



CELEBRATING ISABELLA JACOB

February 17, 1941 - December 19, 2018



Photograph of heaven



Conig Island, c. 1944



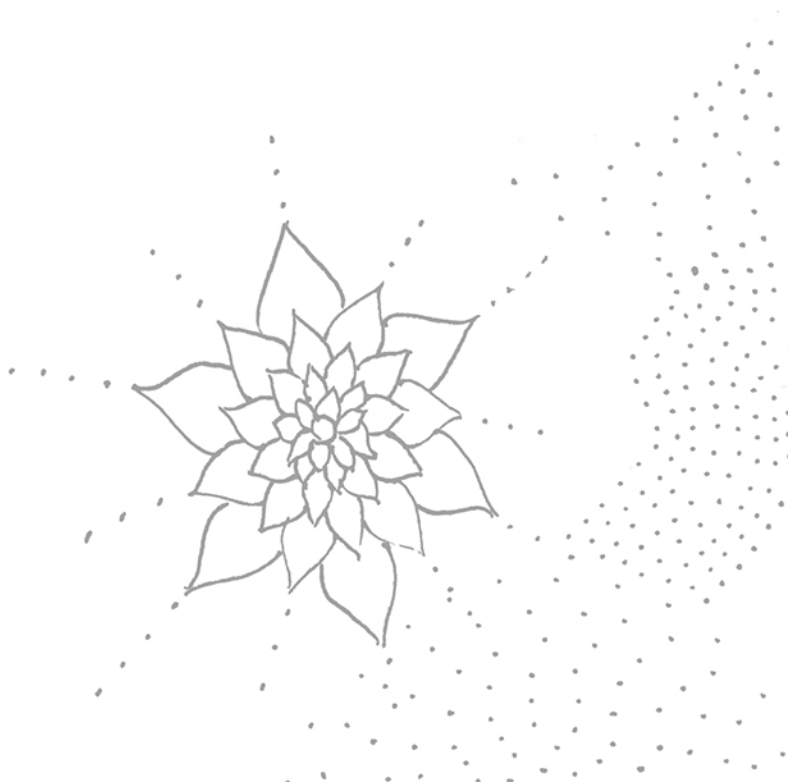
Isabella C. Jacob





Immediately following the program, please join us for a reception in the rooms adjacent to the auditorium. This is a time for conversation, art-making, sharing, connecting, and celebrating.

Food and drinks will be served in the reception areas until 5pm.



Speakers & Tributes
1:30pm in the auditorium

1. Welcome by Jean “Gino” Miele, Isabel’s son
2. Music by Tom Chapin, The Chapin Sisters, and Henry Chapin
You’re Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You’re Gone (Bob Dylan)
3. Julia Miele Rodas, Isabel’s daughter
4. Joshua Miele, Isabel’s son
5. Jean “Gino” Miele, Isabel’s son
6. Slideshow
7. Carol Guasti, Isabel’s daughter-in-law; married to Gino
8. Estuardo Rodas, Isabel’s son-in-law; married to Julia
9. Eugene Edelstein, Isabel’s 1st cousin, and lifetime friend
10. Sandy Yakovenko, Isabel’s lifetime friend and co-conspirator
11. Music: *Unreasonable Love* by Gerry Rumold, Isabel’s friend,
fellow Shalom Couples’ Group member, and Shalom retreat leader.
An original song written for this occasion.
12. Nance McGee, Isabel’s friend & Executive Director of Shalom
13. Julie Lifton, Isabel’s friend & Birchwood yoga instructor
14. Lucas Sconzo, Isabel’s Godson; son of her dear friend Larry Sconzo
15. Mary LoCricchio Clark, Isabel’s lifetime friend and co-conspirator
16. Vivien Ruhland Miele, Isabel’s grandchild; child of Joshua & Liz
17. Theo Rodas, Isabel’s grandchild; child of Julia & Estuardo
18. *Izzy* – a poem. Read by Johanika Roth, dear family friend &
“daughter” of Isabel; written by her brother Malachi Roth
19. Jon Rosenfield, dear family friend & “son” of Isabel
20. Music by Tom Chapin, the Chapin Sisters, and Henry Chapin:
Keep On The Sunny Side (Carter Family)

Isabella Jacob was born Isabella Ida Edith Modelson on February 17, 1941 in Brooklyn, New York. An only child, Isabel typically wore outfits hand-made by her mother Evelyn Dizon, a lingerie designer, and she loved the rare solo outing with her father, Meyer, who had emigrated as a young child from Eastern Europe to escape persecution by the Cossacks. The most joyous times of Isabel's childhood were spent with her cousins, Eugene, Silvia, Barbara, and Marilyn, with her best friend, Sandy, and with her beloved Aunt Julia. Isabel graduated from Erasmus Hall High School, not far from her home in Brooklyn, and began attending Pratt Institute in 1958.

