



- Orthodox Jewish -  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## MORRIS KATZ PROJECT - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are living in a world where hate and Holocaust denial have been growing, and we must find a way in which to fight this trend, starting with building deeper knowledge and understanding among our children.

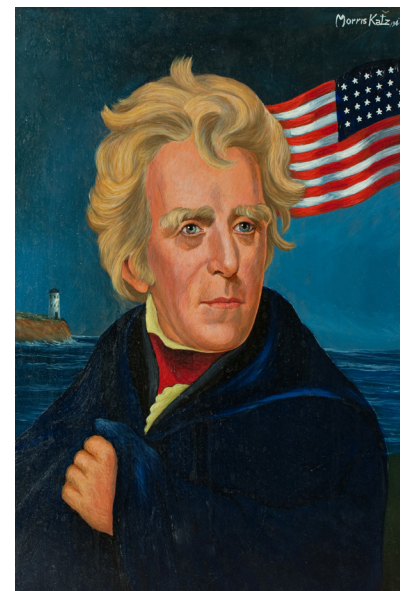
For years it has been said “We must not forget!” How can we be sure that will be true as the generations continue? Perhaps some of our children still feel a connection - but for our grandchildren, it is harder to be certain. As with so many subjects, the ARTS offer a wonderful way to communicate, and so we at the Orthodox Jewish Chamber of Commerce (OJC) have a vision that will be easy to promote and implement in schools, museums and libraries across the country to help perpetuate remembrance, a process that has already been initiated. It has the artist Morris Katz – a Holocaust survivor -- at its center. Why??

Morris Katz is more than an artist – he is a symbol of a patriot, who was so grateful to our country for receiving him from the depths of the Holocaust to develop a successful life in the US, that his response when he heard of John F. Kennedy’s assassination in 1963, was to create a painting of Kennedy, that soon became the foundation of The Presidential Collection. Now, this collection includes paintings of each president, from George Washington through George H.W. Bush (marking the time of the artist’s death), all done in the Old Master style, each taking a full 200 hours to complete. OJC created the Morris Katz Foundation, managing the full Presidents’ Collection and other outstanding works of art. Based on the history, the works, and the dreams of Morris Katz, there is much that can be achieved in fighting hate and antisemitism, and improving relationships and understanding between people.

The artwork by this internationally renowned visual artist Morris Katz offers an extraordinary multi-disciplinary opportunity to present teachers, students, and families with a way to introduce or enhance a Holocaust education program through the beauty of the arts. We have already had this concept approved by the NJ State Dept. of Education (DOE) and is supported by the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education. [https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/2022/feb/02/ResourcesAvailableforSchools-](https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/2022/feb/02/ResourcesAvailableforSchools-MorrisKatz-ThePresidentialCollection.pdf)

[MorrisKatz-ThePresidentialCollection.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/2022/feb/02/ResourcesAvailableforSchools-MorrisKatz-ThePresidentialCollection.pdf) It is in process of similar designations by the New York State and Florida State education departments. OJC spearheaded the addition of this Holocaust Survivors’ Story Collection at the DOE, and Morris Katz is the first one to be added.

Last Presidents’ Day, we initiated a program in New Jersey, whereby information was sent to every school superintendent, library, and college staff, informing them of Katz’s President Collection and providing links to the [https://www.MorrisKatz.org website](https://www.MorrisKatz.org). Now it is time to build on this step and create a structure that will provide teachers with the tools needed to integrate a carefully crafted curriculum appropriate to the





- Orthodox Jewish -  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

local standards – one which can be implemented schools, museums and libraries. This program will also be ideal for annual events related to International Holocaust Day, Yom HaShoah and programs with Yad Vashem.

This collection of magnificent paintings can serve as an interdisciplinary gateway for students in the classroom, to open conversations about much more than the art itself, but also elements of World and American history - about the Holocaust and the path of immigration to the US, where refugees could rebuild their lives. The collection was initiated through the artist's eyes as a survivor who became a great advocate of America. His career led him to hold two Guinness World Records for his prolific production of paintings and for his development of Instant Art. While widely known for his Instant Art, his serious paintings have received outstanding praise and some are showcased via the Morris Katz Foundation's website (link above).

Our Vision can be viewed on multiple levels and through several phases. Basic introductions can occur ideally to coincide with US celebrations such as Presidents' Day and Independence Day, with simple introductions to the Presidential Collection, accompanied by grade-level appropriate lesson plans to engage students' participation. Long-term success will be based on a series of training opportunities for educators, that will involve online and in-person sessions for educator teams to include classroom teachers, curriculum personnel, librarians, and museum staff working together to create detailed curricula that meet state and local standards. New Jersey's implementation of this program could become a model for the nation, as other states will also adopt this program as part of a broader fight against hate, based on greater understanding by the younger generation of the past and how it affects the future.

To further extend an appreciation of Morris Katz's work and gain an understanding of its origins and connections to world history, will be the development of affordable high-quality reproductions of artworks with a visual means to promote the fight against hate and Holocaust denial. Along with the actual art will be informational materials that outline the linkages between history, the Holocaust, and historical trends that result in outstanding positive humanitarian steps which can build greater understanding between peoples and overcoming generations of entrenched bias. There are multitudes who must not forget, many of whom must first be exposed to the history itself to build that understanding.



Duvi Honig,  
CEO Orthodox Jewish  
Chamber of Commerce,  
Morris Katz Foundation