

21st Singer's Warsaw Jewish Culture Festival

More than 100 events that draw on the richness of Yiddish culture will be available across Warsaw.

Great concerts and cherished conversations, intimate recitals and hugely popular performances. Jewish culture, art, and tradition will be interpreted by Polish and international artists, both first-timers and stars who are already well-known to the festival audience, headed by Ara Malikian performing at the final concert. This is what the 21st edition of the Singer's Warsaw Jewish Culture Festival, taking place from 24 August to 1 September, promises to be like. The organizer of the Festival, the Shalom Foundation, presents a guide to the event, which is beginning another decade of its history.

The Singer's Warsaw Festival is a meeting place for all those for whom the Yiddish world is an important part of Polish-Jewish heritage. On the one hand, this Festival calls upon a very broadly defined Jewish tradition, reinforced by the influences of all the places, nations and communities where Jews have lived over the centuries, and on the other - to a very contemporary culture, inspired both by the ancient Jewish heritage and by the continued living dialog conducted in art, literature and music. That is why, every year, Gołda Tencer - the creator and director of the festival - invites the audience to meet with esteemed artists, writers and scientists, and offers a joint discussion, and exchange of views and knowledge. But above all, she strives to present innovative projects in music and theater.

So this year, the Festival stages will again be filled with both big and intimate concerts and recitals. Adults and children will find theater performances, as well as small theatrical forms. Regular program highlights will include meetings dedicated to literature, music and history, film screenings, lectures, workshops, exhibitions or city walks. The Festival stages will host artists from Poland, Austria, Germany, Serbia, Israel, the United States, Sweden, Italy and many others.

Jewish Theater, Summer Stage (35 Senatorska Street) Franciscan Church St. Anthony of Padua

Opened for the Festival, the Summer Stage of the Jewish Theater will host various concerts and recitals. We will hear the **Big Bike Orchestra**, also known as the Orchestra on a Big Bike, which is how a team of six Polish musicians travels (already across Europe!) when they are performing off-stage. Another artist will be **Svahy**, a revolutionary women's folk band playing music by urban women inspired by folk music.

But this stage will also host other interesting artists and projects. **Patryk Zakrocki's duo**, the Austrian klezmer band **Die Hawaras**, actor and performer **Yuri Vedenyapin**, who, in addition to performing, also teaches Yiddish at many prestigious universities such as Harvard, Cambridge and Columbia.

Symcha Keller and his band will take us on a journey into the mystical Hasidic movement.

This is not the end of attractions and interesting sounds. Clarinetist, saxophonist and showman in one, already known to Festival audiences as the leader of the **BUM BUM ORKeSTAR Oliwier Andruszczenko**, will perform with the Chernina band: **Nina Kodorska, Patryk Walczak and Hipolit Woźniak**. The artists explore Roma history, tradition and culture and reinterpret traditional Roma, Romanian, Balkan and Middle Eastern melodies.

Again, Senatorska Street will host two very different but tremendously moving projects performed by young actresses of the Jewish Theater. The first one is a poetry concert entitled "**Śpiew za drutami**" (this is the title of a poetry book written by Henryka and Ilona Karmel), featuring **Emma Herdzik** and **Adrianna Kieś**. The second event is a concert "**Babcia Judzia mawiała...czyli o tym, że wszyscy mają serca**" by **Adrianna Dorociak** and **Marta Parzychowska**, touching on the theme of women's relationship with their bodies and how the culture and social relations affect it, inspired by the work of Eve Ensler, whose father was Jewish by descent and mother a Christian.

Inga Żebrowska & Najmniejsza Scena Świata will perform a concert which will combine stage song and sung poetry.

The program of the Summer Stage will also include the Festival's annual hits: one of the most warmly received events prepared each year by Festival director **Gołda Tencer**, i.e. "In Mother Sonia's Kitchen", and performances for children prepared by the **SIMCHE Puppet Theater**.

