate discovery and hope, foster human connections, and call upon us to help build a more just society.

Visiting the Skirball

The Skirball is located at 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049. Museum hours: Tuesday–Friday, 12:00–5:00 pm; Saturday–Sunday, 10:00 am–5:00 pm; closed Mondays and holidays. Ticket prices: \$18 General, \$13 Seniors, Full-Time Students, and Children 2-17. Exhibitions are always FREE to Skirball Members and Children under 2. Reservations are recommended. The award-winning, inclusive, and interactive exhibition, Noah's Ark at the Skirball, requires timed entry and is ticketed separately. For general information, the public may call (310) 440-4500 or visit skirball.org.

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