



**AMERICA-ISRAEL
CULTURAL FOUNDATION**
קרן התרבות
אמריקה-ישראל

Report of Activities

2021

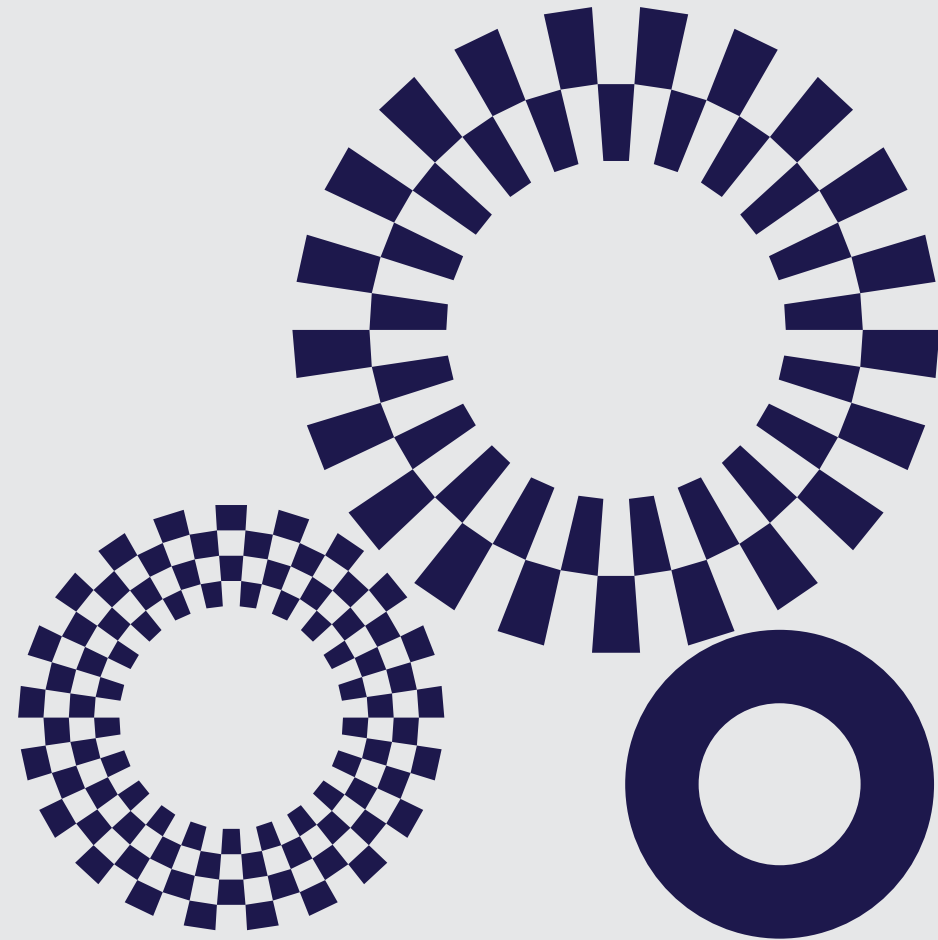
America-Israel Cultural Foundation (AICF) is grateful for your generous support of 2021 programs that supported Israeli artists throughout every stage of their careers. Through your generosity, we continue to build a movement of cultural ambassadors who promote Israel's cultural richness worldwide. It is our pleasure to provide you with a report of this year's accomplishments, highlighting the remarkable programs you helped make possible. Thanks to you, we continue to build Israel's cultural footprint and champion Israeli artists around the world, one artist at a time.

We are honored, over the years, to have provided vital support to over 18,000 remarkable artists in a broad array of categories in music, dance, theater, design, and visual arts.



Creative Excellence Grants (*Sharrett*) Scholarship Program

Hundreds of young artists deemed to be the most excelling in their discipline are awarded scholarship support that enables them to live up to their creative potential. Highly competitive scholarship auditions are conducted annually, with each student presenting their work to a panel of distinguished independent experts, specific to each field and discipline. Out of these auditions, those artists deemed to be the best and brightest in their disciplines, are awarded scholarship support. AICF's Sharrett Scholarship Program proudly awarded 472 grants this year, enabling hundreds of young Israeli artists to pursue their artistic dreams.



