



YIVO
INSTITUTE
FOR JEWISH
RESEARCH



NEWSLETTER
Spring 2025

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WITH GRATITUDE

YIVO's Centennial offers us the opportunity to celebrate a century of success and to thank the thousands of supporters who have contributed and shared in our growth. As we look forward, we invite you to join us in our journey to preserve Jewish culture and provide exceptional programming and learning. Your investment will enrich generations to come.



Melissa S. Cohen
Chief Development Officer

COVER:
Two ballet dancers in the Hallein displaced persons camp. Austria, post-World War II. YIVO Archives.

RIGHT:
At work in the Bibliographic section of YIVO. Vilna, Poland (now Vilnius, Lithuania), 1930. YIVO Archives.

For 100 years,

the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research has preserved the legacy of one thousand years of Ashkenazi Jewish life. Through our treasured collections and robust programming and educational initiatives, YIVO tells the story of what we have cherished, what we have endured, and how we have persisted. It is the story out of which the future of the Jewish people will be built. As the destination for knowledge of Yiddish language, culture, civilization, and its evolution throughout the world, YIVO is essential for keeping this story alive.

2025 is our Centennial Anniversary.

This powerful moment marks the celebration of a historic century of perpetuating Jewish culture. We will mark this milestone with events and announcements throughout the year.

Join us as we celebrate our first one hundred years and look forward to starting YIVO's second century.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

YIVO's 100th year celebrates an institution that has been continuously devoted to an idea and a people. The idea is that our people will exist as long as we possess knowledge of our history, customs, and creative energy; our religious, social, and political ambitions; our languages, our highest aspirations, and our deepest tragedies. It is an inclusive vision, constantly evolving, always creatively reconceiving itself, yet never losing the thread of its connection to our people. YIVO's role is not simply to conserve the past but to enable living knowledge of centuries of Jewish life in Eastern Europe and Russia and throughout the world today to help build our future. That is our mission and we are still accomplishing it. In 2022, YIVO completed its historic project of digitizing all of its pre-war archives in Lithuania and in New York. It took 7 years and 7 million dollars. The entire YIVO community worldwide rallied around this task, and we are grateful.

Out of this project, some 1.5 million documents were put online. In 2023, some 350,000 individuals used these materials online for free. In 2024, this figure grew to an astounding nearly 700,000 individuals around the world.

What does this tell us? It tells us that within the global Jewish world there is a deep, abiding hunger to be reconnected with our past, one that these materials help to satisfy for the first time in 100 years. Doing so is an act of resistance, an affirmation of selfhood and identity that could not be destroyed by the Nazis, the Soviets, emigration, or even the vast waves of assimilation, forced or unforced, that have washed over us for centuries.

That number of 700,000 will continue to grow. These materials are now the basis of educational initiatives throughout the world, including YIVO's Online Museum, our new Learning and Media Center to be launched officially in mid-2025, and our work in creating the first Master's Degree program in Yiddish Civilization. New musical projects and literary works have flowed from the reconnection with this past; films and works of art have been made from them. YIVO's current project to digitize the archives and the collections of the Bund (the Jewish Labor and Political Archives project) will add some 3.5 million documents, most previously unknown to the general public, to this online resource. At a time when the existence of the Jewish people has been questioned in the State of Israel, when Jewish students cannot feel safe in their colleges and universities, and when Jewish artists and writers are not welcome at museums, galleries, and publishing houses here and abroad, the need for this connection and reconnection has never been greater.

Celebrating YIVO is celebrating the Jewish people as a whole. Let us all take pride in these accomplishments as we work together, with your support, to secure our future.



Jonathan Brent

Executive Director & CEO



YIVO is at the center of the resurgence of global Jewish culture, a story that is still being written. Our commitment to the whole story of Ashkenazi Jews and a positive Jewish future remains the core of our mission.

RUTH LEVINE
YIVO Board Chair



I became a writer because of what I learned at YIVO.

DARA HORN
Professor & American Novelist



The YIVO Institute is, without a doubt, one of the most important institutions, if not the most important, in the history of Yiddish.

GENNADY ESTRAIKH
*Professor & Author,
New York University*



When the head of YIVO mentioned that lost documents had been found, an alarm bell went off. I had to retell these stories.

KEN KRIMSTEIN
Author & The New Yorker Cartoonist

Our celebration lasts all year!

YOUTUBE SERIES

Treasures from the YIVO Collections

WEEKLY, JANUARY 2025 – DECEMBER 2025

Every Friday throughout 2025, YIVO will release a new video highlighting a book, object, or artifact from its collections. Each short video features a YIVO staff member discussing an item and explaining its historical significance. Subscribe to our YouTube channel at youtube.com/yivoinstitute to follow along.

EXHIBITIONS

Hail to the Zamlers: YIVO's Collections at 100

ON VIEW JUNE 22, 2025 – DECEMBER 31, 2025

Over the course of a century, YIVO's mission to collect Jewish cultural material has yielded millions of artifacts and documents. Brought to us by Jews of all kinds—from scholars to shoemakers, from rabbis to rabble—these objects are the mute witnesses that tell the tales of Jewish life and culture wherever Jews traveled. This exhibit will display hundreds of these rare items, many of them never seen before.

PUBLICATIONS

100 Objects from the Collections of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

PUBLICATION DATE: JUNE 2025

Delve into Jewish history through 100 unique objects from the YIVO Archives and Library. This gorgeously-illustrated coffee table book contains images and essays which represent modern Jewish history and culture through YIVO's one hundred years of collecting. The volume highlights a variety of manuscripts, photographs, ritual objects, and other ephemera.

STUDY TOURS

See [PAGE 5](#) ▶

For details and updates about our 2025 tours, visit yivo.org/study-tours.

SEE WHAT WE HAVE PLANNED:
For the most up-to-date information: yivo.org/centennial

► Look for this icon  in the newsletter to learn about more Centennial-related programming, news, and special projects.

CENTENNIAL HONOR ROLL

In honor of our milestone centennial year, we have established a Centennial Honor Roll. Commitments in support of our centennial made in addition to membership or annual gifts will ensure that YIVO can continue to grow our archives, programs, education, and capacity so we can continue this essential work for the next 100 years and beyond. The list below reflects pledges and cash payments.

