



יידישער וויסנשאפטלעכער אינסטיטוט.. ייווא  
YIDDISH SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE -- YIVO



# YIVO IN AMERICA

CONFERENCE

JUNE 22-23, 2025



YIVO  
INSTITUTE  
FOR JEWISH  
RESEARCH



YIVO archivists Chana Mlotek and Zosa Szajkowski  
on the stairs of the YIVO building at 535 West 123rd Street,  
New York City, 1945.

# YIVO IN AMERICA

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CONFERENCE  
JUNE 22–23, 2025



JOIN US FOR A celebration of 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.

The destruction of Eastern European Jewry during the Holocaust—including YIVO's original headquarters in Vilna—challenged fundamental ideas about Jewish peoplehood and the Yiddish language's role in it that had animated YIVO since its founding. Despite this, YIVO continued to publish scholarly works in America, support the study of Yiddish linguistics and folklore, and serve as a repository documenting Eastern European Jewish history and culture. YIVO also developed new ventures, helping to create the field of Holocaust studies, playing a pioneering role in the teaching of Yiddish as it ceased being the mother tongue of the Jewish masses, and bolstering the development of Jewish studies more broadly.

In this conference, scholars will discuss YIVO's work since 1940 touching on how YIVO's purpose shifted in the American context, major achievements of YIVO's work in America, YIVO's role in the post-war evolution of Yiddish and Jewish studies, and what work lies ahead for YIVO and Jewish studies more broadly.

This program is supported, in part, by public funds  
from the New York City Department of Cultural  
Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.



## Sunday, June 22, 2025

**7:00pm**     **Welcome Address** BY JONATHAN BRENT  
**Keynote Address** BY CECILE KUZNITZ — *DELIVERED IN YIDDISH*  
*Yiddish Scholarship in Times of Crisis:*  
*"A lighthouse in the rough seas of our bitter present"*

**8:00pm**     **Reception**

## Monday, June 23, 2025

**9:30am**     **Coffee and Cakes**

**10:00am**     **Welcome Address** BY JONATHAN BRENT  
**Keynote Address** BY KALMAN WEISER  
*YIVO and the Challenges of America*

**11:00am**     **Panel 1 — YIVO's Shifting "Folk" in the Post-War Era**  
ERIC GOLDSTEIN, HASIA DINER, NAOMI SEIDMAN; MODERATOR: SAM NORICH

**12:30pm**     **Lunch Break**

**2:00pm**     **Panel 2 — YIVO's Work in America: Achievements and Challenges**  
LEYZER BURKO, MARK SMITH, ITZIK GOTTESMAN; MODERATOR: ALYSSA QUINT

**3:30pm**     **Coffee Break**

**3:45pm**     **Panel 3 — The Post-War Evolution of Yiddish and Jewish Studies**  
ANITA NORICH, STEFANIE HALPERN, REBECCA MARGOLIS;  
MODERATOR: DEBORAH DASH MOORE

**5:15pm**     **Dinner Break**

**7:00pm**     **Discussion Panel — YIVO's Purpose Today**  
JONATHAN BRENT, STEFANIE HALPERN, BEN KAPLAN,  
EDDY PORTNOY, ALEX WEISER; MODERATOR: KALMAN WEISER

**8:00pm**     **Reception**

# DAY 1 — KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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## **Yiddish Scholarship in Times of Crisis: “A lighthouse in the rough seas of our bitter present”**

**Cecile E. Kuznitz**

*DELIVERED IN YIDDISH*

Cecile E. Kuznitz is Associate Professor and Patricia Ross Weis '52 Chair in Jewish History and Culture at Bard College. She is the author of *YIVO and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture: Scholarship for the Yiddish Nation* (Cambridge University Press, 2014; Lithuanian translation, 2025) as well as articles on the Jewish community of Vilna, the field of Yiddish Studies, and Jewish urban history. She has held fellowships at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies.

YIVO WAS FOUNDED IN 1925 in a moment of great optimism, yet within a decade European Jewry found itself caught between authoritarian regimes on the right and the left. At the same time that the institute refuted the lies of Nazi pseudo-science, it resisted calls to embrace the politically-driven approach of Marxist research. YIVO's leaders sought to serve the Jewish people by winning respect for the Yiddish language and its speakers, by documenting Jews' rich culture and thus bolstering their claim for recognition as a national minority, and by addressing the social and economic problems facing contemporary Jewry. They believed they could only achieve these goals through academically rigorous scholarship that placed truth above ideology, and they remained steadfast in their commitment even in the darkest of times.

