



YIVO INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH RESEARCH



NEWSLETTER |

SPRING 2024

17.2

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COVER:

Illustration from *Likhtike minutn* (Bright Moments)
by Nochum Yood, drawings and woodcuts by Note
Kozlovski. New York: Arbeter ring, 1932. YIVO Library.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

2023 was a year of building, taking stock, and consolidation in our archives and library; public programs; and in our language, history, and culture courses, both in-person and online. The creation of the YIVO Learning and Media Center, ongoing digitization of the Jewish Labor and Political Archives, as well as continued outreach both in the United States and abroad have built on the foundations carefully prepared in years past. But 2023 also brought home to all of us the continuing relevance of YIVO, the history documented in our archives and discussed in our programs. The continuing war in Ukraine and the tragic events of October 7 and its aftermath along with the catastrophic rise of global antisemitism show us that this history is not something for academic study only. YIVO has responded to these circumstances through education, public programs, and new efforts of archival preservation: expanded outreach to high schools and colleges (see **PAGE 7**); a three-part series of public programs on Hamas (see **PAGE 4**); traveling to Kyiv this past December to work out an agreement deal with the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine (see **PAGE 16**) to help preserve and digitize materials from the An-sky Ethnographic Expedition of 1912-14, now threatened by Russian missiles, have all been part of this effort. Never has understanding and facing present day threats to the Jewish future been more important. Never has YIVO's role in this been more vital.



JONATHAN BRENT
Executive Director & CEO

WITH APPRECIATION

We cannot accomplish this work without the thousands of supporters who donate, volunteer, and engage in YIVO's activities throughout the year. You are all part of our YIVO family.

If you aren't a member yet, please consider joining today and start enjoying discounts on courses. Membership starts at \$54.

Thank you for your enthusiastic participation. We look forward to your continued engagement and support in 2024!

Visit yivo.org/Membership or call 212.294.6131.

PROGRAMS Spring Season

For event registration, more information, and program updates: yivo.org/Calendar

MON FEB 12
1:00PM ET
HORIZONS BLOSSOM, BORDERS VANISH: ANARCHISM AND YIDDISH LITERATURE
BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM
Co-sponsored by The Tamiment Library at NYU
Anna Elena Torres, in conversation with Amelia Glaser, discusses her newly published book examining Yiddish poetry to offer an original literary study of the Jewish anarchist movement.

THU FEB 15
7:30PM ET
A SCROLLS-BASED READING OF JEWISH TEXT, VOICE AND EXILE
LECTURE | ON ZOOM
Produced by the American Society for Jewish Music's Jewish Music Forum
Ilana Webster-Kogen examines North African rituals, proposing a view of exile centered on mystical and postcolonial thought, Jewish-Muslim connections, and the empowerment of textual expression.

WED FEB 21
1:00PM ET
THE REALITY OF MYTH FOR YIDDISH WRITERS IN WEIMAR GERMANY
LECTURE | ON ZOOM
Part of Carnegie Hall's *Fall of the Weimar Republic: Dancing on the Precipice* festival
Marc Caplan examines the historical significance and legendary allure of Weimar culture by considering three of its most significant Yiddish writers: Moyshe Kulbak, Dovid Bergelson, and Der Nister.

THU FEB 29
1:00PM ET
FIREBIRD
BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM
Alissa Valles, in conversation with Jonathan Brent, discusses her translations of rediscovered Polish writer Zuzanna Ginczanka's sole published book and other poems.

WED MAR 06
7:00PM ET
MUSIC, GENDER, AND JEWISH ORTHODOXY IN NORTH AMERICA
BOOK TALK & PERFORMANCE | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM
Co-sponsored by the American Society for Jewish Music's Jewish Music Forum
Jeremiah Lockwood and Jessica Roda explore their newly-published books, which offer insights into the masculine and feminine art worlds of Hasidic and Litvish-Yeshivish Jews today. The program will conclude with performances from Cantor Yoel Kohn and actress Malky Goldman.

MON MAR 11
1:00PM ET
JEWISH READING HABITS IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE
BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM
In a discussion led by Eddy Portnoy, Nathan Cohen explores Jewish reading practices alongside the rise of Yiddish by delving into publishing policies of Yiddish books and newspapers, popular literary genres of the time, the development of Jewish public libraries, and personal reflections of reading experiences.

WED MAR 13
7:00PM ET
HASIDISM IN POLAND ON THE EVE OF THE HOLOCAUST
LECTURE & PERFORMANCE | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM
Co-sponsored by the Center for Jewish History
Glenn Dynner examines the Hasidic revival in Poland on the eve of the Holocaust. A performance of Hasidic *nigunim* by Lorin Sklamberg will follow the presentation.

THU MAR 14
7:00PM ET
WILD BURNING RAGE AND SONG: REPLIES TO SCOTTSBORO
LECTURE & CONCERT | IN PERSON
Produced by the American Society for Jewish Music's Jewish Music Forum
Join us for a concert-lecture exploring the Yiddish intelligentsia's response to the Scottsboro Trials, one of the most renowned miscarriages of justice in the history of American jurisprudence.

MON MAR 18
1:00PM ET
JEWISH SONGS AND DANCES FOR PIANO: JOEL ENGEL'S FIVE PIANO PIECES OP. 19 (1923)
SIDNEY KRUM YOUNG ARTISTS CONCERT SERIES
PREMIERING ON YOUTUBE
Pianist Thomas Kotcheff performs Joel Engel's *Five Piano Pieces* (1923): a collection of Jewish folksongs, dances, and Hasidic *nigunim* in virtuosic piano arrangements.

WED MAR 20
7:30PM ET
AN ORIGINAL PURIMSPIEL
CONCERT | IN PERSON
Produced by the American Society for Jewish Music
Celebrate Purim this year with a dramatic and festive telling of the story of Esther, Mordechai, Haman, and King Ahasuerus, punctuated by thrilling performances of klezmer music.

THU MAR 21
7:00PM ET
IS ANYTHING OKAY? THE HISTORY OF JEWS AND COMEDY IN AMERICA
CLASS LAUNCH | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM
Celebrate the launch of our newest online course about Jewish comedy, which delves into the history of Jewish comedy and its development in the United States. For more information about the class, see [PAGE 10](#).

WED MAR 27
1:00PM ET
YIDDISH AND HEBREW LITTLE MAGAZINES IN THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC
LECTURE | ON ZOOM
Co-sponsored by the Leo Baeck Institute; part of Carnegie Hall's *Fall of the Weimar Republic: Dancing on the Precipice* festival
Barbara Mann explores the publishing history of Yiddish and Hebrew little magazines, their content, physical features, and readership.

THU MAR 28
7:00PM ET
IN A DARK BLUE NIGHT
ALBUM LAUNCH CONCERT & PARTY | IN PERSON
Co-sponsored by the American Society for Jewish Music and the Tenement Museum
Celebrate the launch concert of *in a dark blue night*, a new album by Pulitzer Prize nominated composer Alex Weiser, comprising two song cycles that explore Jewish immigrant New York City.

MON APR 01
7:00PM ET
DREW FRIEDMAN: VERMEER OF THE BORSCHT BELT
FILM SCREENING | IN PERSON
Join YIVO for a screening of a documentary about comics artist Drew Friedman's evolution from underground comics to the cover of *The New Yorker*, complete with interviews with his friends and colleagues.

Unable to attend our programs? Watch past events at: yivo.org/Video

**THU
APR
04**
7:30PM ET

**"JUDEN, BAPTIZED AND UNBAPTIZED":
JEWISHNESS AND FERDINAND HILLER'S
ISRAEL'S SIEGESGESANG**
LECTURE | ON ZOOM
Produced by the American Society for Jewish Music's Jewish Music Forum

Amanda Ruppenthal-Stein examines performances of Ferdinand Hiller's *Israel's Siegesgesang*, showing how Hiller clearly recognized his Jewish heritage and was acknowledged as a member of the broader Jewish community, regardless of his baptismal status.

**WED
APR
10**
7:00PM ET

**THE PROTOCOLS OF THE ELDERS OF ZION
IN COURT: THE BERN TRIAL (1933-1935) AND
THE "ANTISEMITIC INTERNATIONAL"**
LECTURE | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

Michael Hagemester uses the Bern trial as a case study of Jewish legal self-defense in order to shed light on both the widely disseminated antisemitic publication, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the concerted efforts against the "Antisemitic International" in the 1930s, which have received little attention from historians.

**THU
APR
18**
7:00PM ET

MIRYEML
PERFORMANCE | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM
Co-sponsored by the Congress for Jewish Culture

Tea Arciszewska's play *Miryeml* was heralded as a powerful memorial to the million children murdered in the Holocaust. This nearly-forgotten modernist masterpiece is now available in English translation for the first time.

**THU
MAY
02**
1:00PM ET

**HOW TO DO RESEARCH AT YIVO:
READING A FINDING AID**
WORKSHOP | ON ZOOM

Ruby Landau-Pincus covers what information researchers can expect to discover in a finding aid and provides an overview of a range of finding aid formats available for navigating collections in the YIVO Archives.

