

Sam Griffin - Wall Text

Sam Griffin grew up in London, UK, as the great grandson of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Having fled the pogroms of the early 20th century, they found themselves in the East End of London, building a new life for themselves and their descendants.

As generations of Griffin's family became more assimilated into English society, Judaism and the Jewish way of life became less central. It was in his late teens that Griffin would become drawn to the philosophy of Chabad Chassidic thought, and embrace Jewish practices.

Since there were no images or information about his great grandparents, Griffin's ancestry is shrouded in mystery. Through the language of painting, he attempted to describe the world of London's Jewish East End, of Jewish life in Eastern Europe, and of Chassidic religious custom.

'Farbrengen in Brooklyn', and *'Farbrengen in the small study hall'*, both depict a gathering of Orthodox Chassidic Jews around their Rebbe, listening to his words and chanting ancient melodies as a way to connect with God. Rather than focusing on the central figure of the Rebbe and his Chassidim around him, Griffin creates a sense of movement and energy. Using a technique of mark-making and erasure, covering the canvas with paint and wiping areas away with a rag and turpentine, a blurred image emerges that gives the impression of a distant memory.