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**BAGELS & GRITS:
EXPLORING JEWISH LIFE IN THE DEEP SOUTH**
Featuring the photographs of Dr. Bill Aron
Presented by Museum of Southern Jewish Experience

Exploring Jewish life in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi echoes the theme of journey that has been a part of Jewish story and life for centuries. Jews have journeyed to escape oppression, to seek opportunity, and to preserve their heritage. The journey continues today as the southern Jewish population shifts from small towns to metropolitan centers.

Collecting images of southern Jewish life was a journey of discovery - an opportunity to visit southern Jews and their communities, seeking to understand their history and their struggles to preserve Jewish life in a rapidly changing world. The journey was also a search to define the southern Jewish experience. That journey has resulted in an unparalleled exhibit, "Bagels and Grits;" featuring the photographs of Dr. Bill Aron.

Dr. Aron has gained international recognition for his photographs of Jewish communities around the world. Since 1989, he has collaborated with the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience on a project depicting Jewish life in the Deep South. A volume of this work entitled "Shalom Y'all", with an introduction by Alfred Uhry, has been published by Algonquin Books. The Jewish Publication Society published his first book, "From the Corners of the Earth", which chronicles the Jewish communities of the former Soviet Union, Cuba, Jerusalem, New York and Los Angeles with an introduction by Chaim Potok.

Bill's photographs have been exhibited in major museums and galleries throughout the United States, Europe and Israel. His work has also appeared in a wide

variety of publications and is found in numerous public and private collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, The International Center for Photography, The Jewish Museum, The Chicago Art Institute, The Boston Museum of Fine Arts, The Skirball Museum, The Museum of American Jewish History, The Israel Museum in Jerusalem, and the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel-Aviv.

The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience is dedicated to celebrating the unique experience of Jews in the South and sharing this story with all people. It was established in 1989 as a place to tell this story, exploring not only the past, but also the challenges of Jews living in the South today. The Museum now operates under the auspices of the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, created in 2000 to serve a 12-state region by providing educational and rabbinic services to rural congregations, documenting southern Jewish history, conducting educational outreach programs, and promoting a Jewish cultural presence. The Institute of Southern Jewish Life and the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience are committed to preserving the legacy of Southern Jews and ensuring that their story continues.

The exhibit has traveled extensively in the United States. If you are interested in presenting “Bagels and Grits” in your area, please contact Neola Young at the ISJL, 601.362.6357 or young@isjl.org.