At Pratt, Isabel thrived as a dancer and a studio artist. It was also here that she met Jean Miele, who was finishing his degree in Architecture. The two soon married and Isabel left school in 1960 to join Jean in Augsburg, Germany, where he was serving in the Army, and where her first son, Jean, was born in 1962. Isabel's second child, Julia, was born in 1965, the same year they moved to Park Slope, where they were at the center of a community of young families devoted to revitalizing the neighborhood. Isabel's youngest child, Joshua, was born there in 1969.

Following an attack which blinded her youngest son in 1973 and the subsequent separation from her husband, Isabel engaged more deeply with her creative self. Drawing strength especially from her deep connection with friends Mary and Larry, Isabel joined a local improv group, participated in neighborhood sketch groups, attended and performed in modern dance recitals, and ultimately returned to Pratt to complete her B.F.A. in 1976. Although she continued to draw, paint, and sculpt, it was during this period she first began seriously exploring collage, which became her primary expressive medium. These early works frequently included fragments of her children's drawings and papers, including the braille that became a longstanding element of her work.

It was also during this time that she met and fell in love with Klaus Jacob, a Research Scientist at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory and a fellow-traveler in dance and art circles. The two were soon deeply connected, moving together to Valley Cottage in Rockland County, New York, with Isabel's children in 1976, and marrying in 1979. With Klaus, Isabel began a whole new series of adventures, hiking and

camping, traveling to Germany, Italy, England, Scotland, Canada, Japan, and all over the United States. In addition to working on her art, Isabel was a devoted builder; she immersed herself in hands-on renovation and one-of-a-kind home decorating projects, both in Valley Cottage and in other homes. Her work appeared in many exhibitions; she held jobs at the Jewish Museum, the Museum of the City of New York, the Rockland Center for the Arts, and God's Love We Deliver; and she was awarded artist residencies in the Everglades and in Taos, New Mexico.

With the arrival of grandchildren—Cally, Theo, Ben, Luca, Vivien, Emma—Isabel encountered new depths of love. Wonderfully kind and patient, she was a favorite playmate and companion, game to swim or read, hike or bike, feed the ducks, make art or cook, the latter always one of her favorite activities. The joy of grandchildren coincided with other joys of Isabel's mature life, especially her deep connection to the Shalom Mountain community, where she enjoyed frequent spiritual retreats, served on the Board of Directors, became a mainstay of the community's elder retreat, and where a couples group provided vital grounding for her relationship with Klaus. These years also saw the 2004 move to her treasured home on Paradise Avenue in Piermont (itself a work of art, carefully curated and cultivated in every quirky corner), hiking the Appalachian Trail, early morning rowing on the Hudson, weekends with her couples group and meeting with her reading group, retreats at Shalom Mountain, near-daily yoga at Birchwood, a month-long pilgrimage to India, and continually, wave after wave of new creative outbursts, often surprising even to herself—swimming pools, icebergs, rug-hooking and quilting, small houses ...

Isabel was diagnosed with late stage pancreatic cancer early in 2018 and was as sorrowful as any of us, mainly because, she said, she was still having a good time. During the last year she had a major retrospective exhibition at the Interchurch Center on the Upper West Side, she traveled, spent abundant time with family (including newly discovered nieces and a nephew), reconnected with many old friends, and she maintained her wonderful, irreverent sense of humor. She died at home on December 19, 2018, in the arms of family.

In addition to her husband, children, grandchildren, cousins, and extended family, Isabel is survived by countless loving friends.