Eligible artists are those ages 10-35 who typically receive continuing support throughout their development. Because our music contingent is so large, musicians receive grants for two years and are divided into groups that re-audition every other year to ensure that AICF continues to distribute its resources where they will be most effective. The program's standard for excellence has continued to leave its imprint on Israel's arts education system, with many of the country's top schools and training programs modeling their curriculum around AICF's rigorous standards.

Past Sharrett scholarship recipients make up a substantial segment of the cultural infrastructure in Israel today. They have become active as creative artists, teachers, directors of art institutions, and artistic directors. Thanks to you, this is possible.



Study Abroad Scholarships

With your generous assistance, AICF continues its Study Abroad Scholarship program and proudly awarded 24 grants to exceptional Israeli musicians in 2021. These excelling students were selected from a pool of 66 applicants. Because of your support, these students are able to study abroad with world-renowned teachers from leading conservatories including (but not limited to): Juilliard (New York), Curtis Institute of Music (Philadelphia), Barenboim-Said Akademie (Berlin), Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris (Paris), Conservatorium van Amsterdam (Amsterdam). AICF sponsored students from a variety of disciplines including Violin, Viola, Piano, Cello, Oboe, Bassoon, Jazz Electric Guitar, Jazz Double Bass, Jazz Drums, Jazz Saxophone, Flute, Clarinet, Voice, Composition, and Orchestral Conducting. Scholarships are given up to \$8,500 USD per

recipient and are awarded to eligible artists through a comprehensive assessment of excellence and need.

We are pleased to continue our partnerships with distinct organizations to support students' ability to train at leading institutions worldwide. By partnering with several foundations, we are thrilled to leverage your philanthropic dollar for greater impact.



We know that there are many financial barriers in navigating an artistic career and college is a stepping stone in achieving artistic goals. With your support, we offer the opportunity for artists to successfully navigate financing these once-in-a-lifetime learning opportunities. Study Abroad participants function as Israel's cultural ambassadors who maintain a strong relationship with the Israeli arts scene and promote Israel around the world.

Thank you. You made a difference in enabling Israel's most promising and talented artists to benefit from advanced studies with the finest international teachers.



Israeli Artist Relief Fund

In 2020, AICF launched the Israeli Artist Relief Fund to provide emergency relief to Israeli artists who were experiencing financial distress as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The initial cycle of the fund was created with the intention of supporting 105 deserving professional artists. Once AICF began receiving applications, we were astounded by the enormous need that existed; the artist demand for emergency funding was tremendous. With the help of a new anonymous grant partner, we increased the number of recipients tenfold from its original goal and broadened our support to include artists ages 25-60+.

We employed a multimedia marketing approach, via newspapers, radio, news publications, social media, and our AICF artist community, to broadcast this effort with the goal of reaching every Israeli

artist. After a successful first round of the fund, additional funds from our grant partner were invested to support even more artists. Artists received 3,000 NIS (roughly \$937) each.

To date, the fund has successfully awarded 1,836 Israeli artists financial support. In total, over \$1.8 million in emergency relief was granted to deserving artists experiencing financial distress. AICF has received an overwhelming amount of thanks from Israel's art community, as this effort provided a short-term lifeline, stability, and a sense of optimism for many artists who suffered immensely.

“I have been dancing for 12 years. I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generous financial support. Receiving this generous scholarship gives me a sense of security and personal drive to continue to invest and progress despite all the difficulties. Receiving this scholarship illustrates to me that all the effort I have put in over the past years is paying off. It is encouraging and fun to know that there are people who support and believe in me and my future in this profession because that is what I like to do the most. The field of dance is a competitive field that requires excellence in various fields and the question always arises “whether I am good enough to engage in it later in life. Choosing me to receive this scholarship of excellence gives me hope that the future

is open to me and makes me peace of mind to continue the hard work and striving for excellence that is so required in the field of dance. Thank you very much from the bottom of my heart for your contribution.”

