



## KLEZKANADA BACKGROUNDER

- KlezKanada was founded in 1996 to teach, nurture and present the best of Jewish traditional arts and Yiddish culture to a broad public.
- Rooted in Montréal, Québec, its mission is to foster Jewish cultural and artistic creativity worldwide as both an ethnic heritage and a constantly evolving contemporary culture and identity.
- From its start as a small summer festival, KlezKanada has become one of the leading Yiddish cultural organizations in the world and an important site of the contemporary Yiddish cultural renaissance.
- KlezKanada cultivates its role in the international ecosystem of Yiddish cultural organizations as well as local connections in Montreal Jewish and arts communities.
- KlezKanada's programming is anchored by its flagship annual [Summer Retreat](#) each August in the Laurentian mountains north of Montréal, and extends throughout the year through online and in local programs in Montréal.
- Montreal programs include the monthly [Montreal Klezmer Jam](#) series on the third Sunday of each month and the inaugural [Yiddish Culture Jam](#) event taking place **February 26 - March 1, 2026**.
- KlezKanada's year-round work also includes other curated educational and performance programs, leadership development and mentorship programs, as well as consulting and advising.
- KlezKanada values interdisciplinarity, intergenerationality and is committed to building spaces in which there are many ways to connect to *Yiddishkayt* and to Jewish identity.



- **The Azrieli Scholarship Program**

- Taking place at the annual Summer Retreat, the Azrieli Scholarship Program has gained an international reputation as one of the go-to programs for young innovative culture makers and leaders in contemporary Yiddish arts, music, and culture.
- Over **1,600 scholarships** have been awarded to emerging and established artists aged 18 - 36 from over **20 countries** since KlezKanada's inception
- Azrieli Scholarship alumni have won or been nominated for major prizes such as Grammy Awards, JUNO Awards, Fulbright Fellowships, and PEW Fellowships, perform across the globe in prestigious venues, and lead major festivals and other endeavours in Jewish culture.
- Many alumni of this internationally leading program have become the most sought after performers and faculty around the world, including:
  - Daniel Kahn (USA/Germany)
  - Josh Dolgin [Socalled] (Canada)
  - Sasha Lurje (Latvia/Germany)
  - Zoe Aqua (USA)
  - Avia Moore (Canada, Artistic Director KlezKanada)

- **Past Artistic Directors**

- Michael Alpert, Jeff Warschauer, Frank London, Michael Winograd, Avia Moore (current)

**Contact:** David Moss, Executive Director  
[david.moss@klezkanada.org](mailto:david.moss@klezkanada.org)  
(514) 217-1130