**TUE
MAY
07**
7:00PM ET

**YIDDISH AND HEBREW SONG IN
THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC**
CONCERT | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM
Co-sponsored by the Leo Baeck Institute; part of Carnegie Hall's *Fall of the Weimar Republic: Dancing on the Precipice* festival

Join YIVO for a concert exploring Yiddish and Hebrew songs of the Weimar Republic.

**TUE
MAY
14**
1:00PM ET

**JEWISH SONGS AND DANCES FOR PIANO:
JACOB WEINBERG'S TEN JEWISH SONGS (1933)**
SIDNEY KRUM YOUNG ARTISTS CONCERT SERIES
PREMIERING ON YOUTUBE

Pianist Thomas Kotcheff performs Jacob Weinberg's *Ten Jewish Songs* (1933), a collection of Jewish folksongs, holiday songs, dances, and Hasidic *nigunim*.

**WED
MAY
22**
7:00PM ET

GEBIRTIG'S NOTEBOOKS
CONCERT | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

Join Lorin Sklamberg for his first-ever concert of the ballads of the beloved legendary Yiddish bard of Krakow, Mordkhe Gebirtig, focusing on the lyrics contained in Gebirtig's handwritten notebooks housed in the YIVO Archives.

**TUE
MAY
28**
7:00PM ET

**JOSEPH BRODSKY:
EPITAPH FOR A CENTAUR, SIX YEARS LATER**
FILM SCREENING & DISCUSSION | IN PERSON
Co-sponsored by Poetry in America and COJECO

Join YIVO for a screening of a short film exploring the poet Joseph Brodsky's Jewish identity, his legacy, and the political undertones of his writing.

**THU
MAY
30**
1:00PM ET

**NEO-NAZI TERRORISM AND
COUNTERCULTURAL FASCISM**
BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM

Spencer Sunshine discusses a new wave of aspiring neo-Nazi terrorists and how they are inspired by James Mason's *Siege*, which praises terrorism, serial killers, and Charles Manson.

**THU
JUN
06**
1:00PM ET

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND JEWISH LANGUAGES
BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM

Naomi Seidman, in conversation with Ken Frieden, explores the academic interest in aiming to detect Jewish influences on Sigmund Freud, his own feelings about being Jewish, and suppressed traces of Jewishness in his thought.

**MON
JUN
24**
1:00PM ET

HOMES OF THE PAST
BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM

Jeffrey Shandler, in conversation with Deborah Dash Moore, explores the Museum of the Homes of the Past, an abandoned YIVO project from the 1940s documenting European Jewish lives, places, and ways of living that were destroyed during the Holocaust.

THE ORIGINS AND IDEOLOGY OF HAMAS

This series of three webinars, curated by historian Jeffrey Herf, will elucidate Hamas' origins and ideology; demonstrate how the history of Islamic antisemitism sheds light on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and explore discourse around the October 7th massacres.

Visit yivo.org/IdeologySeries for more information.

**MON
FEB
26**
1:00PM ET

**HAMAS AND THE ORIGINS OF
ISLAMIC ANTISEMITISM**
DISCUSSION | ON ZOOM
with Matthias Küntzel and Jeffrey Herf

**MON
MAR
25**
1:00PM ET

**COLONIALISM, RACISM, AND THE
ARAB ISRAELI WAR OF 1948**
DISCUSSION | ON ZOOM
with Benny Morris and Jeffrey Herf

**TUE
APR
16**
1:00PM ET

RESPONSES TO OCTOBER 7TH
PANEL DISCUSSION | ON ZOOM
with Meir Litvak, Norman Goda, Karin Stögner, and David Hirsh, led by Jeffrey Herf

In addition to this webinar series, YIVO is in the process of planning a conversation with Marwan Muasher, vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, discussing prospects for a future peace process and a reimagining of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Stay tuned at yivo.org/Calendar for more details.



YIVO HOSTED CONCERT PERFORMANCE OF RECONSTRUCTED *SHIR-HASHIRIM*

On December 11, 2023, YIVO hosted a concert performance of the songs of Joseph Rumshinsky and Anshel Shor’s 1911 operetta, *Shir-hashirim: Dos lid fun libe*, also known as “The Song of Love.” A musical comedy, *Shir-hashirim* features several interlocking love triangles that include an aging composer along with his children and their lovers and friends. The work also touches on serious topics including mortality and women’s suffrage. Filled with impressive solos, duets, and ensemble numbers, *Shir-hashirim* was so popular that a 1935 film was made based on it, and, according to Rumshinsky, a teenage George Gershwin could play its score by heart.

This performance was the culmination of over a year’s work to reconstruct performance materials from a variety of archival sources by Ronald Robboy, Max Friedman, and Alex Weiser. Five sets of parts for *Shir-hashirim* exist in the music component of YIVO’s pre-war Esther Rachel Kaminska Museum collection (RG 7), drafts of the libretto exist in the Papers of Anshel Shor and Dora Weissman (RG 689) and a variety of published materials exist including a piano-album, various 78rpm commercial recordings, and an unauthorized published libretto (translated by Allen Lewis Rickman during the course of the project). To supplement these materials, Robboy and Weiser sought additional sources in Rumshinsky’s papers at UCLA and in a collection of radio recordings at the Library of Congress.

The December performance revealed some of the show’s

incredible musical details which couldn’t be gleaned from the over-simplified piano song sheets that were sold by the Hebrew Publishing Company for amateurs to play at home or even from the 78rpm commercial recordings made by Yiddish theater stars. For example: The introduction to the title song *Dos lid fun libe* (The Song of Love) features a Liszt-ian piano prelude. The love duet, *Hofenung zise* (Sweet Hope) features a convincingly faux-Italian introduction and some comedic chatter in which the stars decide to sing in Yiddish, “so that the older folks will also understand.” The culminating Gavotte features incredibly beautiful, intricate, and virtuosic choral writing which is absent in the published sources. These and other wonderful details made palpable how Rumshinsky wasn’t just a popular songsmith, but a gifted composer with serious ambitions for music of the Yiddish stage.

The operetta was performed by students of the Bard Conservatory Vocal Arts Program, who were led in their preparation by Bard faculty: singer Lucy Fitz Gibbon—who herself has performed for YIVO many times—and acclaimed pianist Kayo Iwama. Additional Yiddish coaching was provided by Robboy as well as YIVO’s own Lorin Sklamberg. Take a listen to the performance at yivo.org/Shir-Hashirim, where you will also find a link to a beautiful program booklet created for the evening (designed by YIVO’s Alix Brandwein) which includes song texts in Yiddish, transliteration, and English, (proofread by YIVO’s own Dovid Braun), and a variety of valuable essays by Robboy.

Fall 2023

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

LABZIK: TALES OF A CLEVER PUP

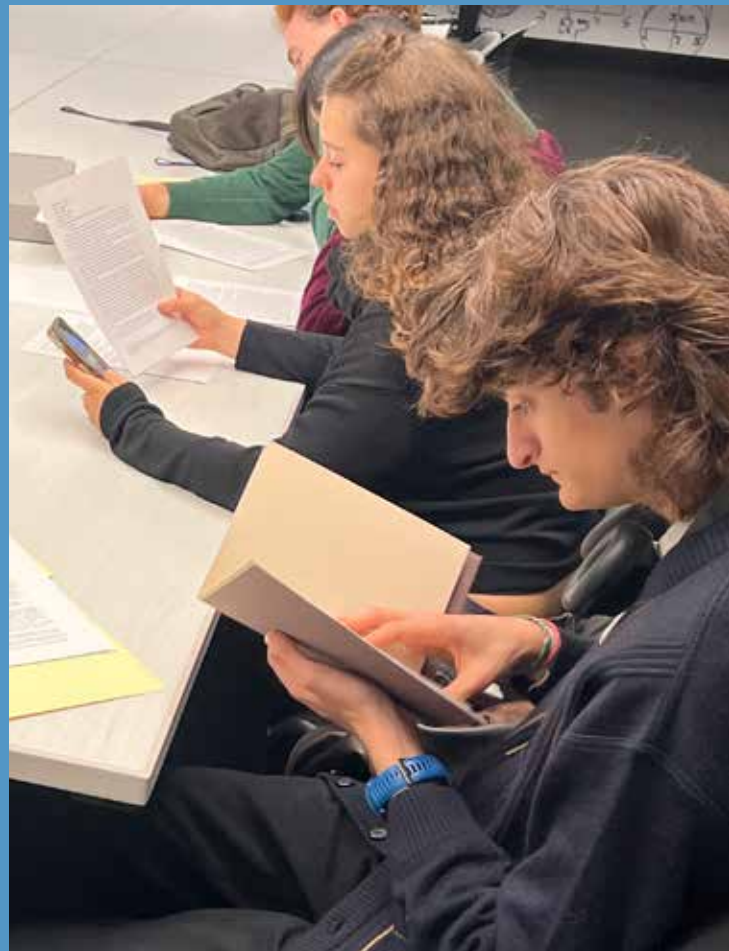
(NOVEMBER 6) YIVO presented the New York film premiere of *Labzik: Tales of a Clever Pup*, a short film based on a book of children's stories by Yiddish author Chaver Paver and featuring narration adapted from Miriam Udel's new English translation and Yiddish dialogue from the original text. Following the (mis)adventures of a clever mutt named Labzik and the working-class family that adopts him, the film addresses social and political issues still relevant today: unemployment, political protest, racism, police brutality, even an airborne disease. The film screening was followed by a Q&A with director Jake Krakovsky and translator Miriam Udel. *Co-sponsored by the Center for Jewish History, The Workers Circle, and Yugntruf.*