Centennial Founder's Circle

Anonymous (3)
Ruth and David Levine
Manat Foundation
Elisa New and Lawrence Summers
Irene Pletka

Centennial Visionary

Atran Foundation, Inc.

Centennial Benefactor

Cara P. Beckenstein
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Allan L. Nadler
Jon Richmond
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The Wagner Family Foundation
Myra and Harry Wagner

Centennial Patron

Joanna and Emil Kleinhaus
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Judith E. Weisfuse and Michael Wax

Centennial Builder

Nicole Simmons and Eric S. Rubin

Centennial Friend

The Stanley & Ethel Glen Family Foundation
Dan Opatoshu and Anne Spielberg

INFORMATION

Learn more and become a supporter at:
yivo.org/centennial-honor-roll

JUNE 16-29, 2025

Study Tour of Lithuania & Poland

EXCLUSIVELY FOR YIVO

Join YIVO for an enlightening journey to Lithuania and Poland. Reclaim your heritage as you examine the life that was lived in these lands. View the remarkable history of old Warsaw, Kraków, Vilnius, and Białowieża.

► Visit yivo.org/LithuaniaPoland2025 for more information.

JULY 7-17, 2025

Study Tour of Imperial Cities in Central Europe

EXCLUSIVELY FOR YIVO

Come and explore the rich history of Budapest, Vienna, and Berlin through a uniquely Jewish lens. Visit beautiful synagogues, unrivaled museums, and landmarks of religious life and secular genius.

► Visit yivo.org/CentralEurope2025 for more information.

SEPTEMBER 1-14, 2025

Study Tour of Northern Italy

EXCLUSIVELY FOR YIVO

Join YIVO on a journey of discovery across northern Italy, exploring the fascinating, troubled, and glorious history of Italian Jews in the northern tier, unfamiliar to most of us.

► Visit yivo.org/NorthernItaly2025 for more information.

Programs

Spring 2025

For event registration, more information, and program updates: vivo.org/calendar

TUE
FEB
11

The City Without Jews

FILM SCREENING | IN PERSON

PRESENTED BY THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR JEWISH MUSIC'S JEWISH MUSIC FORUM;
CO-SPONSORED BY THE SUNRISE FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION AND THE ARTS


7:30pm ET

Enjoy a screening of a 1924 Austrian Expressionist film about the expulsion of Jews from the city of Utopia. The film will be accompanied by a live score.

WED
FEB
19

The YIVO Library in New York: Personal Reflections on Its History and Collections

LECTURE | ON ZOOM

 Zachary M. Baker offers personal reflections on the legacy of the YIVO Library after its move to New York City in 1940.

1:00pm ET

TUE
FEB
25

Russia's Jews in World War I

BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM

Polly Zavadviker uncovers the history of Jews in the Russian Empire by revealing the stories of how Jewish civilians experienced World War I and its violent epicenter on the Eastern Front, in a discussion moderated by Eliyana Adler.

1:00pm ET

THU
MAR
06

Andrzej Ciepliński Plays Jewish Clarinet Masterworks

SIDNEY KRUM YOUNG ARTISTS CONCERT | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

CO-SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR JEWISH MUSIC
AND POLISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE NEW YORK

7:00pm ET

Distinguished Warsaw-based clarinetist Andrzej Ciepliński performs a rare American recital of Jewish classical music masterworks, joined by cellist Julian Schwarz, pianist Marika Bournaki, violinists Peter Sirotni and Daniel Kurganov, and violist Colin Brookes.

MON
MAR
10

Yiddish Tangos and Klezmer Mambos

PANEL DISCUSSION | ON ZOOM

PART OF CARNegie HALL'S NUESTROS SONIDOS FESTIVAL


1:00pm ET

Join YIVO for a panel discussion with Ronald Robboy, Sonia Gollance, and Josh Kun, as they explore the remarkable influence of Latin American music and dance on the culture of Yiddish-speaking communities in the United States.

THU
MAR
27

A Trip into the Archive: The Case of Otto Schneid

LECTURE | ON ZOOM

 Alyssa Quint discusses art historian Otto Schneid and the creation of YIVO's Museum of Jewish Art, Judaica, and Art History, a defunct project from the early days of the Institute.

1:00pm ET

MON
MAR
31

The Dybbuk, or Between Two Worlds

PERFORMANCE | IN PERSON

PRESENTED BY THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR JEWISH MUSIC AND THE COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS AT THE NEW SCHOOL; PART OF THE MANNES SOUNDS FESTIVAL

7:00pm ET

Through his haunting and evocative score, Ofer Ben-Amots offers an operatic retelling of Sh. An-ski's masterpiece of the Yiddish theatrical canon, in this performance by students from The New School.

THU
APR
03

Yiddish Studies in the Digital Age: 10 Years of *In geveb*

PANEL DISCUSSION | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

7:00pm ET

Celebrate the 10-year anniversary of *In geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies* with a discussion by Elena Hoffenberg, Eitan Kensky, Eddy Portnoy, and Rachel Rubinstein, moderated by Jessica Kirzane and Madeleine Cohen.

TUE
APR
08

Agunot in the Ashkenazi Realm, 1648-1850

BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM

1:00pm ET

By studying the plight of *agunot*, Noa Shashar sheds light on Jewish family life in the early modern era and on the activity of the rabbinic experts with the authority to free an *agunah*, in a discussion led by Elisheva Carlebach.

TUE
APR
22

An Evening of Sephardic Art Song

SIDNEY KRUM YOUNG ARTISTS CONCERT | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

7:00pm ET


In this two-part event, Dr. Lori Şen presents an overview of the Sephardic art song genre. Zoë Johnstone Stewart (guitar) and Andrew Stewart (piano) will join Şen for a performance after the lecture.

THU
APR
24

The YIVO Sound Archive and the Klezmer Revival

LECTURE | ON ZOOM

1:00pm ET

 YIVO sound archivist Eléonore Biezunski tells the story of the Max and Frieda Weinstein Archive of YIVO Sound Recordings in relation to the revitalization of klezmer music since the mid-1970s.