**דעם י'וואָס  
וויסנשאַפֿטלעכע אַרבעט  
אין אַן עת־צרה:  
„אַ לייכטטורעם אין דעם  
צעכוואַליעטן ים פֿון  
אונדזער ביטערן איצט“**

דער י'וואָ איז געגרינדעט געוואָרן אין 1925 אין אַ מאַמענט פֿון גרויס  
אַפטימיזם, אָבער מיט אַ קנאַפֿן יאַרצענדליק שפּעטער האָבן אייראָפּעיִשע ייִדן  
זיך געפֿונען צווישן אויטאָריטאַרישע רעזשימען סײַ פֿון לינקס, סײַ פֿון רעכטס.  
דער אינסטיטוט האָט אין איין צײַט אָפּגעפֿרעגט די ליגנס פֿון דער נאַציִשער  
פּסעוודאָוויסנשאַפֿט און זיך אַנטקעגנגעשטעלט דעם דרוק אָנצונעמען  
די פּאָליטיש מאַטיווירטע שיטה פֿון דער מאַרקסיסטישער פֿאַרשונג.

דעם י'וואָס פֿירערס האָבן געוואָלט דינען דעם ייִדישן פֿאָלק דורך  
אויספּועלן דרך־ארץ צו דער ייִדישער שפּראַך - און ממילא צו אַלע  
אירע רעדערס - דורך אָפהיטן די רײַכע ייִדישע קולטור און דערמיט  
אונטערשטיצן די מיעוטים־רעכט פֿון ייִדישן פֿאָלק, ווי אויך דורך אַנטפּלעקן  
די אַקטועלע סאָציאַלע און עקאָנאָמישע פּראָבלעמען פֿון דער ייִדישער  
געזעלשאַפֿט. זײ האָבן געגלייבט באַמונה־שלמה אַז זײ קענען דערגרייכן  
אַט די צילן נאָך דורך פינקטלעכער אַקאַדעמישער וויסנשאַפֿט וואָס גיט  
אַפּ די בכורה דעם אמת אַנשטאָט אידעאָלאָגיע, און זײ זײַנען געבליבן  
פֿעסט בײַ זייערע פּרינציפּן אַפֿילו אין די סאַמע פֿינצטערע טעג.

## DAY 2 — KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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### **YIVO and the Challenges of America**

#### **Kalman Weiser**

Kalman Weiser is the Silber Family Professor of Modern Jewish Studies and Director of the Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies at York University. He specializes in modern Jewish history, Yiddish language and culture, and Jewish language studies. His most recent volume is *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism* (2021). He is now completing two books. The first is about the complex relationships across the decades between four Yiddish linguists—two Jewish (YIVO co-founder Max Weinreich and haredi scholar Solomon Birnbaum), two Germans who became Nazis. The other is about how refugee scholars transformed YIVO in Vilna, Poland into today's YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City.

DURING WWII, YIVO'S WORLD center transferred its operation from Vilna to New York City. Staffed by immigrant and refugee intellectuals, the institution continued its mission of producing knowledge "from the folk, for the folk, with the folk." But how could YIVO serve as the national academy of a global Yiddish-speaking people when its largest part in Eastern Europe was no longer alive? How could it honor its commitment to the survivors of that civilization while meeting the very different needs of an increasingly English-speaking American Jewry little attuned to its values? And what of its duties to Jewish communities around the world, including in the new State of Israel? These questions bitterly divided YIVO's leadership in New York during its first crucial 15 years as the institute's world center. Beyond helping to defining YIVO's identity and to set a course for its activities for subsequent decades, these questions remain relevant to the present day.

### YIVO's Shifting "Folk" in the Post-War Era

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Moderated by

**Samuel Norich**

Samuel Norich was executive director of the YIVO Institute from 1980 to 1992. He retired as publisher and CEO of the *Forward* newspapers in 2017, after having served in that role for two decades. He is the author of "What Will Bind Us Now: A Report on the Institutional Ties between Israel and American Jewry" (1994). He served as a vice president of the World Jewish Congress from 1975-81, and now serves on the boards of the *Forward*, New Jewish Narrative, Atran Foundation, and Jewish Labor Committee. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife, the artist Deborah Ugoretz.