THE LEGACY OF CHAIM GRADE

(NOVEMBER 15) Scholar and translator Justin Cammy led a panel discussion on the life, legacy, and literature of Chaim Grade, one of the most prolific and defining Yiddish voices in post-war literature. The panel featured Ruth Wisse (a senior fellow at the Tikvah Fund and recipient of its Herzl Prize) and Curt Leviant (translator and critically acclaimed novelist). YIVO and the National Library of Israel (NLI) recently completed the digitization of the Papers of Chaim Grade and Inna Hecker Grade. *Co-sponsored by the National Library of Israel.*

REMEMBERING VILNA: THE FORTUNOFF ARCHIVE'S NEW PODCAST

(NOVEMBER 27) YIVO's Academic Advisor and Director of Exhibitions, Eddy Portnoy, led a discussion exploring the third installment of *Those Who Were There: Voices from the Holocaust*, a podcast from the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies. This new 10-episode season, titled *Remembering Vilna: The Jerusalem of Lithuania*, was produced in partnership with YIVO. Podcast co-producers Nahanni Rous and Eric Marcus, podcast host Eleanor Reissa, and historical consultant Samuel Kassow discussed the newest season, which brought to life the story of the destruction of Vilna, Poland's vibrant Jewish community, through recorded survivor testimonies and Herman Kruk's extensive diaries.



PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS: 2023



80 public programs
21K+ registrations
10K+ YouTube subscribers reached



LEARNING AND MEDIA CENTER

Continuing its pilot phase this fall, the YIVO Learning and Media Center (YLMC) hosted six visiting groups. Among the groups, there were three schools including Columbia University, The Dalton School, and Bard College. The first visit of the fall took place on September 13 with a visit from the Tamizdat Project, a group of scholars dedicated to creating an online archive of banned and censored authors from the USSR, headed by Hunter College Professor Yasha Klotz. During this visit the group was introduced to YIVO's institutional history and YIVO's library by YLMC Educator Susannah Trubman.

The YLMC later collaborated with YIVO archivists Hallel Yadin and Ruby Landau-Pincus for YIVO's first-ever participation in the annual Open House New York (OHNY) Weekend on Sunday, October 22. OHNY Weekend is an annual festival that opens hundreds of places across New York City to foster discovery. The archivists curated a selection of materials related to New York City for the event. These materials centered on Yiddish theater, daily Jewish life in New York, Yiddish writers, and Jewish food. Landau-Pincus, YIVO Public Programs Associate Julia Rothkoff, and the YLMC Educator were on hand to give context to materials and interact with visitors, while Yadin led hourly tours of the archive stacks.

On November 2, five students from The Dalton School came for a special lesson that incorporated a lecture on YIVO's history and an abbreviated version of the YIVO Youth Autobiography Contest Lesson, as well as a tour of the archives led by Stefanie Halpern, Director of the YIVO Archives, and a tour of YIVO's *Palestinian Yiddish* exhibition given by Eddy Portnoy, YIVO's Senior Academic Advisor & Director of Exhibitions. Due to the success of the visit, a second visit from The Dalton School was planned, and thirty-two students from Dalton's Modern Middle East and Food History courses visited. To accommodate the larger size, students were split into groups, alternating between tours of the *Palestinian Yiddish* exhibit—again given by Portnoy—and

a curated selection of Jewish food materials chosen by Trubman and Landau-Pincus.

Between Dalton visits, on November 9 YIVO hosted a group of genealogists for a lesson on YIVO's *landsmanshaftn* collection. The group was given a history of *landsmanshaftn* as organizations and insight into how and why YIVO's *landsmanshaftn* archive was created. This was followed by an archival show-and-tell with curated selections from the archive, and a trip by the genealogists to the archive where they were able to search collections that contained materials related to their own family histories.

On November 17, YIVO hosted a beginner Yiddish language class from Columbia University. The class was brought to YIVO by Graduate Instructor Ethan Fraenkel, an alum of YIVO's Uriel Weinreich Summer Program. During their visit, the group was given a presentation about YIVO's history, a tour of archival stacks led by Halpern, and a chance to peruse the YLMC's archival lesson kits. During the last section, they tested their Yiddish knowledge by trying to read the archival reproductions in their original Yiddish.

The final YLMC visit for Fall 2023 was on December 11. Seven Bard students who later that evening performed in YIVO's concert performance of the 1911 operetta *Shir-hashirim*, fit time into their busy rehearsal schedule to receive an introduction to the YIVO Archives. They were given tips on how to conduct research from Trubman and gained greater insight into the history of Yiddish song with a special presentation by YLMC Director Alex Weiser.

The YLMC is looking forward to visits in Spring 2024 with classes from Stuyvesant and a return from our first visitors, The Frisch School. The YLMC will also be making a special trip, with archival kits in tow, to Park Avenue Synagogue to meet with their teen group. If you are interested in having your class or group visit the YLMC please contact YLMC Educator Susannah Trubman at strubman@yivo.org.

WINTER CLASSES AT YIVO

Held annually since 2012, the YIVO-Bard Winter Program on Ashkenazi Civilization delved into the literature,

history, and culture of East European Jewry and was taught by international presenters and scholars – Jonathan Brent, Nathaniel Deutsch, Hasia Diner, Elżbieta Janicka, Samuel Kassow, Irena Klepfisz, Curt Leviant, Tony Michels, and Ilan Stavans. Program participants engaged with the Jewish Ashkenazi experience with courses not typically found outside of the university setting.

The keynote event “Holocaust Distortion in Poland and Beyond” featured noted historian Jan Grabowski. Grabowski shed light on the origins of the current political situation in Poland as well as its impact on Holocaust memory and education in Poland, Europe, and beyond.

Concurrent with the Winter Program, YIVO ran a series of winter Yiddish seminars. These seminars, taught by Malena Chinski, Dr. Eric Goldman, Eve Jochnowitz, Abraham Lichtenbaum, Vicky Ash-Shifriss, and Rose Waldman, covered topics such as Yiddish literature, cinema, and translation. Over 200 students participated in the Winter Program and winter Yiddish seminars.

2024 URIEL WEINREICH SUMMER PROGRAM IN YIDDISH LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE

Learn more and apply at summerprogram.yivo.org.

JUNE 24 – AUGUST 2, 2024

For the third year in a row, our six-week intensive program will take place both in person and online. The Summer Program offers peerless instruction in the Yiddish language and an in-depth exploration of the literature and culture of East European Jewry and its diaspora communities. The program features daily Yiddish language study from beginner to advanced levels, history and culture seminars, *shmues* (conversation) classes, a theater workshop, lectures by visiting scholars, a Yiddish song workshop, and more.

The Weinreich Program treats Yiddish as a living language and emphasizes spoken Yiddish. Whether on Zoom or in person, we hope you join us this summer!

International & Financial Aid Application Deadline: **February 16**
General Applicants Apply by: **March 1**

If six weeks isn't enough, join us one week prior for our annual Refresher Course:

REFRESHER COURSE | JUNE 17-21 | Instructor: Dovid Braun

ONCE-A-WEEK YIDDISH

12 weeks
12 total sessions
1.5 hours each

BEGINNER I YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 25 – May 19 | 10:00am-11:30am ET
Instructor: Sharon Bar-Kochva

(Thursday) Feb. 22 – May 16 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Nachum Lerner

(In-person nyc) Feb. 21 – May 15 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Moishele Alfonso

BEGINNER II YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 25 – May 19 | 12:00pm-1:30pm ET
Instructor: Nina Warnke

(Wednesday) Feb. 21 – May 15 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Nina Warnke

(In-person nyc) Feb. 27 – May 28 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Nachum Lerner

BEGINNER III YIDDISH

(Monday) Mar. 4 – Jun. 10 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Lucas Fiszman

(Tuesday) Feb. 20 – May 21 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Malena Chinski

(In-person nyc) Feb. 27 – May 28 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Andryusha Kuznetsov

BEGINNER IV YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 25 – May 19 | 10:00am-11:30am ET
Instructor: Sonia Dratwa-Pinkusowitz

(Thursday) Feb. 22 – May 9 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Reb Noyekh (Noah Barrera)

INTERMEDIATE I YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 25 – May 19 | 4:00pm-5:30pm ET
Instructor: Karolina Szymaniak

(Monday) Feb. 19 – May 20 | 4:30pm-6:00pm ET
Instructor: Nina Warnke

(Tuesday) Feb. 20 – May 21 | 3:00pm-4:30pm ET
Instructor: Perl Teitelbaum

INTERMEDIATE II YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 25 – May 19 | 10:00am-11:30am ET
Instructor: Philip Schwartz

(Friday) Feb. 23 – May 10 | 3:00pm-4:30pm ET
Instructor: Reb Noyekh (Noah Barrera)

INTERMEDIATE III YIDDISH

Feb. 26 – Jun. 3 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Karolina Szymaniak

INTERMEDIATE IV YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 25 – May 19 | 2:00pm-3:30pm ET
Instructor: Sonia Dratwa-Pinkusowitz

(Monday) Feb. 26 – Jun. 3 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Vera Szabó

ADVANCED I YIDDISH

Feb. 26 – Jun. 3 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Perl Teitelbaum

This spring we are offering 35 courses, all held remotely on Zoom unless otherwise noted. Join us and students from around the world! Space is limited and classes fill up quickly, so be sure to register today.