Izzy

a group of youngsters born into turbulent waters
found in her an island that gave us shelter, that gave us strength
her warmth, her love, her fortitude, her gentle goodnight kiss
she gave us calm and understanding
she gave us a connection to the whole
she showed us that all is well in the universe and in our souls
she showed us that challenges are what we make of them
she rose to the occasion
she guided us, calm and resolute
a woman of infinite tolerance and acceptance
a woman of infinite creativity and wisdom
she was a mother to anyone that longed to be nurtured
she was a guide to anyone seeking courage
she was an even keel in the face of countless storms
she is our foundation, our mentor, our teacher, our sage
she is an artist living and creating into eternity

- Malachi Roth (written upon Izzy's passing)

The Day After: December 20, 2018 at 11:22pm - Gino's Reflections

My mom died last night, and I wanted to let those of you who had the pleasure of knowing Izzy (Isabella Ida Edith Modelson Miele Jacob) that she passed as she lived: on her own terms. She made up the rules as she went along, and that extends to her last wishes as well: Her family is gathered around her, and we've been basically living at her house in Piermont since last night. The Berkeley family has flown in and all the Brooklyn folks have been going back and forth as we prepare her body for cremation tomorrow. Mom wanted to die at home, and she did. She wanted to live fully until she couldn't, and then leave. So that's how it went. She told us she wanted the female-bodied family members to prepare her body, rather than strangers in a funeral home, so that's what happened last night. We all tended to her according to our gifts, and to her house. We're also tending to each other and to Klaus (her husband of these many decades), just as he tended to Izzy's every need for these last months, with simple, clear, beautiful, patient, loving devotion. Izzy asked that we shroud her body elegantly, get a plain pine casket to lay her out in, set it up in a cozy spot in the house, and spend a day or so loving each other, being sad, eating together, breathing deeply, celebrating... and having fun decorating her casket together, before turning it all into ashes. Not the way most people do things, but that's my mom. And you know what? We HAVE been having fun. And we're sad. And we've also responded to this watershed moment in our lives with the gravity, ceremony, and ritual it deserves. In true Izzy-style, though, we make up the rituals as we go. We lit candles around her beautifully decorated casket and thanked her body for the wonderful way it carried her through the world (loving, traveling, dancing, cooking, hiking, yoga-ing, rowing, spiritual retreat-ing, rule-breaking, art-making, and so much more). We thanked her body for the way it held us and loved us and, for me and my siblings, the way it acted as a magical portal through which we arrived in this world, incarnate. Isabel has been teaching us (all along, but especially this year): teaching us to make stuff, to squeeze every bit of fun out of a day, and to celebrate this miraculous, magical life. So hug your loved ones a little closer tonight, forgive somebody, do something crazy, make up the rules as you go... and think of my mom. I'll miss her so much. And I'm so happy for her that she's on to her next adventure. These have been beautiful and heartbreaking days. Much love to you, my friends. Thank you for reading this.

We are so grateful to:

The kind people of **Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory**,
Klaus' workplace of 50 years.

Everyone who volunteered to speak, sing, arrange, and coordinate...

Tom Chapin
www.tomchapin.com

Lily and Abigail Chapin
www.thechapinsisters.com

Henry Chapin
www.henrychapin.com

Special thanks to Isabel's dear friend *Frances Wells*; to the *Platt Family*;
and thank you to all those who cooked, offered housing or transport for
today's guests, and who helped in a thousand ways to celebrate Izzy.

Thank you to the *hundreds* of people who sent notes,
pictures, stories, love, and sympathy.

Shalom Mountain Retreat and Study Center

Calling people to be conscious, loving and fully alive, Shalom is a secular
place to get "unstuck," learn skills and principles of loving, develop tools
for personal growth, and do your "work" with support from skilled
facilitators and fellow travelers. Shalom changed Izzy's life.
www.shalommountain.com

The International End of Life Doula Association is a nonprofit
organization dedicated to bringing deeper meaning and greater comfort
to dying people and loved ones in the last days of life.
www.inelda.org

Amy Cunningham, a truly progressive funeral director, whose teaching
opened our eyes to the possibility of Izzy's at-home, DIY "funeral."
www.theinspiredfuneral.com

Eternal gratitude to the late **"Omi" Dora Jacob**, Klaus' mom, whose
loving presence inspired and informed the way Isabel lived, and died.

*Sincerest thanks to **everyone** whose love and respect for Isabel, Klaus, and
our family made this celebration (and so much else) possible.*