#### **Rethinking the "Jewish Race": The YIVO Institute and the Changing Definition of Jewishness in World War II-Era America**

**Eric L. Goldstein**

Eric L. Goldstein is Associate Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Emory University. He is the author of the award-winning *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton University Press, 2006) and, with Deborah R. Weiner, *On Middle Ground: A History of the Jews of Baltimore* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018). He is currently working on a history of reading among Yiddish-speaking immigrants to America from 1870 to World War I. From 2007-2012, he was the editor of the quarterly scholarly journal, *American Jewish History*.

DURING WORLD WAR II, American Jews hoped that an Allied victory would position them to benefit from a new post-war order and finally win full acceptance as a part of white America. One thorny question, however, was exactly how Jews would be defined in the post-war era; would they continue to be referred to (and refer to themselves) as a distinct "racial" group, or would social integration and the discrediting of Nazi racial dogmas finally banish this terminology from the American and American Jewish lexicons? In 1943, three émigré scholars from the YIVO Institute—Max Weinreich, Nathan Goldberg, and Jacob Letschinsky—set out to answer these questions. Focusing on the classification of Jews as "Hebrews" in U.S. immigration records, these researchers surveyed the opinions of prominent Jewish academics, trying to find a way to describe the multifaceted nature of Jewish identity while also facilitating Jewish integration into white America. Their work product, *The Classification of Jewish Immigrants and its Implication*, published by YIVO in 1945, not only mapped out a route toward racial acceptance for American Jews, but also demonstrated how the tools of social science could help them navigate the challenges and opportunities of the post-war world.

## DAY 2 — PANEL 1

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### **American Jewish Historians and their Discovery of the Eastern European Experience**

#### **Hasia Diner**

Hasia Diner is Professor Emerita at New York University where she held the Paul S. and Sylvia Steinberg Chair in American Jewish History. She directed at NYU the Goldstein-Goren Center for American Jewish History. The author of numerous books in the field, including several prize winners, she held a Guggenheim Fellowship and is an elected member of both the Society of American Historians and the American Academy of Jewish Research.

1954 MARKED THE 300TH anniversary of Jewish settlement of what would become the United States. It saw a flurry of community activities and also witnessed the emergence of a new era in American Jewish history scholarship, a field of inquiry which had begun in the 1890s. The 1954 moment provided a starting off point for scholars trained in American history who began to focus on the experience of the Jews in the nation's past. Most of these were the American-born children, actually sons, of Eastern European Jewish immigrants and in the scholarship they produced they elevated that migration, projecting it as the central narrative of American Jewish life.

In the process, scholars like Moses Rischin, Oscar Handlin, among others, made reference to the importance of YIVO as a repository of material for the study of not just the Jews but of the United States. They used YIVO sources, encouraged their students to do so, and participated in YIVO activities. They created a narrative of American Jewish history that valorized their own immigrant progenitors from Eastern Europe, Yiddish speakers, but in the process, flattened out and rendered into near stereotypes, the Jewish immigrants who had come to the United States from the German-speaking lands in the decades from the 1820s-1880s.

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## Max Weinreich Faces Post-War YIVO, Freud in Hand

### Naomi Seidman

Naomi Seidman is the Chancellor Jackman Professor of the Arts in the Department for the Study of Religion and the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. Her fourth book, *Sarah Schenirer and the Bais Yaakov Movement: A Revolution in the Name of Tradition* (The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2019), won a National Jewish Book Award in Women's Studies in 2019. Her most recent book is *Translating the Jewish Freud: Psychoanalysis in Hebrew and Yiddish* (Stanford University Press, 2024). Her podcast on leaving the ultra-Orthodox Jewish world, *Heretic in the House*, won a Signal Award.