To learn more and register, visit yivo.org/Classes.

Questions? Visit yivo.org/Class-FAQ to help determine which class is right for you!

TWICE-A-WEEK YIDDISH

12 weeks
24 total sessions
1.5 hours each

INTENSIVE BEGINNER I&II YIDDISH

Feb. 22 – May 20 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Malena Chinski

INTENSIVE BEGINNER III&IV YIDDISH

Feb. 22 – May 20 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Alexandra Polyan

INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE I&II YIDDISH

Feb. 25 – May 22 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Reb Noyekh (Noah Barrera)

INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE III&IV YIDDISH

Feb. 22 – May 16 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Perl Teitelbaum

INTENSIVE ADVANCED III&IV YIDDISH

Feb. 22 – May 16 | 12:00pm-1:30pm ET
Instructor: Sonia Dratwa-Pinkusowitz

INTENSIVE ADVANCED V&VI YIDDISH

Feb. 21 – May 22 | 9:00am-10:30am ET
Instructor: Vera Szabó

ADVANCED TOPICS IN YIDDISH LITERATURE & GRAMMAR: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING IN YIDDISH

Feb. 20 – May 21 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Sheva Zucker

CONVERSATIONAL YIDDISH

10 weeks
10 total sessions
1.5 hours each

BEGINNER CONVERSATIONAL YIDDISH FOR HERITAGE LEARNERS

Mar. 6 – May 15 | 4:00pm-5:30pm ET
Instructor: Malena Chinski

CONTINUING CONVERSATIONAL YIDDISH FOR HERITAGE LEARNERS

Mar. 6 – May 15 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Nachum Lerner

READING YIDDISH

14 weeks
14 total sessions
1.8 hours each

BEGINNER I READING YIDDISH

Feb. 14 – May 22 | 1:00pm-2:50pm ET
Instructor: Josh Price

SEMINARS & ELECTIVES (IN ENGLISH)

10 weeks
10 total sessions
1.5 hours each

PSYCHICS AND THE OCCULT IN MODERN JEWISH CULTURE

Mar. 3 – May 19 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Samuel Glauber

NEW YORK JEWISH RADICALISM: POLITICAL AND ARTISTIC EXPERIMENTS

Mar. 3 – May 12 | 1:00pm-2:30pm ET
Instructor: M. Syd Rosen

THE JEWISH LOWER EAST SIDE

Mar. 5 – May 21 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Elissa Sampson

SEMINARS & ELECTIVES (IN YIDDISH)

10 weeks
10 total sessions
1.5 hours each

ERETS-YISROEL AS A REGION OF "YIDDISHLAND": TRAVELS OF YIDDISH WRITERS TO PALESTINE 1907-1937

Mar. 3 – May 19 | 12:00pm-1:30pm ET
Instructor: Yaad Biran

GLOBETROTTING YIDDISH WRITERS: EXPLORING THE WORK OF PERETS HIRSHBEYN AND H.-D. NOMBERG

Mar. 5 – May 21 | 5:30pm-7:00pm ET
Instructor: Abraham Lichtenbaum

EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS: 2023



89 classes
1,066 students
25 countries

Is Anything Okay?

THE HISTORY OF JEWS AND COMEDY IN AMERICA

The latest online course from

YIVO'S SHINE ONLINE EDUCATIONAL SERIES

From the earliest jokes told on the Lower East Side to the comedy routines honed in the Catskills, Ashkenazi Jews developed radically new forms of comedic output in the 20th century. On film and television, pioneering Jewish comics broke norms and challenged taboos of American culture.

In our newest online course, delve into the history of Jewish comedy and its explosive development in the United States. See hundreds of unique archival objects, including vintage jokebooks, early comedy records, film and television clips, photographs, and posters, along with interviews and discussions with leading scholars and personalities from the world of Jewish comedy.

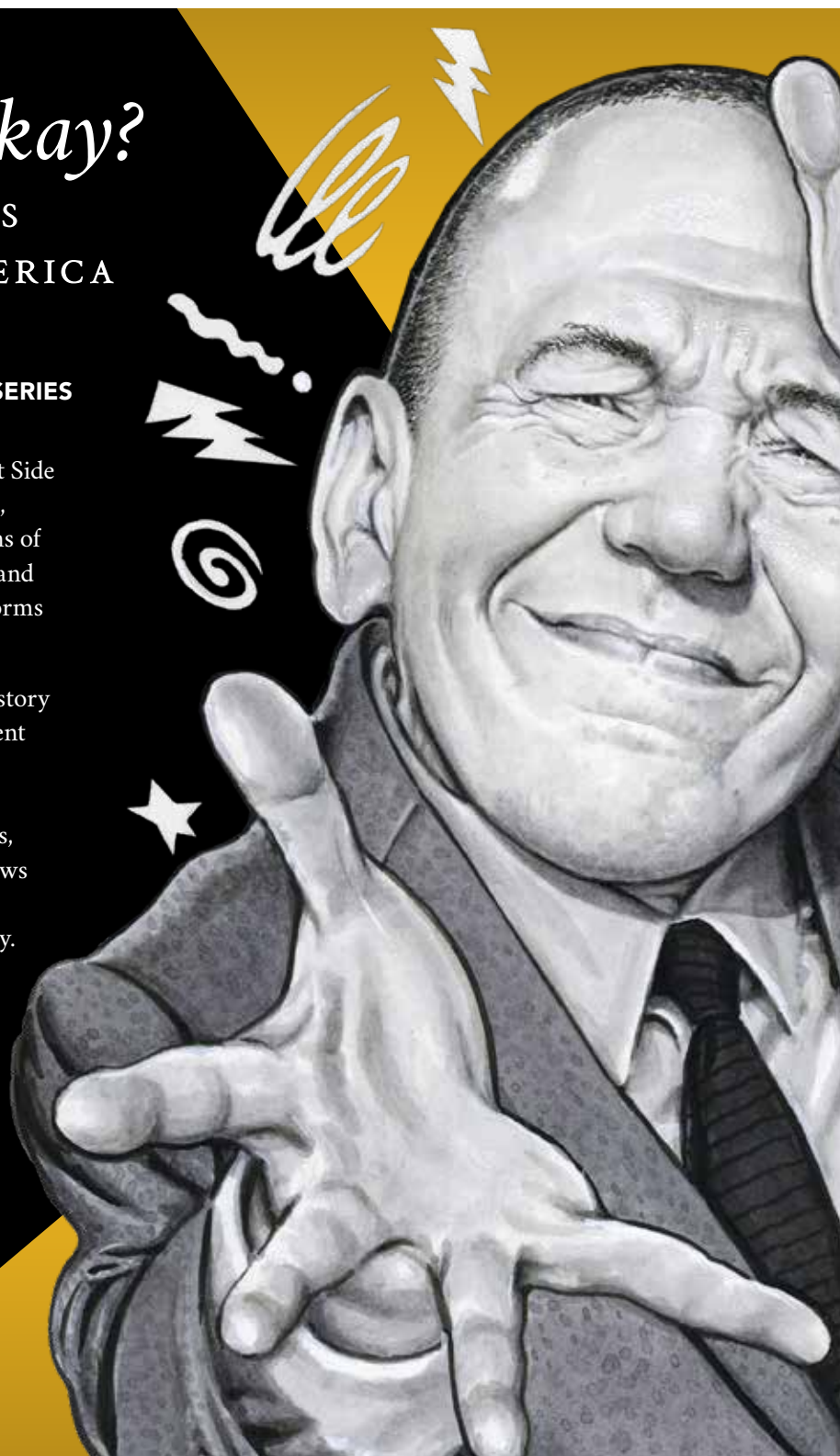
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GILBERT GOTTFRIED BY DREW FRIEDMAN