This year, our Festival will also come to the **Franciscan Church of St. Anthony of Padua**. The first will be a classical concert presenting the works of the German composers of Jewish origin, **Felix Mendelssohn** and **Ludwig van Beethoven** performed by the **Royal String Quartet**. The RSQ is a Polish string quartet that has been active for a quarter of a century and features: **Izabella Szałaj-Zimak**, **Elwira Przybyłowska**, **Paweł Czarny** and **Michał Pepol**. Another, a jazz concert, or more precisely the "Gone" project, will be played by three extraordinary musicians from Italy: **Gianluca Lusi**, who is considered one of the best Italian saxophonists, accordion virtuoso **Simone Zanchini** and **Luigi Masciari**, guitarist, well-known jazz arranger and composer.

The National Theater, the Opera House (Plac Teatralny 1)

The Festival's final concert will take place at the National Opera House. This year it will be a truly awaited event, as for the second time the organizers have managed to invite **Ara Malikian**. This internationally renowned Spanish violinist and composer of Armenian origin, born in Lebanon, is the recipient of many prestigious awards (he was nominated for the Latin Grammy Awards and many others). Above all, the artist stands out among other musicians for his masterful and original performances of both classical music and original compositions that present the culture of the Middle East, Central Europe, Argentina and Spain. He is giving his concerts around the world. He has also written music for Pedro Almodovar's films. Each Ara Malikian's concert is a mold-breaking show, full of dance, costumes, colors and effects.

Grzybowski Square

On the Festival Friday in Grzybowski Square, the place where it all began, the organizers will again set up a large table and invite participants to a joint Shabbat dinner. Following the festive **Shabbat Shalom** evening, an open-air concert called **Klezmer Night** will take place in the square, with the band **KROKE** as the main performer.

Kwadrat Theater (138 Marszałkowska Street)

One of the Festival's friendly stages, Kwadrat Theater will traditionally host many stars. This year, the big stage will host a festive cantoral concert, which will mark the official opening of our Festival. The concert will feature an outstanding New York cantor, a favorite of Festival audiences, **Yaakov "Yanky" Lemmer**, accompanied by **Menachem Bristowsky** and the **Olivier Andrushchenko** ensemble.

Concerts will be given here by, among others, one of the most outstanding Polish pianists, **Adam Makowicz**, and the great dam of the Polish music scene, **Sława Przybylska**, who will be accompanied by the piano virtuoso **Janusz Tylman**. The Polish-Israeli artist **Olga Avigail Mielezczuk** and the band **Tango Attack** will present the project "Gates of Jerusalem". The artists will be accompanied on stage by a guest from Israel, the outstanding percussionist **Erez Mounk**. One of the most interesting concerts of this year's Festival will be a performance by **Liraz**, an Israeli artist with Iranian roots, inspired by Iranian music from the times before the 1979 revolution, who will come with her band.

On the big stage of the Kwadrat Theater, **Jan Emil Młynarski**, well-known and appreciated by the Festival audience, will present his latest project, "Narkotyki". These are songs, poetic metaphors for love, but the title is also a metaphor describing the mysterious, captivating power of an old lyrical melody with poetic text. Młynarski will be accompanied on stage by the brass band **Brass Federation**. As part of the theatrical part of the 21st edition of the Singer's Warsaw Festival, artists from Serbia, led by the well-known actress **Milena Radulović**, will perform here for the first time. They will present a play by Festival patron **Ichok Bashewis Singer**, "Tajbele and her Demon". The theater collective 'Theater of Laughter' from Frankfurt (Oder) will present a show that is partially a puppet show

inspired by the writings of Bruno Schulz, **"The Republic of Dreams"**, with live music. The performance is the result of Polish-German cooperation and is directed by acclaimed puppet artist **Frank Soenhle**. The international duo **"MOON&MELODY"** is a 'folktronica' duo of **Roksana Vikaluk**, a Ukrainian-Polish composer, singer and director who is based in Berlin, and the German musician and inventor Wolfram Spyra. The artists will present a unique project, a theatricalised concert **"Arumnemen Di Welt!"** with Ashkenazi, Sephardic, white and classical singing, a beautiful story about the drama of the inevitability of fate and the peculiar irony of Jewish humor. **Janusz Tencer** will invite everyone to an unforgettable evening of music and humor. The Polish-Jewish artist will present songs, most of which he wrote himself, with lyrics and music.

