



'Mikvah Project' opens at Jewish Community Center

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By Mary Thomas, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

An unusual exhibition of photographs documenting the "ancient and secret ritual of mikvah immersion" opens this weekend at The American Jewish Museum in the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, Squirrel Hill.

"The Mikvah Project," a traveling exhibition with photographs by Janice Rubin and text by Leah Lax, explores a 3,000-year-old tradition derived from Jewish law requiring women to "immerse themselves in a ritual bath after their monthly cycle and before they resume sexual relations." The images and accompanying interviews represent a cross-section of American women, their views on body image and sexuality, and their "search for God in a moment of greatest intimacy."

Rubin and Lax will give the keynote speech for the opening reception at 7 p.m. Sunday. There also will be a performance by Kol Isha, a local Jewish women's theater group.

At 2 p.m. Feb. 22, Chatham College professor of art Elisabeth Roark will speak on "Bathing, Purity and the Body: The Mikvah Project in Context."

"Water Rituals in Diverse Cultures" is the subject of a panel comprising area history of religion faculty that will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. March 21.

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'The Mikvah Project'

The exhibition continues through March 28. The gallery is open daily and admission is free. To find out more about the exhibition, visit www.mikvahproject.com. For gallery information, call 412-521-8011, ext. 105.