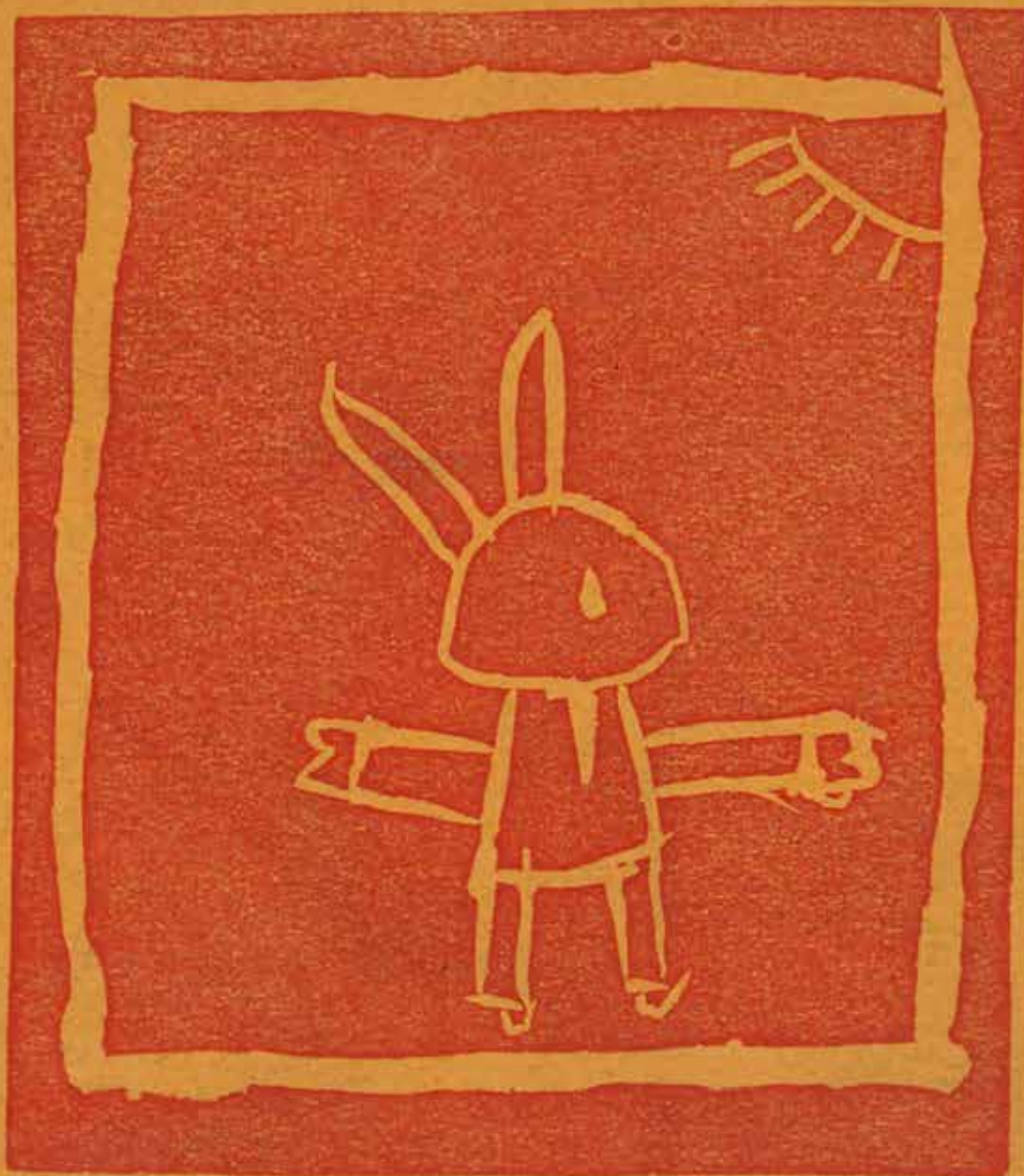
FEATURING:

W. KAMAU BELL ▪ **LEWIS BLACK** ▪ **DREW FRIEDMAN**
JENA FRIEDMAN ▪ **JUDY GOLD** ▪ **PAUL REISER** ▪ **MODI ROSENFELD**
BILLY WEST ▪ **MICHAEL WEX** ▪ **ALAN ZWEIBEL**

AND MORE!

Number Eleven

September 1930



A MAGAZINE WRITTEN, PRINT-
ED AND ILLUSTRATED BY THE
CHILDREN OF THE MODERN
SCHOOL, STELTON, N. J.

THE JEWISH LABOR AND POLITICAL ARCHIVES

Eugene M., 7.

Eugene R., 7.



Eugene S., 6.

Lilly D., 7.

The unhappy cake

Once there was a cake, this cake was a nice looking cake but nobody wanted to buy it one day this cake was very sad and began to cry boo hoo it so happened that a boy and his mother were passing by and heard the crying and the boy said oh let's buy that cake mother; all right Bobby. And they did and the cake I'm sorry to say did not live happily ever after.

VICTORIA ARONOFF

VOICE OF THE CHILDREN



Linocut Cut by Diana

THE VOICE OF THE CHILDREN

is written, printed and illustrated by the children of The Modern School. Each story is set up, proofread and illustrated by its author, except in the case of very young contributors; they dictate their stories to older children, who also set them up in type. The inexperienced author of five, six or seven asks the spelling of almost every word in the slow and laborious process of building up his story.

The next difficult step is setting up each word in terms of type, and taking an hour or more for setting a single line is not unusual.

Work requiring greater skill, such as distributing type, presswork and binding, in which mistakes are very costly, is usually done by the older children.

Linocut cuts and stories are made by children of all ages with no assistance or suggestions of any kind by members of the staff.



THE PINE TREE

In a wood stood a tall pine tree. It was a resting place for me. There I would sit with the rabbits and birds. Such happiness could not be expressed in words.

I was a friend of the creatures of the wood, That lived near the place where the pine tree stood.

One day when I was full of sadness, I thought I would go to the place of gladness

Featured Artifacts

THE FERRER MODERN SCHOOL IN STELTON, NJ

The Jewish Labor and Political Archives houses a large collection of materials on anarchist movements across the world. Included in this collection are materials relating to the Ferrer Modern School in Stelton, New Jersey. Founded in 1915, the school was named after Francisco Ferrer, a Spanish anarchist and educationist who established a network of secular, private, libertarian schools in Barcelona. Ferrer was executed in 1909 after being convicted of orchestrating a series of insurrections. His death led to an international outcry and the founding of schools following his educational principles. In Ferrer's words, "The whole value of education consists in respect for the physical, intellectual, and moral faculties of the child...education is not worthy of the name unless it be stripped of all dogmatism, and unless it leaves to the child the direction of its powers and is content to support them in their manifestations."

The tenets of the Ferrer Modern School in Stelton were geared toward the development of self-activity, creativeness, judgement, self-reliance, and strength of character. The school included an assembly room for singing, dancing, and dramatic activities; a craft, weaving, and art room; a library; a room for study; a print shop; and a shop for wood and metal craft. Students were encouraged to "do anything their inventive and creative minds may fancy." One such activity was the publication of *Voice of the Children*, a book of poetry and accompanying linocuts entirely written, illustrated, and printed by the students with no assistance or suggestion by any teachers or members of the staff.

PICTURED: Pages from various editions of *Voice of the Children*, ca. 1930s. YIVO Archives.

**YIVO AWARDED
\$224,000 SAVE
AMERICA'S
TREASURES
GRANT FROM
THE INSTITUTE
OF MUSEUM
AND LIBRARY
SERVICES**

YIVO is thrilled to receive a grant of \$224,007 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through the Save America's Treasures grant program. Save America's Treasures grants are awarded to help preserve and conserve nationally significant collections that help tell a more complete story of America and its people. This grant will enable YIVO to process and

digitize two important collections from its Jewish Labor and Political Archives (JLPA) which documents Jewish political, labor, and social movements in the United States and Europe from 1870 to 1992. These collections include the Workmen's Circle Collection, 1893-1972 and the JLPA Photograph Collection, 15,000 Photos.

**YIVO AWARDED
\$150,000
GRANT FROM
THE NATIONAL
ARCHIVES'
NATIONAL
HISTORICAL
PUBLICATIONS
AND RECORDS
COMMISSION**

YIVO is delighted to receive a grant of \$150,000 from the National Archives' National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The Commission supports activities to preserve, publish, and encourage the use of documentary sources. This grant will enable YIVO to process and digitize three important collections from the JLPA. The collections include

International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Collection, 1894-1970s; Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America Collection, 1914-1984; and Jewish Labor Committee Collection, 1930s-1960s.

**YIVO RECEIVES
\$25,000 GRANT
FROM THE
SLOMO AND
CINDY SILVIAN
FOUNDATION,
INC**

YIVO is delighted to announce a grant of \$25,000 from The Slomo and Cindy Silvian Foundation, Inc. for the conservation, processing, and digitization of Holocaust-related materials in the JLPA. Totalling approximately 196,000 pages of archival documents, these materials include

correspondence, manuscripts, newsletters, ephemera, and photographs that recorded life in the camps and ghettos, Nazi atrocities and war crimes, clandestine activities of underground resistance cells, reports and advocacy during the war, and rescue efforts. This is the Foundation's second grant for this multi-year project. YIVO is grateful to the Foundation for its continued support and partnership.