MAX WEINREICH, CO-FOUNDER AND longtime director of YIVO, spent much of the 1930s immersed in psychoanalysis; he translated, taught, and popularized Freud's work and published a psychoanalytically informed study of Polish Jewish youth. But Weinreich dropped the unfinished translation of Freud's *Introduction to Psychoanalysis* after the war, and Mordkhe Schaechter has described how his coining of key Yiddish psychoanalytic terms, like *visik* and *umvisik* for the conscious and unconscious, failed to take root. The Polish youth of Weinreich's research were decimated a few short years after his study. What remained, then, of Weinreich's engagement with and interest in psychoanalysis after the war? This paper will follow the reverberations of psychoanalysis in Weinreich's work and thought in America. It will read Weinreich's public remarks on the subject and those that were privately transmitted, tracing the ways in which Weinreich brought psychoanalysis to bear on a new research agenda. Despite the interruption of much of the most direct psychoanalytic research, Freud's thought continued to shape Weinreich's words, shedding light on the exile of YIVO, the destruction of war, the "psychic fragmentation" of American Jews, and the therapeutic role YIVO might play in the post-war American landscape.

## DAY 2 — PANEL 2

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### YIVO's Work in America: Achievements and Challenges

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Moderated by

**Alyssa Quint**

Alyssa Quint is a cultural historian, an editor, and a contributing writer at *Tablet Magazine*. She is the author of *The Rise of the Modern Yiddish Theater* (Indiana University Press, 2019), a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award and the Jordan Schnitzer Award, and the editor of *Women on the Yiddish Stage* (Legenda, 2023), *Three Yiddish Plays by Women: Female Jewish Perspectives, 1880-1920* (YIVO/Bloomsbury, 2023), and *Mississippi (1935) by Leyb Malakh: A Yiddish Play about the Scottsboro Boys*, forthcoming from YIVO/Bloomsbury in 2026.

#### **The New York YIVO on the Language Front (1940-1970)**

**Leyzer Burko**

Leyzer Burko is a Yiddish researcher and language teacher with a doctorate from the Jewish Theological Seminary. The topic of his dissertation was the work of the YIVO Linguistic Circle, in particular the contributions of Max and Uriel Weinreich, as well as Yudel Mark. Burko currently lives in Warsaw.

FROM 1940 TO 1970, the American YIVO was a whirlwind of Yiddish language research. YIVO's director, Max Weinreich, compiled a monumental history of the language, while his son, Uriel, wrote the first college textbook. They and other scholars of the YIVO Linguistic Circle undertook monumental projects to preserve the treasures of the language—not just books and documents, but the words themselves and the pre-war spoken dialects, which were quickly being forgotten. YIVO scholars compiled the "Great Dictionary of the Yiddish Language" (never completed), modeled on the Oxford English Dictionary. They recorded lengthy interviews with hundreds of elderly informants in order to preserve their Yiddish for posterity. Without these efforts, we would know very little about the real Yiddish spoken by Eastern European Jews, as opposed to its purely literary form.

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## YIVO and the Creation of Holocaust Studies

### Mark L. Smith

Mark L. Smith is the author of *The Yiddish Historians and the Struggle for a Jewish History of the Holocaust* (2019) and *Building and Consoling a Nation: The Yiddish Historians in Their Own Words* (forthcoming, 2025). He is currently Resident Scholar at American Jewish University, Los Angeles, and has taught Jewish history at UCLA, his alma mater. He writes and lectures on Eastern European Jewish history, with a special interest in Holocaust historiography and Yiddish scholarly writing.

YIVO WAS AMONG THE first Jewish institutions to study the Holocaust. The approach to Holocaust research by YIVO-affiliated scholars continued their sensibilities and methods for studying previous periods of Jewish life and history. Contrary to other early research centers, the YIVO scholars did not concentrate on antisemitism, death and destruction, or even Jewish heroism or German crimes (with the notable exception of Max Weinreich's 1946 book, *Hitler's Professors*).

Instead, the YIVO scholars studied the Holocaust as the latest, albeit most frightful, period of Jewish (rather than German) history and focused on Jewish life under German domination and the struggle to sustain it—relying most decidedly on the use of Jewish sources. YIVO's role in the creation of Holocaust studies encompassed three phases: contemporaneous reportage during wartime, immediate post-war collection of primary sources, and, following a period of research and gathering of forces, sustained production of scholarly works.

## DAY 2 — PANEL 2

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### YIVO and Folklore in the Post- Holocaust years

#### Itzik Gottesman

Itzik Gottesman is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Germanic Studies and the Schusterman Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. He teaches Yiddish language, culture, and Jewish folklore. He is the author of *Defining the Yiddish Nation: The Jewish Folklorists of Poland* (Wayne State University Press, 2003). He also directs the “Yiddish Song of the Week” blog, showcasing rare Yiddish folk recordings. Formerly managing editor of the *Yiddish Forward* in New York, he has taught Yiddish at the University of Pennsylvania and University of Texas and has conducted folklore fieldwork in New York, Mexico, and Israel.