Yasur Scheinin, Dance, 16



Periphery Outreach Program

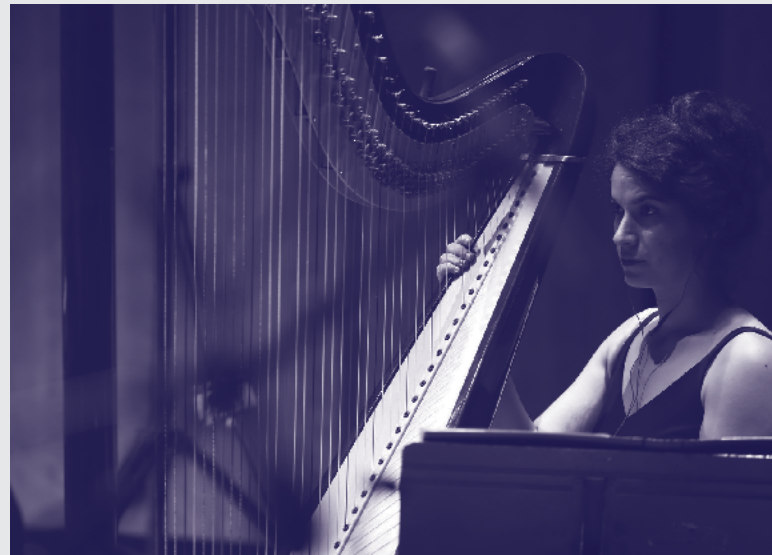
AICF's Periphery Outreach Program was piloted in 2020 and provides resources to ensure the artistic success of talented young musicians from outlying areas around Israel. During the Sharett audition process, our distinguished panel of judges helps us identify a select number of students who have enormous untapped potential but do not have access to a top-tier musical education. An overwhelming number of these artists live in Israel's periphery, which has been historically underserved. These students face both socio-economic challenges and a shortage of high-level arts educators. This program offers private lessons to talented students from these communities to study with top pedagogues.



In its second year, the program included seven talented young musicians who were awarded funding for twelve lessons, plus travel stipends, to study with top-tier teachers from Israel's center. AICF's distinguished cadre of professionals works with students on an individual one-on-one basis as well as in conjunction with periphery teachers to strengthen the program of studies.

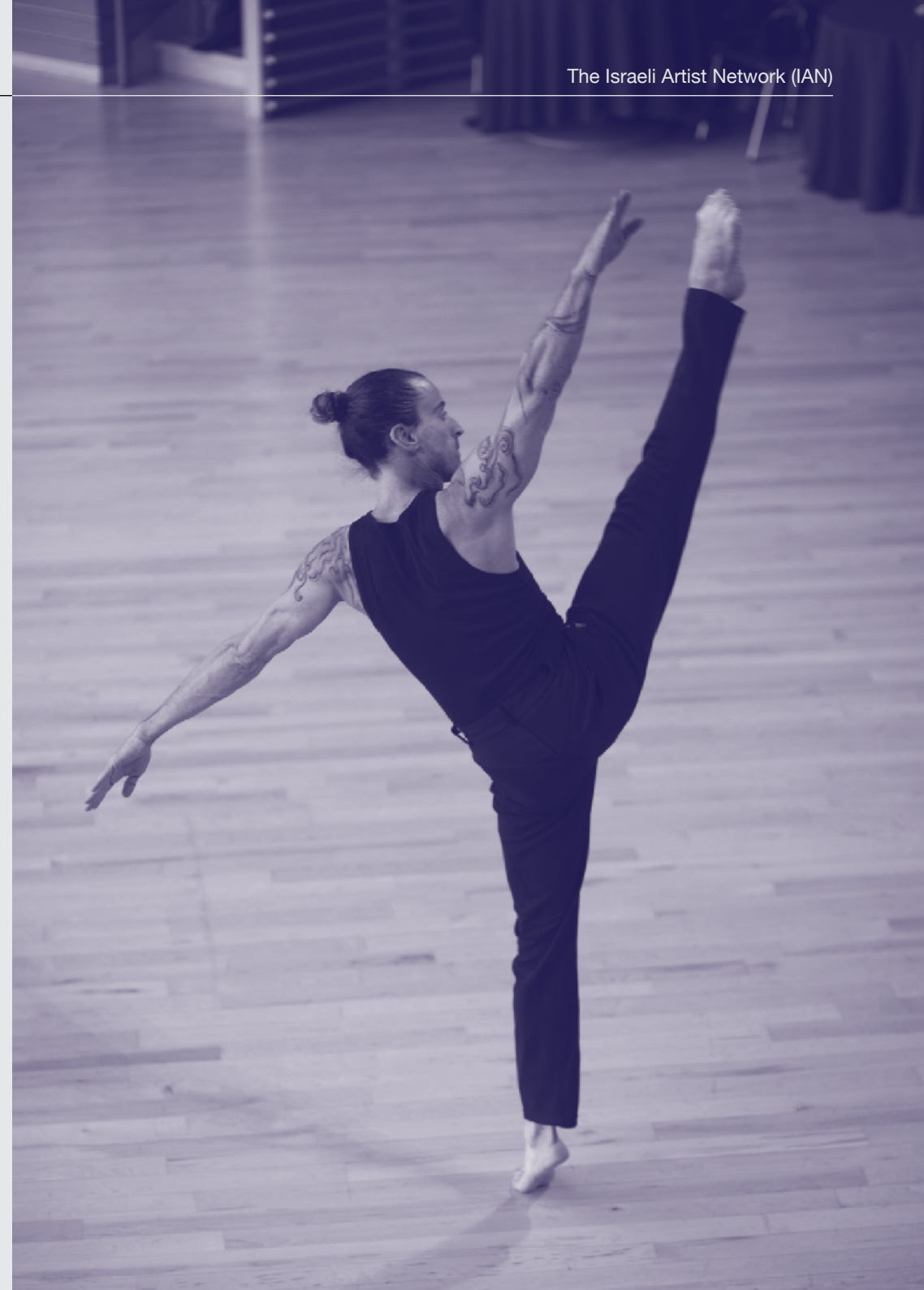
In addition, this program sends top teachers to the periphery to present specialized masterclasses to the community. One of the masterclasses was conducted by Asaf Zohar, one of the most active Israeli pianists. Asaf Zohar is Chairman of the Piano Department Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel-Aviv University and is on the faculty as a piano professor. He has been awarded prizes in Israel and has performed with all the leading Israeli orchestras including the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. It is because of AICF's extensive network we are able to offer teachers like Asaf to communities that otherwise would not have access.