MON
APR
28

Two Revolutionary Jews: Leon Trotsky and Chaim Zhitlowsky

LECTURE | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

7:00pm ET

Tony Michels analyzes left-wing Jewish politics since the 19th century, focusing on the seminal Jewish Russian revolutionaries Leon Trotsky and Chaim Zhitlowsky and their radically different answers to the predicament of modern Jewry.

TUE
APR
29

Warsaw Testament by Rokhl Auerbach

BOOK TALK | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

CO-SPONSORED BY THE GROSS FAMILY CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ANTISEMITISM AND THE HOLOCAUST

7:00pm ET

Samuel Kassow discusses his new translation of writer Rokhl Auerbach's memoir, *Warsaw Testament*, which paints a vivid portrait of the city's prewar Yiddish literary and artistic community and of its destruction at the hands of the Nazis.

THU
MAY
01

Falafel, Freilach and Frijoles: From Mambo to Borscht

CONCERT | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

7:00pm ET

CO-PRESENTED BY YIVO, BELONGÓ, AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR JEWISH MUSIC, BORSCHT BELT MUSEUM, AND LEO BAECK INSTITUTE; THIS EVENT FORMS PART OF CARNegie HALL'S NUESTROS SONIDOS FESTIVAL

Enjoy a concert performed by Arturo O'Farrill and his Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra featuring Jewish and Yiddish classics in Afro Latin big band versions and Latin classics in klezmer arrangements.

MON
MAY
05

6:30pm ET

Person Place Thing with Jonathan Brent

DISCUSSION | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM
CO-SPONSORED BY PERSON PLACE THING


YIVO Executive Director Jonathan Brent and Randy Cohen discuss three objects from the YIVO collections, with live music performed by Jardena Gertler-Jaffe and Bethany Pietroniro.

WED
MAY
07

1:00pm ET

The Making of a Historian of East European Jewry and the Holocaust: Lucy S. Dawidowicz and the YIVO in Vilna, New York, and Offenbach

LECTURE | ON ZOOM

 This talk by Nancy Sinkoff explores the influence of YIVO on Lucy S. Dawidowicz, a postwar American Jewish public intellectual and historian, who was central to the field that is now called "Holocaust Studies."

THU
MAY
15

7:30pm ET

Chaim Grade's Sons and Daughters

BOOK TALK | IN PERSON AT 92NY & ON ZOOM
PRESENTED BY 92NY BRONFMAN CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE; CO-SPONSORED BY YIVO

Join 92NY and YIVO for a discussion of acclaimed novelist Chaim Grade's *Sons and Daughters*, celebrating the long-awaited English translation of this Tolstoyan masterpiece that chronicles the final decade of a world succumbing to modernity.

THU
JUN
05

1:00pm ET

The New Jewish School in Music (1908-1938) as Part of the Jewish Cultural Renaissance

BOOK TALK | ON ZOOM

Jascha Nemtsov, in a discussion led by Alex Weiser, examines the fascinating and dramatic history of the New Jewish School of Music, which started with the founding of the Society for Jewish Folk Music in St. Petersburg.

THU
JUN
05

7:30pm ET

The Rudashevski Diary: Life and Loss in the Vilna Ghetto

PANEL DISCUSSION | IN PERSON AT 92NY & ON ZOOM


PRESENTED BY 92NY BRONFMAN CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE; CO-SPONSORED BY YIVO
Jonathan Brent, Samuel Kassow, Mindaugas Kvietkauskas, and Karolina Ziulkoski explore the diary of Yitskhok Rudashevski, who lived in the Vilna Ghetto as a young teenager.

WED
JUN
11

1:00pm ET

New Trends in YIVO Scholarship

PANEL DISCUSSION | ON ZOOM


 Join us for a panel discussion sharing new research on various historic YIVO initiatives featuring presentations by William Pimlott, Kamil Kijek, and Nicolas Vallois, followed by a conversation led by Jessica Kirzane.

SUN
JUN
22

MON
JUN
23

YIVO in America

CONFERENCE | IN PERSON & ON ZOOM

 Celebrate YIVO's 100th anniversary with a conference focusing on how YIVO's founding vision for Jewish social sciences has been realized in America since its headquarters shifted to New York City in 1940.

Visit yivo.org/centennial-conference for schedule details.

Fall 2024

Program Highlights

Nusakh Vilne Memorial

(SEPTEMBER 29, 2024) Every year, YIVO holds a memorial to commemorate the Jewish community of Vilna, where it was founded. This year, Bret Werb discussed Shmerke Kaczerginski's work collecting songs of the Holocaust. Kaczerginski was a member of the Paper Brigade, risking his life during World War II to hide Jewish cultural items, smuggling them back into the Vilna Ghetto. Following the discussion, Temma Schaechter and Binyumen Schaechter performed a mini concert featuring musical settings of his poetry.

Jewish Folk Medicine in Eastern Europe

(NOVEMBER 11, 2024) Marek Tuszewicki discussed his book *A Frog Under the Tongue*, in a conversation moderated by cultural critic Rokhl Kafrissen. Tuszewicki shared insights into Ashkenazi healing traditions, blending kabbalistic methods, folk remedies, and magical incantations, while exploring how modern medicine reshaped these practices. The talk shed light on little-known aspects of Ashkenazi culture, and on how the need to treat sickness brought Jews and their neighbors together.

Proof of Identity

(DECEMBER 5, 2024) YIVO hosted the US Premiere of *Proof of Identity*, a documentary from the POLIN: Museum of the History of Polish Jews that explores what it means to be a Polish Jew today. Through interviews with a variety of Jews residing in Poland today, the documentary examines how Polish Jews define their own identity at different stages of life. The screening was followed by a discussion with the film's director Mikołaj Grynberg, Columbia University Film Professor Annette Insdorf, and Head of the Exhibition Department at the POLIN Museum Joanna Fikus.

PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS: 2024



78 public programs

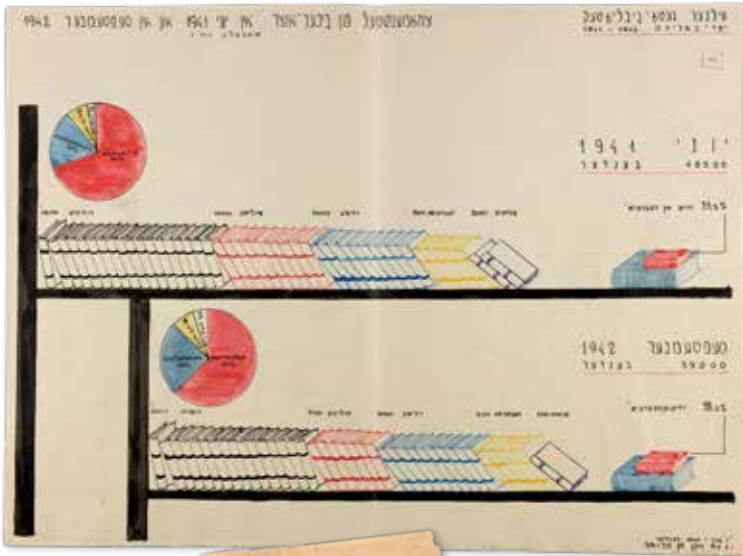
29K+ registrations

619K+ YouTube views

Unable to attend our programs?

Watch past events at: yivo.org/video

Learning and Media Center



Inside an Archival Box

For the YIVO Learning and Media Center's (YLMC) first pilot visit in May of 2023, we created a classroom set of archival boxes for teaching a lesson dedicated to the YIVO Youth Autobiography Contests of the 1930s. These boxes—full of high-quality reproductions of archival materials—have since been used dozens of times to teach visiting high school, college, and adult groups about the lives of Jewish youths in interwar Poland.

In response to feedback we received through surveys and discussions with educators, we decided that our next series of Archival Box Lessons would center on the story of the Paper Brigade and cultural resistance within the Vilna Ghetto. For this lesson, we created four boxes, each dedicated to a different Paper Brigade member—Zelig Kalmanovitch, Rachela Pupko-Krinsky, Herman Kruk, and Avrom Sutzkever. Each box features reproductions of materials from RG 223, the Sutzkever-Kaczerzinski Collection, and is accompanied by an excerpt of a memoir or diary in translation which sheds light on the Paper Brigade's work and life in the Vilna Ghetto. The featured materials touch on the ghetto school system, theater, and library and include reproductions of historical documents that the Paper Brigade saved from destruction, including manuscripts of Y. L. Peretz and Sh. An-ski, a diary from a young Theodor Herzl, and an autobiography of a Jewish youth submitted to one of the YIVO autobiography contests.

We debuted our new lesson with a group of students from The Dalton School in October of 2024 and look forward to sharing this lesson with many more visiting groups soon. Here are a few documents featured in these new boxes:


- TOP:** Report of the Library and Reading Room, 1942-1944
- MIDDLE:** Wall poster for a tournament of active sports (basketball and volleyball) on July 26, 1942, with a colored poster for a street track race and other sports activities on August 9, 1942, on the reverse side
- BOTTOM:** Small poster in watercolor, announcing the Hebrew Hanukkah presentation entitled "Hadliku Ha-Nerot" (Light the Candles) performed at the Ghetto Theater by the "Yeladim" Children's Transport Brigade, December 6, 1942

Are you interested in bringing a class to visit the YIVO Learning and Media Center? Contact Susannah Trubman at strubman@yivo.org to schedule your visit today!





Construction Has Begun on YIVO's Learning and Media Center!

 Since May 2023, YIVO has been hosting pilot lessons with visiting groups of students from a variety of high schools and universities, including The Frisch School, Stuyvesant High School, Riverdale Country School, The Dalton School, Columbia University, and Sarah Lawrence College, among others. YIVO has used these pilot lessons to inform the design of its Learning and Media Center—a new publicly accessible exhibition and classroom area slated to open during YIVO's centennial celebration in mid-2025.

The Learning and Media Center will include a classroom to host visiting groups for lessons which draw on our archival materials, cases that will display artifacts from YIVO's Archives and Library, year-round exhibitions, an intimate open stacks library of Yiddish and English books, stations to listen to sound recordings and watch videos from YIVO's collections, and more.

YLMC BY THE NUMBERS: TO DATE

800+ unique visitors

29 events, including visits, presentations, and workshops





YIVO Meets with the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States

YIVO's Executive Director and CEO Jonathan Brent, together with Chief Development Officer Melissa Cohen and Chief of Staff Shelly Freeman, recently met with the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States H.E. Oksana Markarova. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss YIVO's project with the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine (VNLU) aimed at digitizing and preserving the historically significant Sh. An-ski collection and to express YIVO's solidarity with the people of Ukraine. The Ukrainian Ambassador expressed her robust support for the initiative which will safeguard this irreplaceable Jewish cultural heritage. Her endorsement underscores the project's importance in preserving historical documentation threatened by ongoing regional conflict.

The Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Washington, DC, Commemorates YIVO's 100th Anniversary and the Establishment of the Antanas Ulpis Humanitarian Award



On December 9, the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Washington, DC, hosted a distinguished event commemorating the 100th anniversary of YIVO and the establishment of the Antanas Ulpis Humanitarian Award. This award, a collaborative initiative between YIVO and the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, aims to honor individuals who significantly contribute to enhancing Lithuanian-Jewish relations and understanding.

During the event, Ambassador Audra Plepytė expressed gratitude to YIVO for its vital efforts over the past century in preserving Lithuania's prewar history and culture, which had been obscured during the 50 years of Soviet occupation following World War II. Aušrinė Žilinskienė, Director General of the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, conveyed her congratulations to YIVO and addressed attendees through a video message. Additionally, Jonathan Brent spoke about the organization's historical significance and future endeavors. The gathering served as a platform to celebrate YIVO's invaluable contributions to the preservation, study, and promotion of East European Jewish history and culture on a global scale. It was attended by numerous Litvaks, Americans of Lithuanian descent, as well as representatives from Jewish organizations and congressional representatives and their staff.



YIVO Executive Director and CEO Jonathan Brent speaks at the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Washington, DC.



Bundist refugees from Europe at a group meal.
Shanghai, China, 1941. YIVO Archives.

THE JEWISH LABOR AND POLITICAL ARCHIVES

HELP
THE JEWISH
CHILDREN
OF EUROPE



JEWISH LABOR COMMITTEE
175 EAST BROADWAY
NEW YORK 2, N. Y.