**YIVO AWARDED
AN ADDITIONAL
\$9,417 FROM
THE NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES**

YIVO is pleased to announce a second grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities of \$9,417 to purchase housing supplies to reduce the risk of degradation. This follows a \$349,524 grant to process and digitize four collections from the JLPA.

HOW I COPED WITH EXAMINING TRAGIC DOCUMENTS

Sarah Hudes writes about her experience as a Project Conservator working on physically preserving collections for the Jewish Labor and Political Archives digitization project.

by SARAH HUDES, Bard College Class of 2023

One of the first rules of conservation I was taught: remove any non-paper from the documents. Over time, I collected dozens of paper clips, yellowed pieces of tape, and ribbons. I found the debris beautiful; I found it wove an additional story that words couldn't. Edges of letters reinforced with tape, or manuscripts with a dozen more staples than necessary—these were all extra steps to make sure messages were received intact. I hated to discard these little things that revealed parts of human nature, so they piled up on my desk. And sometimes, in between boxes, I would make paper clip chains to decorate my desk.

To me, conservation, especially Jewish conservation, is all about giving dignity to memory. In one of the letters I conserved during my time at YIVO, a woman quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Natural History of Intellect." She includes the excerpt: "Without memory all life and thought were an unrelated succession. As gravity holds matter from flying off into space, so memory gives stability to knowledge; it is the cohesion which keeps things from falling into a lump, or flowing into waves."

In my time working as a paper conservator on the Bund archive, I learned many technical skills, but most of all I gained a glimpse into the thousands of words, letters, receipts, and stories that made up history. Conservation is a symbiotic relationship between the conservator and the documents—it gifted me knowledge, memory of the past, and in return I was lucky enough to gift the documents new life.

YIVO WELCOMES YOUR SUPPORT OF THE JEWISH LABOR AND POLITICAL ARCHIVES PROJECT (JLPA)

As of December 31, 2023, the project has raised over \$2.5 Million towards its \$8.5 Million goal. This diverse collection includes items related to the Holocaust, labor unions, Jewish political activism, and much more. Together they offer invaluable insights into how Jews in Europe and the United States responded to the momentous events of the 20th century.

Join us on this journey as we make this historic archival collection available to a global audience.

We are profoundly indebted to Irene Pletka for her generous lead support of this extraordinary collection.

For more information and naming opportunities, please contact Melissa S. Cohen at **212.294.6156** or via email at **mcohen@yivo.org**.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

YIVO's Jewish Labor and Political Archives (JLPA) encompasses more than 100 collections (3.5 million pages of documents). The materials cover geographic locations across the United States and Europe from 1870 to 1992. They are rich in correspondence between major political and labor leaders; materials about revolutionary cells; illegal press and pamphlets circulated during the Holocaust, manuscripts of speeches delivered by figures in the Jewish Labor Bund; leaflets and flyers calling for protests and boycotts; posters advertising rallies and marches; and sound recordings of members of the US labor movement.

The collections illustrate how the transnational activities of the Jewish working class were instrumental in the international labor movement. Jews who immigrated to the United States during the period of mass immigration brought their political ideologies, social consciousness, and demand for labor reform to the new and fertile ground of the American working class, joining other ethnic groups in the fight for fair wages and workers' rights. The collections provide valuable insights on the impact of the Jewish immigrant community on American culture and serve as a bridge to understanding the evolution and diversity of the American Jewish experience.

\$1,000,000+ BUILDER

Irene Pletka

\$500,000+ PARTNER

\$100,000+ BENEFACTOR

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Save America's Treasures (IMLS)
Ruth and David Levine
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
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\$5,000+ CONTRIBUTOR

The Hittman Family Foundation
Julius C. Spiegel

\$1,000+ FRIEND

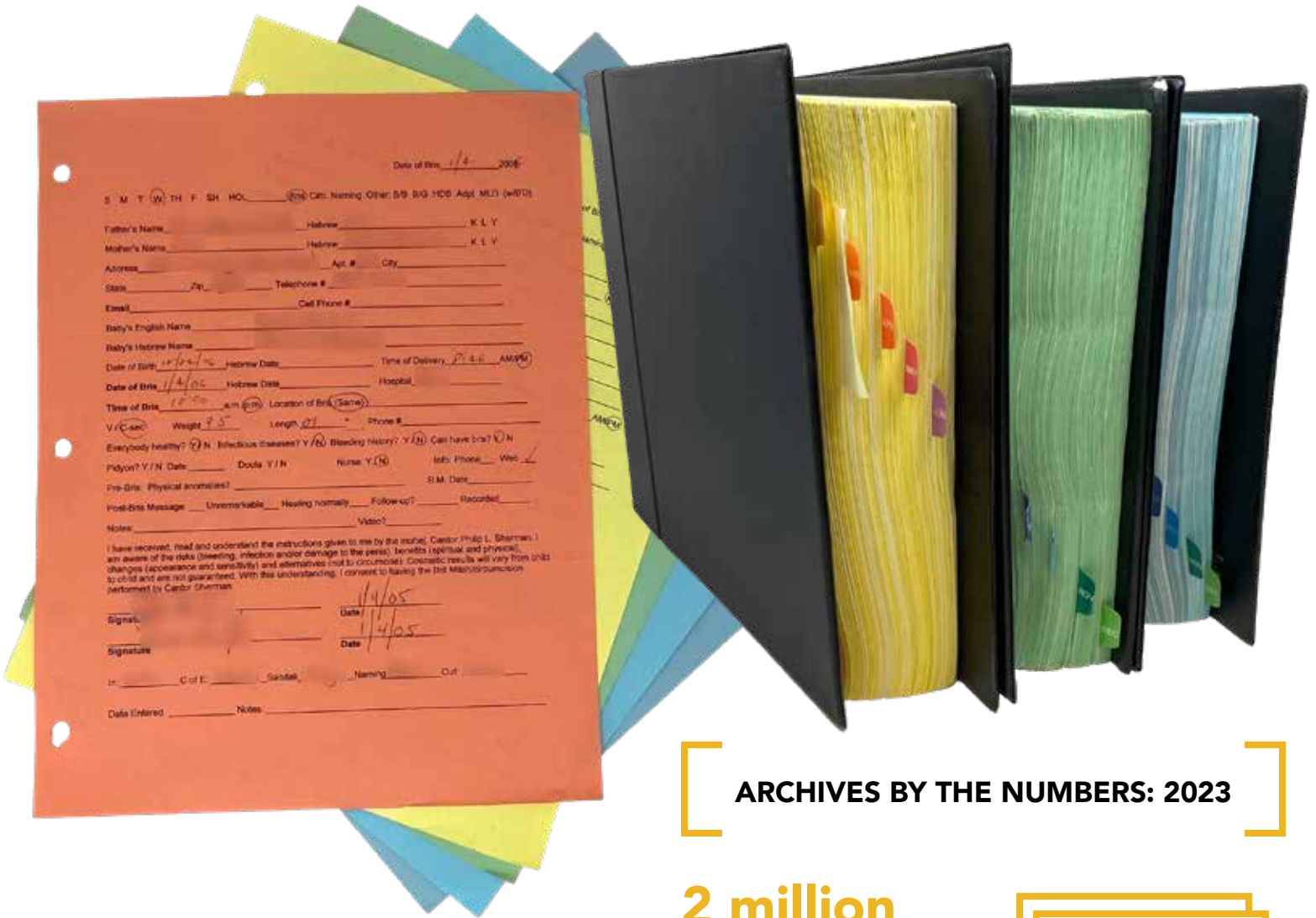
Ellen Odoner and Edward Kerson



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

The National Endowment for the Humanities:
Democracy demands wisdom.

FROM THE YIVO COLLECTIONS



ARCHIVES BY THE NUMBERS: 2023

2 million

newly digitized pages
made available online

30,000

visits to our online
finding aids

350,000

visits to our digitized materials

40,000

complimentary reference photos taken
for patrons around the world

Explore our collections at yivo.org/Archives-Library.

Recent Accession

THE COLLECTION OF PHILIP L. SHERMAN

YIVO received the collection of Philip L. Sherman, who, during his 45-year career as a mohel, performed 26,000 brises for baby boys born in the New York area, including the sons of some of YIVO's staff. The collection contains hundreds of binders filled with thousands of forms documenting various aspects relating to the bris including the English and Hebrew names of the baby and parents; the date and time of the bris; the individuals honored with carrying and holding the baby; and even information about the healing process. The information contained in these records will prove an invaluable resource to future generations of researchers and family historians who can draw important data from these comprehensive records.

NEWS FROM YIVO

LITHUANIAN PRESIDENT VISITS YIVO FOR THE UNVEILING OF PLAQUES HONORING THE VILNA GHETTO "PAPER BRIGADE" AND LITHUANIAN LIBRARIAN

In September, YIVO welcomed Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda for the unveiling of two plaques in YIVO's Strashun Rare Book Room, to honor those who rescued the remnants of East European Jewish culture from the Nazis during World War II and the Soviets in the war's aftermath.

