Transformations of A Jewish Princess: Salomé and the Remaking of the Jewish Female Body

Jonathan Freedman

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Salomé and the Remaking of the Jewish Female Body

Oscar Wilde’s play Salomé was written about a Jewish woman, and for the Jewish actress Sarah Bernhardt, though the play was banned before she could appear in it. A number of Jewish women later took on the role in theatre or dance, including silent film star Alla Nazimova, Yiddish actress Bessie Thomashefsky, and comedienne Fanny Brice. Jonathan Freedman (University of Michigan) uses these representations in order to examine the emergence of a new type of Jewish female beauty, in the context of the modern world these Jews were entering by means of their spectacular public performances.

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