THIS TALK WILL EMPHASIZE the differences between the pre-war and post-war study of Yiddish folklore at YIVO. In terms of collection, the YIVO Ethnographic Commission, also known as the YIVO Folklore Commission, was the most successful branch of YIVO before the war. Hundreds of volunteer *zamlers* throughout Eastern Europe sent in materials to the YIVO in Vilna. After the war, folklore collection and research continued on a much smaller scale, with new perspectives in the field of folklore influencing the collection of materials. Three issues of the journal *Yidisher folklor* highlighted a new generation of folklorists, including Bina Weinreich and Chana Mlotek. Folklore materials were published and analyzed in issues of YIVO’s *Yidishe shprakh* and *YIVO-bleter*. In addition, some of the post-war folklore research entailed organizing and publishing parts of materials collected in the 1920s-1930s, such as the papers of A. Litvin and I. L. Cahan’s studies of folklore. The YIVO Folksong Project, also known as “Eastern European Folksong in its Social Context,” conceived and initiated by Barbara Kirshenlatt-Gimblett in 1973-1975, was the most ambitious folklore project.

## DAY 2 — PANEL 3

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# The Post-War Evolution of Yiddish and Jewish Studies

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Moderated by

**Deborah Dash Moore**

Deborah Dash Moore is Jonathan Freedman Distinguished University Professor of History and Professor of Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan, specializing in twentieth century urban Jewish history. Her recent book, *Walkers in the City: Jewish Street Photographers of Mid-Century New York* (2023), winner of a National Jewish Book Award, extends her interest to photography. She serves as editor-in-chief of *The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization*, a 10-volume anthology of original sources translated into English from the biblical period to 2005.

## Yiddish Graduates

**Anita Norich**

Anita Norich is the Tikva Frymer-Kensky Collegiate Professor Emerita of English and Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. She is the author of *Writing in Tongues: Yiddish Translation in the 20th Century* (University of Washington Press, 2014) and *Discovering Exile: Yiddish and Jewish American Literature in America During the Holocaust* (Stanford University Press, 2007). A prominent Yiddish translator, her published translations include *Desires* by Celia Dropkin (White Goat Press, 2024), *Fear and Other Stories* by Chana Blankshteyn (Wayne State University Press, 2022), and *A Jewish Refugee in New York* by Kadia Molodowsky (Indiana University Press, 2019), among others.

IT SHOULD COME AS no surprise that YIVO's role has changed over the decades since World War II. There was a scant handful of universities that taught Yiddish, and students were scattered in various departments—German, English and Comparative Literature, History, etc. In the U.S., it was impossible—or at least irresponsible—to study anything Yiddish without being a student at the Max Weinreich Center and sitting in the cramped, noisy, vital YIVO library on 86th and 5th. More recently, non-native speakers and American-born academics and translators can be found in many universities across North America. Despite such changes, YIVO's library and archives continue to be essential for any research about Yiddish culture and history. We will consider how and why YIVO's role has changed and what YIVO's role is now and in the future.

## DAY 2 — PANEL 3

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### **Collecting America: YIVO's Post-War Archival Initiatives**

#### **Stefanie Halpern**

Stefanie Halpern is Director of Collections at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. She received her Ph.D. from the Department of Jewish Literature at The Jewish Theological Seminary and a Masters in Archival Studies from Clayton State University. Halpern has published on archival theory and practice, Yiddish theater, and Jewish performance, and was the assistant curator of the exhibition "From the Bowery to Broadway: New York's Yiddish Theater," held at the Museum of the City of New York.

IN THE POST-WAR YEARS, after YIVO shifted its headquarters to New York City, it gradually expanded the focus of its collecting through initiatives concerned with documenting the Eastern European Jewish experience in America. YIVO produced essay contents, questionnaires, and large-scale calls for materials which emanated from a keen awareness that without access to the personal, communal, and institutional materials of Jewish life in America, research on this topic would be stunted. This paper explores several major initiatives, including the creation of a central archive on American Jewish life and the push to collect material from *landsmanshaftn*, among other projects meant to increase YIVO's holdings.