CHILDREN OF THE U.S.A.
FOR THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

Thousands of surviving Jewish children overseas look to you, wait anxiously for your response to their appeal. Thousands of Jewish children, lucky to have escaped death in Hitler's gas chambers, languish now in the camps of Germany; they are lonely and forlorn, hungry and bare-foot. They look to you and wait for your response.

A harsh winter is approaching Europe. A winter bearing suffering to all and especially to the Jews, and even more so to the Jewish children.

The Jewish children are in critical need of winter coats, good shoes, warm underwear. No one can give it to them but you. And they wait for your response.

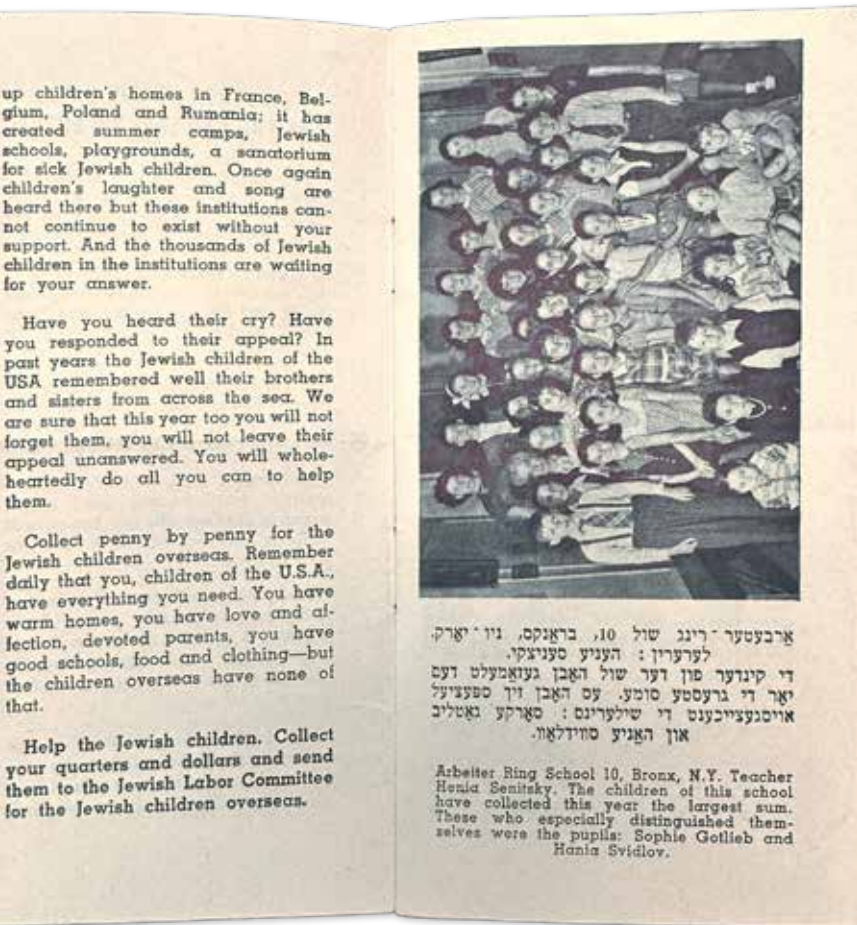
Thousands of children have no text books or any reading matter. Little Jewish tots yearn for toys, they want to play, they want a little gaiety. No one can give it to them but you. And they wait for you. . . .

The Jewish Labor Committee has assumed the responsibility for the care and support of thousands of Jewish children. The Committee has built

FEATURED ARTIFACT

A Jewish Labor Committee Appeal Booklet to Support the Jewish Children Who Survived the Holocaust

This is an appeal booklet that comes from YIVO's Jewish Labor Committee collection. It seeks support for Jewish children who had survived the Holocaust and were living in one of the children's homes built and run by the Jewish Labor Committee. With texts in Yiddish and English, the booklet was distributed to Jewish children attending one of the *Arbeter Ring* schools in the United States. In an effort to help the children in the US connect with those in Europe, it features photographs of daily activities in JLC-supported homes in France and Belgium. The booklet reminds the children in the US that they are fortunate to have everything they need: "You have warm homes, you have love and affection, devoted parents, you have good schools, food and clothing." In contrast, the booklet states bluntly, "But the children overseas have none of that," and implores those in the US to "collect penny by penny" to help the JLC supply Europe's surviving Jewish youth with winter coats, shoes, warm underwear, toys, and textbooks.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

Consisting of nearly 200 collections encompassing 3.5 million pages of archival documents that were collected by the Bund Archives, the Jewish Labor and Political Archives (JLPA) forms the world's most comprehensive body of material pertaining to Jewish social and political activism in Europe and the United States. Spanning the years 1870 to 1992, the JLPA tells the story of Jews' involvement in the European political and revolutionary movements of the 20th century and resistance to the Holocaust, as well as their impact on the American labor movement and the fight for fair wages and workers' rights. YIVO is now in the midst of an eight-year project to digitize these unparalleled materials and make them available for free access online.

As of December 17, 2024, the JLPA project has raised over \$5.8 million toward its \$8.5 million goal. We welcome your support as we make this historic archival resource available to a global audience. **Thanks to matching challenge grants from an anonymous foundation and The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), German Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF), and the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ), your support will now have an even greater impact!**

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**.

YIVO Receives \$22,500 from the Slomo and Cindy Silvian Foundation, Inc.

YIVO is pleased to announce a grant of \$22,500 from the Slomo and Cindy Silvian Foundation, Inc. for the conservation, processing, and digitization of Holocaust-related materials in the JLPA. The materials cover various aspects of the Holocaust and its lingering effects, painting a more detailed image of the lives lived and lost. This is the Foundation's fifth grant, the third towards this multi-year project. We are grateful to the Board of Directors of the Slomo and Cindy Silvian Foundation for their steadfast generosity, which enables us to match a challenge grant from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and an anonymous foundation. Their continued support allows us to continue honoring the memory of those who persevered in the wake of such tragedy.