In 1941, the Nazis ransacked the YIVO Archives and Library, located in Vilnius, Lithuania. Jews living in the

Vilna Ghetto (many of whom had been associated with YIVO) were forced to sort through the YIVO materials. The first plaque was dedicated to "The Paper Brigade," a group of Jewish slave laborers led by Avrom Sutzkever and Shmerke Kaczerginski, who smuggled hundreds of thousands of rare books and documents out of YIVO headquarters into the Vilna Ghetto.

The second plaque is dedicated to Antanas Ulpis, who saved these materials once again in 1948 when the Soviets intended to destroy all memory of Jewish culture. A non-Jewish Lithuanian librarian, Ulpis rescued and hid these materials in the church of St. George, protecting them from destruction by the Soviets.

JONATHAN BRENT SPEAKS AT LITHUANIAN SYMPOSIUM ON THE ROLE OF JUDEO-BOLSHEVISM SLANDER IN CREATING ANTISEMITISM IN LITHUANIA

To mark the 80th anniversary of the liquidation of the Vilna Ghetto, the Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community with the help of YIVO arranged a conference at the Seimas (Parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania titled *Ideologies of Hate and Hope in Modern Jewish History*. Speaker of the Seimas Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen opened the conference. YIVO Executive Director & CEO Jonathan Brent spoke on the topic

of *Judeo-Bolshevism: The Founding Myth of Modern Antisemitism*. Other speakers included Jochen Hellbeck (Rutgers University) and Violeta Davoliūtė (Vilnius University), who also addressed the dangerous and lethal antisemitic myth of Judeo-Bolshevism.

"I am very pleased that this conference took place in the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, that the Speaker of the Seimas herself gave a welcome speech, expressing a very clear position condemning any form of antisemitism. This is crucial because this particular antisemitic myth links the Jewish people as a whole to Bolshevism, and *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was essential to Hitler's genocide and remains current in many antisemitic movements today worldwide, including in Poland, Lithuania, America, and the Middle East," said Brent. Lithuanian students were among those who attended the conference.

YIVO WORKING IN UKRAINE TO PRESERVE AND DIGITIZE PRECIOUS JEWISH MATERIALS

The Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine (VNLU) houses precious materials from S. An-sky, who was perhaps best known for his play *The Dybbuk* and his ethnographic expeditions at the turn of the century. The An-sky Ethnographic Expedition (1912-1914) collected a wealth of objects and materials documenting Jewish life in the Pale of Settlement. These materials are critical to understanding the daily lives and cultural legacy of the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe which includes the heritage of many Jewish Americans.

The An-sky materials in the VNLU's Judaica Department have been studied by only a handful of scholars and the war in Ukraine threatens their existence. In November, Jonathan Brent traveled to Kyiv to view these materials and meet the Director of the VNLU to discuss YIVO's role in protecting and preserving this unique collection.

As a result of the visit, YIVO entered an agreement with the VNLU to help to preserve and digitize the VNLU An-sky collection and make it available for the first time to the global public. There is also discussion about YIVO's role in assisting to preserve and digitize the library's Judaica collection. This project is urgent because if we do not act quickly, we risk losing forever a critically important record of Eastern European Jewish life.

"With this project YIVO is fulfilling its age-old mission to preserve, document, and disseminate Eastern European Jewish history and culture in the most modern of ways through the technology of digitization – something our founders could not have envisioned back in 1925," said Brent.

Watch Jonathan Brent's interview on CNN about this visit at [yivo.org/JP-CNN-121923](https://www.yivo.org/JP-CNN-121923).

To find out more about this project and how you can help, please contact mcohen@yivo.org.

JONATHAN BRENT VISITS WASHINGTON, DC

On October 25, Congressman Jerry Nadler invited Jonathan Brent to address a breakfast meeting for his congressional colleagues and staffers to learn about YIVO and its work in digitizing its vast collections, which include significant materials about Jewish life in the United States. Meetings were also held with representatives from Senator Dick Durbin's office, Senator Chuck Schumer's office, and Congressman Jamie Raskin's office to brief them on YIVO's educational initiatives, including the YIVO Bruce and Francesca Cernia Slovin Online Museum and the new YIVO Learning and Media Center.



**YIVO AND THE
MARTYNAS
MAŽVYDAS
NATIONAL
LIBRARY OF
LITHUANIA
ESTABLISH THE
ANTANAS ULPIS
HUMANITARIAN
AWARD**

In 1948, Antanas Ulpis, the Director of the Lithuanian National Book Chamber in Vilnius, saved thousands of Jewish books and documents from imminent destruction at the hands of the Soviets. He risked his life to safeguard YIVO archives and books. In honor of his memory and great courage, YIVO, together with the Martynas

Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, established the Antanas Ulpis Humanitarian Award for contributions to furthering Lithuanian-Jewish relations and understanding. The award will be granted annually with the inaugural award anticipated in 2025 to coincide with YIVO's centenary anniversary. 2024 will be focused on raising funds for the award, which will require an endowment of \$100,000.

For more information on this first-of-its-kind award and how you can contribute, contact mcohen@yivo.org.



**YIVO LAUNCHES
LITHUANIAN
TRANSLATION
OF ONLINE
MUSEUM
EXHIBITION**

In September, YIVO launched a Lithuanian translation of its award-winning Bruce and Francesca Cernia Slovin Online Museum's inaugural exhibition, *Beba Epstein: The Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Girl*. The translation

is a joint project between YIVO, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, and the Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania in New York. The translation into Lithuanian will allow the Lithuanian people, and Lithuanian students and teachers in particular, to access this unique and impactful resource for teaching Jewish history and Holocaust education.

Developed by YIVO in consultation with scholars and Beba Epstein's family, the exhibition explores East European Jewish life in the 20th and 21st centuries through the true story of one teenage girl. Karolina Ziulkoski, the museum's Chief Curator and a Webby Award-winning interactive designer, has combined innovative technology with first-rate storytelling to showcase rare materials from YIVO's archive of twenty-four million documents and artifacts. The exhibition has won several honors and awards, including 2022 Anthem Awards Silver Winner, Vega Awards 2020 | Arcturus Winner, GLAMi Awards 2021 Finalist, and AAM Muse Awards 2021 Honorable Mention.



1 [L-R] Ruth Levine (Chair of the YIVO Board of Directors), First Lady Diana Nausėdienė, President Gitanas Nausėda, Edward Blank (YIVO Board), Jonathan Brent, and Leo Melamed (YIVO Board).

2 Jonathan Brent and Shelly Freeman (YIVO Chief of Staff, second from left) meeting with library staff at the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine in Kyiv.

3 Jonathan Brent and Prof. Dr. Renaldas Gudauskas (Director General of the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania) with the agreement to establish the Antanas Ulpis Humanitarian Award.

**YIVO VISITS
ZUZANNA
GINCZANKA
JEWISH HIGH
SCHOOL,
POLAND'S
ONLY JEWISH
HIGH SCHOOL**

YIVO's Executive Director & CEO Jonathan Brent and Chief of Staff Shelly Freeman recently visited Warsaw as part of a wider trip to Lithuania and Ukraine. They were privileged to visit the Zuzanna Ginczanka Jewish High School, established in Warsaw by Ronald Lauder in 2020. It is the only

Jewish high school in all of Poland. Further discussions are taking place about how YIVO can collaborate with Ginczanka Jewish High School to create another exhibition in YIVO's Online Museum devoted to the life of Zuzanna Ginczanka, who was born in Kyiv, became a Polish-Jewish poet of the interwar period, and was denounced and executed in Kraków shortly before the end of World War II.

**NEW
CATALOGUING
& METADATA
MANAGER IN
THE LIBRARY,
ALEXANDRA
WEINSTEIN**

YIVO is delighted to announce the appointment of its new Cataloguing & Metadata Manager, Alexandra Weinstein, who joined YIVO in October 2023. Alexandra has an M.A. in Library Science and an M.A. in History from Queens College, and a B.A. in

Communications from Hofstra University. Before joining YIVO Alexandra worked as a Librarian at Touro University—Lander College for Women and interned at the Jewish Theological Seminary cataloguing their microfilm collection.

Alexandra is particularly excited about her new role at YIVO: "Now more than ever, it is essential to protect and preserve Jewish history and Ashkenazic culture. Through YIVO's extensive library and classes, we are passing on the knowledge to the next generation. From the Bund to the Vilna collection, YIVO isn't a typical library but an expanse of knowledge that shows what it means to be an Ashkenazi Jew."

**STEFANIE
HALPERN
AND ALEX
WEISER VISIT
MELBOURNE
AND SYDNEY
AUSTRALIA**

On an invitation from Monash University's Australian Centre for Jewish Civilization (ACJC), Stefanie Halpern, Director of the YIVO Archives, and Alex Weiser, Director of Public Programs, made a trip to Melbourne and Sydney to share their work in August

2023. Halpern gave talks on Yiddish theater and YIVO's history, archives, and digitization projects. She also led workshops with Jewish archives and libraries discussing collection development and management. Weiser gave talks on Yiddish song and his own compositions, led workshops with Monash University's composition students, and was featured in a conversation following a sold-out performance of his Yiddish art songs. During the trip they met with numerous Australian Jewish community leaders and interviewed with various print and radio outlets.