AICF supports Israel's underserved periphery with this awe-inspiring program and continues this pursuit through the Creative Excellence Grants Program, where 60 recipients reside in Israel's periphery. It is with deep gratitude that we thank you for supporting all Israeli artists, no matter where they emanate. Our goal is for this program to cause a ripple effect, closing the gap between artistic potential and access to education.



The Israeli Artist Network (IAN)

The moment an artist receives their first AICF grant or scholarship, they are invited to join the web-based Israeli Artist Network (IAN). IAN is AICF's go-to resource and cultural database for Israeli artists and art consumers around the world. The network includes an interactive calendar that features Israeli artists' events including performances, exhibitions, and screenings from a variety of disciplines. IAN enables Israeli artists to enhance their online presence and connect with communities and audiences globally. It offers arts consumers an opportunity to search for Israeli events based on geography (as well as virtually) and discover emerging artists based on creative fields.



More than 2,300 artists are active on the platform, which receives 240,000 views annually. Your support allows this dynamic and diverse network to promote Israel as a hub of cultural activity. Its popularity continues to explode and expand rapidly with viewers from Tel Aviv, New York, Jerusalem, Berlin, Los Angeles, London, Boston and Haifa. In 2021, the top three locations for viewing were Israel, United States and Germany.

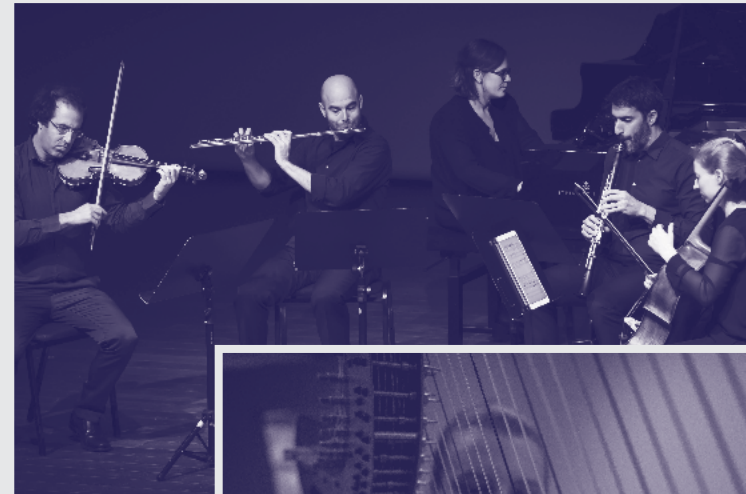
AICF looks forward to enhancing our digital platforms that will enable easier access for both artists and art lovers alike.