JLPA BY THE NUMBERS: TO DATE



Approximately
3.5 million
pages in the collection

65% conserved
35% processed
15% digitized and available online



JLPA PROJECT SUPPORTERS

\$1,000,000+ Builder

Anonymous
Ruth and David Levine
Irene Pletka

\$500,000+ Partner

\$100,000+ Benefactor

Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany,
The German Federal Ministry of Finance, and the
Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future
Institute of Museum and Library Services: Save America's Treasures (IMLS)
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC)

\$50,000+ Patron

Anonymous
The Slomo and Cindy Silvian Foundation, Inc.

\$25,000+ Sponsor

\$10,000+ Supporter

Atran Foundation
The Hittman Family Foundation
Harri Hoffmann Family Foundation
Deborah K. Holmes Family Foundation
Myra and Harry Wagner & The Wagner Family Foundation

\$5,000+ Contributor

Julius C. Spiegel

\$1,000+ Friend

Ellen Odoner and Edward Kerson

As of
DECEMBER 31, 2024



Funded by:



on the basis of a decision
of the Bundestag

With Assistance from the Conference on
Jewish Material Claims Against Germany
Supported by the German Federal Ministry of
Finance and the Foundation Remembrance,
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NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

The National Endowment for the
Humanities: Democracy demands wisdom.

From the YIVO Collections



RECENT ACCESSION

The Collection of The Reverend Samuel Arluck (1882-1953)

YIVO received items relating to The Reverend Samuel Arluck (1882-1953), father of the famed American composer Harold Arlen whose catalog of over 500 songs includes the beloved "Over the Rainbow" and "Get Happy." Surely Harold inherited his musical talent from his father, who was born in Vilna in 1882, immigrated to Louisville, Kentucky in 1887, and became a famed cantor leading congregations in Buffalo and Syracuse, New York. The collection consists of ephemera relating to Samuel Arluck's personal life and career and includes a framed oil painting of Cantor Arluck on the *bimah* at Temple Adath Yeshurum in Syracuse, New York. This painting was created in the 1950s by Harold Arlen.

LIBRARY HIGHLIGHT

Why is this Journal Different from All Other Journals?

Educating children outside of the classroom can come in many forms, from traditional books to children's journals, with one such being *Kinder zhurnal*. Unlike other children's journals, which are primarily for entertainment, *Kinder zhurnal* was founded by the Sholem Aleichem Folk Institute for the purpose of organizing a secular Yiddish school system. Beginning in 1920, *Kinder zhurnal* published works by Yiddish writers and poets, from Mani Leib to Kadya Molodowsky, with themes relating to Judaism.

The theme of the April 1949 edition of *Kinder zhurnal* focused on Passover. On the cover is Moses splitting the red sea while the Jews observe the miracle. The first page has a poem written by Y. L. Kaloshiner about celebrating Passover from a child's perspective. Next to the poem is a picture of a family reading their *haggadot*. The caption states, "What is more beautiful than a Jewish home on Passover with a seder?" referring to the ritual of the first two nights of Passover.



Meeting Sam Philips: How Newly Translated Letters and Research at YIVO Helped Us Get to Know Our Grandfather

by CAROL and SUSAN PHILIPS

Our grandfather, Sam Philips, had ten grandchildren, none of whom, now elders ourselves, can recall him speaking. To us, he was a cipher—a small, silent house painter. That is, until his 60-plus letters, published in *The Forward* from the 1940s to 1960s, were translated from Yiddish this past year. Through that process, we learned that he was born in the Polish *shtetl* Biata Rawska, about his life there as a *yeshiva-bokher* (a young, male yeshiva student), before immigrating to America at age 17.



His prolific, heartfelt, highly literate, well-argued Yiddish letters elucidated his life and ideas. We now know that he was deeply involved in the New York socialist Yiddish world as a worker, an intellectual, and an activist. He wrote in real time about such diverse topics as the murder of Jews in Europe, the establishment of the state of Israel, kosher meat prices in New York, labor laws in New York State, and Yiddish in America. In sum, the letters demonstrate his belief in the importance of his own contributions, those of an everyman, to ongoing Jewish conversations.

We concur with our translator, Tara Neuwirth, who undertook this work while attending the 2024 YIVO summer intensive Yiddish program, that this project “could have only happened at YIVO.” Conducting research in the Archives, helped by her instructors, classmates and archivists, she found additional materials, including our grandfather’s contributions to the Biata Rawska *yizkor* (memorial) book. While this project has produced not only a plethora of answers, it has also raised even more questions, questions that we hope to pursue further.

PICTURED: Sam and Sadie Philips with their grandchildren Carol and Alice.

Microfilm Digitization

This year, the YIVO Archives completed a major project: digitizing all of its microfilmed holdings. Over 100 collections are now digitized and freely available online. These materials are diverse, ranging from major collections on the Holocaust to the records of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society to material from the oldest Jewish congregation in America, Congregation Shearith Israel, dating back to the 18th century.

COLLECTIONS BY THE NUMBERS: 2024

692K+

visits to our digitized materials

29K+

reference photographs sent, and 1,200+ reference queries answered

2,500+

items paged for researchers in the Reading Room, including Archives and Library materials

46

record groups (RGs) added to the Archives

► Explore our collections at yivo.org/archives-library.

אַ שיינעם דאַנק!

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

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Education



Winter Classes at YIVO


 Held annually since 2012, the YIVO-Bard Winter Program on Ashkenazi Civilization explores Ashkenazi Jewish life and culture throughout its thousand-year history in Eastern Europe and the diaspora. This year, in celebration of YIVO's 100th anniversary, the program featured courses illuminating developments over the past century in music, literature, history, science and more. The program featured a diverse lineup of international presenters and scholars—of international and national presenters including historian Hasia Diner, film critic J. Hoberman, scholars and writers Sander Gilman, Jan Grabowski, Adam Kirsch, and Pulitzer Prize winner Anne Applebaum, along with instructors from leading institutions across the globe. The program enables participants to engage with the Jewish Ashkenazi experience with courses not typically found outside of the university setting.

The keynote event "Autocracies in the 21st Century" featured Anne Applebaum in conversation with Jonathan Brent. They explored how authoritarian regimes have evolved to collaborate across industries, borders, and technologies to stay in power.