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## Learning Yiddish with YIVO: A Century of Cultural Transmission

### Rebecca Margolis

Professor Rebecca (Rivke) Margolis is the Pratt Foundation Chair of Jewish Civilisation at Monash University. Her research explores Yiddish cultural production across the past century, including literature, theatre, film, and television. She is the author of *The Yiddish Supernatural on Screen: Dybbuks, Demons and a Haunted Jewish Past*, *Yiddish Lives On: Strategies of Language Transmission, Jewish Roots, Canadian Soil: Yiddish Culture in Montreal, 1905-1945*, and *Basic Yiddish: A Grammar and Workbook*. She has taught Yiddish language and culture for over 30 years and has been both a student and instructor in the YIVO *zumer-program*.

SINCE ITS FOUNDING, THE YIVO has placed education about Eastern European Jewish language and culture at the heart of its mission alongside research. This talk explores the YIVO's contribution to the field of Yiddish through its educational initiatives. In addition to discussing the history of educational projects spanning print and online publications and teaching, the talk highlights the enduring impact of the YIVO-Bard Uriel Weinreich Summer Program in Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture, since it was established in 1968. The presentation examines the model of immersive language pedagogy developed by the Summer Program (*zumer-program*) and draws on findings from a survey of program alumni to assess the program's long-term influence on Yiddish teaching, scholarship, cultural activity, and community building.

## DAY 2 — DISCUSSION PANEL

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### YIVO's Purpose Today

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Moderated by  
**Kalman Weiser**

with  
**Jonathan Brent**  
**Stefanie Halpern**  
**Ben Kaplan**  
**Eddy Portnoy**  
**Alex Weiser**

THIS PANEL, FEATURING YIVO'S current staff leadership, will address the question of YIVO's significance in our time. The discussion will touch on YIVO's current and planned initiatives and will explore YIVO's contemporary community, work, and its place within the broader world of Jewish studies. The conversation will touch on questions of Jewish identity, unfinished projects, and dream initiatives.

Jonathan Brent is the Executive Director of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City. From 1991 to 2009, he was Editorial Director and Associate Director of Yale University Press. He is the founder of the world-acclaimed *Annals of Communism* series, which he established at Yale University Press in 1991. Brent is the co-author of *Stalin's Last Crime: The Plot Against the Jewish Doctors, 1948-1953* (Harper-Collins, 2003) and *Inside the Stalin Archives* (Atlas Books, 2008). He is now working on a biography of the Soviet-Jewish writer Isaac Babel. Brent teaches history and literature at Bard College.

Ben Kaplan is the Director of Education at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, where he directs programs that teach Jewish history and culture to a broad and diverse audience. These programs include the YIVO-Bard Uriel Weinreich Summer Program in Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture and the YIVO-Bard Winter Program on Ashkenazi Civilization. Recent projects include two libretti he wrote for opera collaborations with composer Alex Weiser: *The Great Dictionary of the Yiddish Language*, based on the life of Yiddish linguist Yudel Mark, and *State of the Jews*, based on the life of Theodor Herzl.

Eddy Portnoy is the Senior Academic Advisor and Director of Exhibitions at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. The exhibitions he has created for YIVO have won plaudits from *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *VICE*, *The Forward*, and others. He has written numerous articles on topics relating to Jewish popular culture and is also the author of *Bad Rabbi: And Other Strange but True Stories from the Yiddish Press* (Stanford University Press, 2017).

Alex Weiser is the Director of Public Programs at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. As a composer, Weiser's debut album, *and all the days were purple*, was named a 2020 Pulitzer Prize Finalist and features settings of modernist Yiddish poetry. A second album, *in a dark blue night*, features two song cycles which explore Jewish New York history. Other projects include operas *Tevye's Daughters* with librettist Stephanie Fleischmann (American Lyric Theater) and *The Great Dictionary of the Yiddish Language* with librettist Ben Kaplan (American Opera Projects).



The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research is dedicated to the preservation and study of the history and culture of Eastern European Jewry worldwide. For a century, YIVO has pioneered new forms of Jewish scholarship, research, education, and cultural expression. Our public programs and exhibitions, as well as online and on-site courses, extend our global outreach and enable us to share our vast resources. The YIVO Archives contains more than 24 million original items, and YIVO's Library has over 400,000 volumes—the single largest resource for such study in the world.