Austrian Cultural Forum (7/9 Prózna Street)

The Austrian Cultural Forum will host Festival lectures, exhibitions and film screenings. It will be the venue of the meetings in the **Jewish Literary Salon** series hosted by **Remigiusz Grzela**. This year, Salon guests will include **Jacek Leociak, Patrycja Dołowy, Elżbieta Ficowska, Grzegorz Gauden, Krostof Zorde** and **Helena Lindskog**. It will also be the venue for meetings in the **"Tell me your story"** series hosted by, among others, **Jan Ordyński**. The series **"Mistrzowie Czytają"** (Masters Read) will again feature the best Jewish prose interpreted by well-known Polish actors, and Yiddish enthusiasts will again have the opportunity to come to the meetings of the **Jewish Culture Enthusiasts' Club**.

The Yiddish Cultural Center (15 Andersa Street)

At the Yiddish Cultural Center, visitors will be given the chance to learn about the latest developments in Polish Yiddish studies during an academic session and literary meetings. Meanwhile, in the Yiddish Cultural Center's larder, **Katarzyna Batarowska** will be waiting for everyone with a mirabelle plum, a symbol of Muranów and a symbol of summer holidays. She will take everyone interested on a tasty journey presenting plum delicacies. In the visual arts workshop, a three-dimensional illustration workshop centered around the rose motif will be hosted by **Dominika Ludwig**. The event's program will include artistic tailoring workshops with **Monika Piłera** combined with a discussion on the complexity of the Jewish identity. The circus theme in Yiddish culture will be introduced by **Barbara Szablisy**, and there will also be thematic Yiddish workshops moderated by **Karolina Szymaniak**. As part of the Third Age University's open day, the organizers are inviting not only seniors to, among other things, design a wedding canopy with **Monika Krajewska**, an Israeli dance workshop with **Kinga Kalupa**, and a workshop of forgotten pre-war songs by Jewish composers and lyricists hosted by **Robert Lipka**.

The Jewish Theater, accompanying events: Stage at the Warsaw Garrison Command Club (141a Niepodległości Ave.) Szymon Szurmiej Chamber Stage 35 Senatorska Sreet)

This year, several very interesting events await the audience on the stages made available by the Festival's partner, the Jewish Theater. Once again, the audience will have an opportunity to see, among others, such plays as the famous **"Dybbuk"**, directed by **Maja Kleczewska**, who was awarded the Konrad Laurel for this work, **"Circus Kafka"**, directed by **Michał Walczak** - "a circus musical about insomnia and the dangers of reading" based on the motives of Remigiusz Grzela's book **"Bagaż Franzy K. Podróż, której nigdy nie było"**, **"Szlakiery żydowskiego kabaretu"** ("Hits of the Jewish Cabaret") written and directed by **Gołda Tencer**, offering a dose of pre-war Jewish music and humor in the form of stand-up comedy written by, among others, Tuwim, Hemar, and Jurandot, or another, extremely funny although contemporary work by Daniel Simon translated by Janusz Tencer, **"The Convertible Girl"** directed by **Marcin Sławiński**. Audiences can also look forward to the Jewish Theater's latest productions: the June premiere, the play **"Houdini. A Magical Odyssey"**, directed by **Michał Walczak**, described as an "escape musical", **"A City without Jews"** directed by **Karolina Kirsz**, which is a March premiere based on the motives of the first anti-fascist novel in Europe by Hugo Bettauer. There will also be a performance of **"Jewish Dog"** directed by **Ewa Galica**, based on the book by Asher Kravitz, which was produced as part of the BIMA - Young Stage project and in cooperation with the Aleksander Zelwerowicz Theater Academy.

The Festival program has been published on the organizer's website: www.shalom.org.pl and on the Festival's Facebook and Instagram pages.

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