Concurrent with the Winter Program, YIVO ran a series of winter Yiddish seminars. These seminars covered topics such as Yiddish music, Jewish food, Yiddish theater, and Jewish history. Over 250 students participated in the Winter Program and winter Yiddish seminars.

Summer Program students on a tour of Hasidic Williamsburg, New York, 2024. Photo by Shoshana Simons (Summer Program '24).

2025 YIVO-Bard Uriel Weinreich Summer Program in Yiddish Language, Literature & Culture

 JUNE 22 – AUGUST 1, 2025

► Learn more and apply at summerprogram.yivo.org

This summer, our six-week intensive program will be taking 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 presents the breadth of Yiddish Civilization and focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and understanding Yiddish. Whether on Zoom or in person, we hope you will join us this summer!

Thanks to the generosity of The Leona Zweig Rosenberg Trust, YIVO is proud to announce 2025 Centennial Scholarships that will cover tuition, housing, travel, and living expenses for a select number of Summer Program students.

International and Financial Aid Application Deadline: February 14
General Application Deadline: March 3

Join us one week prior for our annual Refresher Course:

JUNE 16-20, 2025 | *Instructor: Dovid Braun*

During the week before the Summer Program begins, participants will review the structure and use of Yiddish before embarking on their next level in the Program's intensive setting.

Yiddish Metropolitan Diary: A Subway Encounter

by DR. DALIT WARSHAW, *YIVO Yiddish student*

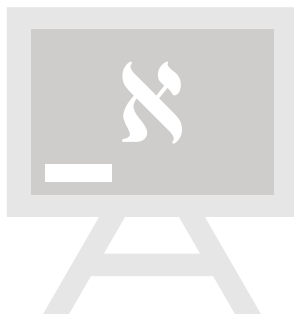
Mayn tayer yidish togbikhl (Dear Yiddish diary):

It was a brisk yet sunny Saturday afternoon in mid-December. I was sitting on a crowded I train, amid a long and ruminative trek downtown from Riverdale. As is my wont during such commutes, I took out my Yiddish homework, which in this case was preparation of an excerpt from Bella Chagall's memoir *Burning Lights*, the chapter "Der ershter shney" ("The First Snow").

Suddenly, a voice resounded from above: "Ah, *redt ir yidish?* (You speak Yiddish?)" I looked up: my reading happened to be in the direct line of vision of a man with a beard, standing and holding the subway pole! Before I knew it, I was responding in Yiddish, and thus began a conversation on all manners of topics lasting from 137th St. down to Lincoln Center, completely in Yiddish!

As I neared my destination, it was clear that this *yidische* discussion had to continue (especially as, musician that I am, I was greatly relishing this *ershte* [first] opportunity to discuss Mahler, Wagner, and Scriabin all in the *mame-loshn* [mother-tongue], quite joyfully off-kilter as every encounter with this *fantastisher* [fantastic] language has thus far promised to be)... He dictated his cell number to me (in Yiddish, of course), and the *shmues* (conversation) is still going on, weeks later (if with the admitted assistance of the *verterbukh* [dictionary])!

EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS: 2024



78 classes
1,086 students
36 countries

Spring Classes

BEGINNER YIDDISH

12 weeks
12 total sessions
1.5 hours each

BEGINNER I YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 16 – May 18 | 3:00pm-4:30pm ET
Instructor: Nina Warnke

(Monday) Feb. 24 – May 19 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Perl Teitelbaum

(Monday In-person in NYC)
Feb. 24 – May 19 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Moishele Alfonso

(Tuesday)
Feb. 25 – May 13 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Lucas Fiszman

(Tuesday In-person in NYC)
Feb. 25 – May 13 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Andryusha Kuznetsov

(Thursday)
Feb. 27 – May 22 | 5:00pm-6:30pm ET
Instructor: Malena Chinski

BEGINNER II YIDDISH

(Sunday Morning)
Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 10:30am-12:00pm ET
Instructor: Tal Hever-Chybowski

(Sunday Afternoon)
Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 12:00pm-1:30pm ET
Instructor: Philip Schwartz

(Monday) Feb. 24 – Jun. 2 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Malena Chinski

(In-person in NYC)
Feb. 25 – May 20 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Nachum Lerner

BEGINNER III YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 10:30am-12:00pm ET
Instructor: Karolina Szymaniak

BEGINNER IV YIDDISH

(Tuesday) Feb. 18 – May 6 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Nina Warnke

(In-person in NYC)
Feb. 24 – May 19 | 6:30pm-8:00pm ET
Instructor: Andryusha Kuznetsov

This spring we are offering 29 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!

INTER-MEDIATE YIDDISH

*12 weeks
12 total sessions
1.5 hours each*

INTERMEDIATE I YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 8:30am-10:00am ET
Instructor: Tal Hever-Chybowski

(Tuesday) Feb. 18 – May 13 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Malena Chinski

INTERMEDIATE II YIDDISH

(Sunday) Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 10:00am-11:30am ET
Instructor: Sonia Dratwa-Pinkusowitz

INTERMEDIATE III YIDDISH

(Monday) Feb. 17 – May 12 | 4:00pm-5:30pm ET
Instructor: Nina Warnke

(Tuesday) Feb. 18 – May 6 | 3:00pm-4:30pm ET
Instructor: Perl Teitelbaum

INTERMEDIATE IV YIDDISH

(Monday Morning)
Feb. 24 – May 19 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Vera Szabó

(Monday Afternoon)
Feb. 24 – May 19 | 3:00pm-4:30pm ET
Instructor: Lucas Fiszman

ADVANCED YIDDISH

*12 weeks
12 total sessions
1.5 hours each*

* Unless otherwise noted

ADVANCED I YIDDISH

(Monday)
Feb. 24 – May 19 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Karolina Szymaniak

ADVANCED II YIDDISH

(Sunday Afternoon)
Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 2:00pm-3:30pm ET
Instructor: Sonia Dratwa-Pinkusowitz

(Sunday Evening)
Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Perl Teitelbaum

ADVANCED TOPICS IN YIDDISH LITERATURE & GRAMMAR

The Generation Gap
Feb. 23 – Jun. 1 | 12:00pm-1:30pm ET
Instructor: Sonia Dratwa-Pinkusowitz