Instrument Loan Program

AICF proudly continues its 80-year tradition of sharing its impressive collection of string instruments with exceptional musicians. This collection has been acquired through donations from institutions and independent donors in Israel and abroad. AICF's lending program ensures that promising musicians without the means to purchase a quality instrument may practice, audition, and perform on top-tier instruments. AICF lends those of the highest quality (some valued at over \$1 million and date back to the 18th century) to top excelling musicians so they can play on instruments that enable them to reach their fullest musical potential. Your support allows us to maintain this bank of quality instruments so that it will endure for future generations.

The total value of the instrument loan bank is \$5.5 million. In 2021, 89% of the bank was in the hands of deserving musicians with a total value of \$4.9 million being loaned out.



“The most impactful help I have received from AICF has to be the cellos provided as part of the Instrument Loan program. It is important to have an instrument that doesn’t limit the musician at the level they’re at. When the level of the instrument is lower, it may interfere with the progress the musician is making, but if the instrument is at a slightly higher quality, it can help accelerate the musician’s development. I have received incredible instruments from AICF since I was fifteen years old, and I am currently borrowing the ex-Havemeyer cello built by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini in 1743.”

Haran Meltzer, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra member and AICF grantee since 2009



Aviv Competitions

Founded in 1999, AICF's Aviv Competition is the leading prestigious competition for Israel's emerging classical musicians. The competition brings together budding professional musicians ages 21-32 to perform before distinguished panels of influential judges, critics, and audiences from around the world. The competition assists in the advancement of outstanding Israeli musicians who are embarking on their artistic journey and are prepared for professional and international careers.

Winners are supported through cash prizes as well as direct connections to the industry, including performance opportunities; exposure to new audiences; media opportunities, like radio broadcasts and visibility to critics; and assistance in career development in Israel and abroad.

The competitions take place every two years, in cooperation with the Tel Aviv Museum of Art and the Music Department of the Ministry

of Culture and Sport. Preparations are already underway and we look forward to the next Aviv Competition in December 2022 - January 2023.



Digital Future

With life around us changing rapidly, we see opportunities to leverage the current strength of our programming to catapult AICF's programs, and the organization at large, into the digital future with online expansion. This effort will enable a powerful AICF platform, and it will make our offerings even further accessible to Israel's rising stars. It is a crucial step toward our goal of creating an online one-stop shop for all those connected to AICF.



“From the first audition for the AICF scholarships, through every important national prize, AICF's Aviv Competitions, and all the way through my academic studies, the donors of the AICF were always behind me. Not only supporting me financially but also acknowledging first my potential, and then my devoted hard work, filling me again and again with the necessary motivation to keep pushing forward...I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart, for your donation, a donation that makes a difference, a donation the makes dreams come true.”

Almog Segal, Piano, 26



Summary

America-Israel Cultural Foundation (AICF) is extremely grateful for your vital support of its Creative Excellence Grants Program, Study Abroad Scholarships, Periphery Outreach Program, Israeli Artist Network, Instrument Loan Program, and our other initiatives. We invite you to learn more about these programs in our new digital home, at aicf.org, which was recently revamped to allow easier access for art lovers and artists alike.

This year we remember the legacy of our past board chairman and president, William Schwartz. Bill was a guiding light for the organization in many ways, and his dedication and humor will continue to inspire our work in the future.

Although we all experienced the shifts that have come with COVID-19, we are proud to have been a backbone for Israel's artists when they needed us most. We rely on the generosity of friends like you to make this vital work possible.

We are tremendously grateful for your support of the AICF's programs, which provide life-changing resources to exceptional Israeli artists. Thank you for enabling Israel's most gifted artists to share their remarkable talent around the world and make Israel a leading hub for arts and culture. We thank you for supporting so many deserving artists poised to become Israel's greatest voices of tomorrow.

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Thank You