**ALEX WEISER
PARTICIPATES
IN LONDON
CONFERENCE
ON NEW
RESEARCH
ON MUSIC,
ARCHIVES AND
THE HOLOCAUST**

On September 6-7, the Yale Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies partnered with various institutions to host, at the Wiener Holocaust Library in London, a conference about new research on music, archives, and the Holocaust. Academic talks discussed a variety of topics ranging from the ethnographic work

of Shmerke Kaczerginski and Ben Stonehill to contemporary creative projects which reimagine Holocaust music for new audiences. Alex Weiser gave a presentation on resources for the study of music and the Holocaust at YIVO, including the newly available and digitized recordings of the YIVO Yiddish Folksong Project (RG 2299) and Papers of Nachman Blumental (RG 2238).

**FIRST VOLUME
PUBLISHED IN
YIVO'S NEW
TRANSLATION
SERIES, YIDDISH
VOICES**

YIVO is pleased to announce the publication of *Yiddish Voices*, an exciting new series showcasing literary works in new English translations. *Three Yiddish Plays by Women*, the first volume of the series, brings together plays penned in Russia,

Poland, and the United States from over a century ago. Each play grapples with enduring women's issues, including motherhood, pregnancy and abortion, financial independence, and self-realization. This volume is a landmark volume of vital significance to students of women's history, modern Jewish history, cultural history, and theater history.

The series, made possible through the generous support from the family of Harriet R. Yassky, features translated works that connect today's readers with Yiddish literature in its full range of authors, genres, and subject matters. Published in partnership with YIVO and Bloomsbury Academic, each volume presents a rich and engaging literary work in English translation with a well-matched historian's introduction. Curated by Alyssa Quint and Elissa Bemporad, the series showcases first-time translations of enduring Yiddish texts—memoirs, novels, and plays—whose topics and themes have powerful contemporary resonance.

**HALLEL YADIN
PRESENTS AT
EUROPEAN
HOLOCAUST
RESEARCH
INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKSHOP**

In November, YIVO archivist Hallel Yadin attended a workshop in Munich for the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure's Reference and Information Services Group. This was the first in-person meeting for the group, which was established in 2022. She

presented on YIVO's Holocaust collections, and the efforts the Archives is undertaking to make them as accessible as possible to researchers of all backgrounds. She connected with archivists working with Holocaust records throughout Europe, the United States, and Australia. YIVO looks forward to building upon these connections to strengthen our reference services.



אַ שיינעם דאַנק!

*YIVO thanks its many incredible volunteers
for all their hard work and assistance.*

LAURA AUKETAYEVA

DEBORAH BONELLI

RENA BOROW

FAIVUS BRAUER

FAINA BURKO

STEWART DRILLER

MARK FRIEDMAN

OSNAT GREENBAUM

EWA JUODIS

LAUREL KALLEN

LORRAINE KORN

ALYS KREMER

DIANE LOUGHRAN

GAIL MALMGREEN

SUSAN MILAMED

SELMA PERLSTEIN

RISA REINGOLD

MIMI SANDLER

REUVEN SCHLENKER

SOPHIA TARNAGURSKAYA

PEGGY WEISS

- 4 Students at the Zuzanna Ginczanka Jewish High School in Warsaw, Poland.
- 5 Stefanie Halpern discussing the history of YIVO and its archives at the Sydney Jewish Museum.
- 6 Alex Weiser speaking about Yiddish song at the University of Sydney.

JUNE 17-30, 2024

Study Tour of Lithuania & Poland

EXCLUSIVELY FOR YIVO

Join YIVO for an enlightening journey to Lithuania and Poland. Examine the life that was lived as you reconnect with your own heritage. Discover the remarkable treasures of old Warsaw, Kraków, Vilnius, and Białowieża.

► Visit yivo.org/LithuaniaPoland2024 for more information.



OCTOBER DAYS IN ITALY WITH YIVO

by BRIAN AND ONELLA STAGOLL

In early October 2023 we journeyed across Northern Italy on the first YIVO tour to Italy. Jews have lived in Italy since Roman times, but always as a “minority of a minority.” This marked a contrast to our earlier experience on YIVO tours in Eastern Europe and we wondered if there was anything to learn? As we discovered, a great deal.

Italy is the home of the oldest diasporas in the West, with a Golden Age in the Renaissance, and a Silver Age after Italian Reunification in 1851. These were times of tolerance and integration, but they were punctuated by the centuries of ghettoization and persecution that followed the Inquisition, and later with the Racial Laws of Mussolini. Alexander Stille* talks of times of *Benevolence* suddenly reversing into *Betrayal*. The timing of our trip was a chilling reminder of this pattern when we gathered in Milan just after October 7. We all had feelings of shock, grief, and rage which became the undertow of the tour, the everyday shadow.

We were a mixed group: Americans and Australians, observant and secular, liberal and conservative, all bound by our connections to Yiddish and family histories of the Holocaust. It felt strange to be travelling at such a time but being together built a sense of safety and solace as we shared emotions that otherwise might have been too big to have alone. The bus became our *shetl*, easing our dismay and disbelief and allowing us some exhilarating discoveries.

From Milan we continued searching sites of Jewish history: Turin, the Hill Towns of Piedmont, Genoa, Florence, Bologna, Modena, Parma, Ferrara, Padua, Trieste, and finally Venice. Every place had a synagogue, usually centuries old, often small and hidden away. They were dazzling and lovingly preserved by their small remaining communities, but all had a fading melancholic beauty. As a reminder of our present situation, they were ominously guarded by soldiers.

Back on the bus we drove past the homes of Jewish writers—Levi, Ginzburg, Bassani, Segre—and read aloud from their works. In Parma we visited the wonderful Biblioteca Palatina library which holds one of the world’s largest collections of ancient Hebrew manuscripts. We saw four Yiddish texts from around 1400, detected by Max Weinreich in the 1920s.

We lunched at stunning Nervi on the coast near Genoa where Sholem Aleichem spent long periods seeking a cure for tuberculosis. In Ferrara, a major Jewish centre in the Renaissance, we walked through the Jewish cemetery to the grave of Giorgio Bassani, author of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, the story of 330 Ferrara Jews deported to Auschwitz. Only one returned.



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IN THE MEDIA

Here are some of YIVO's media highlights from fall 2023:

The Forward (DECEMBER 8, 2023)

Love triangles and arias abound in this reconstructed 1911 Yiddish comic operetta

JTA (SEPTEMBER 19, 2023)

In New York, Lithuania's president honors those who saved Jewish artifacts during and after the Holocaust

JNS (SEPTEMBER 11, 2023)

Exhibit spans 16th-century Jewish maternal guilt-trip to modern Hebraists beating up Yiddishists

Cleveland Jewish News (SEPTEMBER 8, 2023)

Cleveland Heights woman can't get enough Yiddish

Australian Jewish News (SEPTEMBER 8, 2023)

YIVO Australian Visit a Success, Youngsters Interested in Yiddish

Haaretz (SEPTEMBER 7, 2023)

When Speaking Yiddish Could Get You Beaten Up by Jews in Tel Aviv

New York Jewish Week (SEPTEMBER 5, 2023)

Israeli Hebrew didn't kill Yiddish. As a new exhibit in NYC shows, it gave it a new nest to live in.

Detroit Jewish News (SEPTEMBER 3, 2023)

Multilingual Scholar Graduates from YIVO's Yiddish Program with Unique Linguistic Goals

St. Louis Jewish Light (AUGUST 31, 2023)

Jewish Light readers get exclusive first look at new Yiddish exhibit in NYC

In the Bologna ghetto we stood where a 7-year-old Jewish boy, Edgardo Mortara, was kidnapped on orders of the Pope, on the basis that he had been baptised a Christian. A major international incident followed, linked to the Reunification struggle against the Papal States, but the boy was never returned. The 2023 historical drama *Rapito* recounts the story. The Church has never recanted.

In Trieste we stood where Mussolini had declared the Racial Laws in 1938, a major reversal and betrayal and the formal endorsement by Italy of the Holocaust.

On our last afternoon we boated to the Lido and the ancient Jewish Cemetery in Venice. It dates back to 1300 and is still standing after a thousand years. It was desolate, disordered and silent.

It offered a place for reflection on our 12 days. If we were exhausted and emotionally wrung-out, we were also aware how much our connection to our history had been deepened and enriched.

Our historians Sam Kassow and Elissa Bemporad had been enthralling, and with our tour leader Irene Pletka, alongside Ruth Levine, unsparing in their care and support. Back in Melbourne we are still resonating with memories of our group experience and exploration together.

* Alexander Stille, 1991. *Benevolence and Betrayal: Five Italian Jewish Families under Fascism.*



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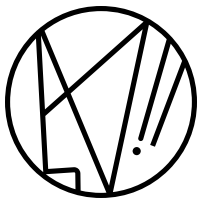
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NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024

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