Autobiographical Writing in Yiddish
Feb. 20 – May 15 | 6:00pm-7:30pm ET
Instructor: Sheva Zucker
* 12 weeks, 24 total sessions

SEMINARS & ELECTIVES (IN ENGLISH)

*10 weeks
10 total sessions
1.5 hours each*

Jewish Warsaw

Feb. 23 – May 18 | 11:00am-12:30pm ET
Instructor: Samuel Glauber

Victims, Refugees, Soldiers: East European Jews at War

Feb. 23 – May 18 | 12:30pm-2:00pm ET
Instructor: Aleksandra Jakubczak

SEMINARS & ELECTIVES (IN YIDDISH)

*10 weeks
10 total sessions
1.5 hours each*

Readings in Yiddish Prose

Feb. 26 – May 7 | 9:30am-11:00am ET
Instructor: Vera Szabó

The Poetry of Dovid Hofshteyn

Feb. 19 – Apr. 23 | 7:00pm-8:30pm ET
Instructor: Eugene Orenstein



YIVO's Shine Online Educational Series

YIVO's Shine Online courses are **free** and available to take **at your own pace**.

Learn about Jewish history and culture with experts in the field and explore YIVO's unique archival collections.

5 classes
30K+ students registered

Students from **76 countries** and **all 50 states**

[YIVO.ORG/SHINE](https://yivo.org/shine)

GET STARTED TODAY!



YIVO Archivist & Special Projects Manager Hallel Yadin gives a tour of the stacks as part of a workshop for *The Cambridge History of Holocaust Literature*.

YIVO Hosts Workshop for *The Cambridge History of Holocaust Literature*

In September, YIVO hosted a workshop of 41 contributors to the upcoming volume, *The Cambridge History of Holocaust Literature*. The scholars received exclusive tours of the YIVO stacks, with particular emphasis on our Holocaust collections. Select participants, Rachelle Grossman, Matt Johnson, Harriet Murav, Christin Zühlke, and Erin McGlothlin, also joined YIVO for a panel discussion about Yiddish writing and publishing after the Holocaust, which was open to the public. The workshop was funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council.

YIVO Partners with Esteemed Institutions to Bring Holocaust Education Training to Educators

We are excited to announce recently-held and upcoming workshops for educators, hosted by Karolina Ziulkoski, Chief Curator of the YIVO Bruce and Francesca Cernia Slovin Online Museum, focused on YIVO’s latest exhibition, *“Yitskhok Rudashevski: A Teenager’s Account of Life and Death in the Vilna Ghetto.”* These workshops are designed to introduce K-12 teachers to this poignant exhibition, providing them with access to primary resources and insights to incorporate Holocaust education meaningfully into their classrooms.

YIVO Launches Redesigned YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe

With over 246,000 visitors in 2024, the YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe is the go-to resource for anyone interested in the history of East European Jewry. The only resource of its kind, the Encyclopedia provides the most complete picture of the history and culture of Jews in Eastern Europe from the beginnings of their settlement in the region to the present. Now transformed into an easy-to-use website, the Encyclopedia’s accurate, reliable, scholarly information about East European Jewish life is accessible to everyone free of charge. The redesign offers a faster, more reliable user experience, with increased readability and accessibility, and it now displays content more effectively on desktop and mobile browsers. Explore at encyclopedia.yivo.org.

This educational initiative is being delivered in partnership with several respected institutions in the field of Holocaust education:

- ▶ On **November 18, 2024**, our workshop was held with **Echoes and Reflections**, an organization that provides Holocaust education curriculum.
- ▶ On **February 27, 2025**, we are partnering with the **Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center**.
- ▶ On **May 4, 2025**, we will participate in a workshop held by the **UK Holocaust Educational Trust**.
- ▶ In the **first half of 2025**, we will hold a program with **Teach the Shoah**, an organization that uses storytelling to share stories and lessons from the Holocaust.

These workshops offer a unique opportunity for educators to connect with Yitskhok Rudashevski’s story and bring essential lessons of history, resilience, and remembrance into their classrooms. We invite all interested educators to join us in this important work of Holocaust education.

In the Media

Here are some of YIVO's media highlights from summer and fall 2024:

New Jersey Jewish News (DECEMBER 25, 2024)
Autocracy today: More sophisticated, just as hateful

Smithsonian Center for Folklife & Cultural Heritage Magazine
(OCTOBER 29, 2024)
History through My Jewish Grandmother's Eyes,
Music through Her Memories

Smithsonian Voices (SEPTEMBER 26, 2024)
A Teenager's Holocaust Diary Is Changing the Way
We Interact With Online Exhibitions

Talkline With Zev Brenner (SEPTEMBER 20, 2024)
The Yiddish are Coming Back – Ben Kaplan & Dovid Braun of YIVO

JTA / NY Jewish Week (SEPTEMBER 12, 2024)
A NYC conference celebrates the cultural
creativity of formerly Orthodox Jews

The Jewish Standard (SEPTEMBER 12, 2024)
Life off the derech

Jewish Journal (SEPTEMBER 11, 2024)
YIVO Introduces Trendsetting Digital Exhibits for Holocaust Education

Tablet (AUGUST 30, 2024)
The Men Who Weren't There

The Jewish Standard (AUGUST 15, 2024)
Who's learning Yiddish?

The Forward (AUGUST 9, 2024)
VIDEO: Meet young people who studied Yiddish this summer

The Yiddish Voice (AUGUST 7, 2024)
Dovid Braun, Zumer-Program Academic Director;
Miriam Libenson z"l (1995): Tisha B'ov

Worldscreen (AUGUST 6, 2024)
ChaiFlicks & YIVO Institute for Jewish Research Team Up

JTA / NY Jewish Week (AUGUST 5, 2024)
Why these students, ages 16 to 84, spent their
summer studying Yiddish in New York

Aish (JULY 30, 2024)
Teenager's Remarkable Diary of Life and Death in the Vilna Ghetto

In geveb (JULY 25, 2024)
In *The Great Dictionary of the Yiddish Language*, the dictionary dazzles

The Jewish Standard (JULY 25, 2024)
The Vilna ghetto ... through a boy's diary



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- DECEMBER 31, 2024

\$500,000+

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please report any corrections to mcohen@yivo.org.

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NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025

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