

# Annual Report 2022



AMERICA-ISRAEL  
CULTURAL FOUNDATION  
קרן התרבות  
אמריקה-ישראל

**Dear Friends,**

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for your ongoing support of our mission to empower Israel's most talented artists and showcase their incredible work. In a challenging year for arts and culture philanthropy, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to provide scholarships, support programs, and instruments to outstanding artists across Israel.

For more than eight decades, AICF has single-handedly nurtured thousands of artists, transforming the arts in Israel and beyond. Your generosity has allowed us to provide crucial early, middle, and advanced support to Israel's most prominent musicians, actors, dancers and visual artists. Through this work, AICF not only enriches culture in Israel but also in the world.

However, we are aware of the challenges we face, particularly in the arts and Israel philanthropy space. Over the past few years, we have seen a decrease in funds available for organizations like ours. Ongoing political and economic uncertainty will undoubtedly further impact funding for arts and culture programs in Israel. In these fraught times, we are proud to build on Israel's strengths and continue to forge a sterling corps of cultural ambassadors for Israel around the world. By supporting our work, you are helping to strengthen the ties between Israel and the rest of the world.

Thank you for your generosity and unwavering commitment to our mission. We are grateful for each and every one of our donors. Your support enables us to assure that Israel's most talented artists have the resources they need to thrive. We look forward to continuing this journey together to build a brighter future for Israel's artists and to enrich the world with their creativity.

Sincerely,

Joshua-Marc Tanenbaum, Board President  
Iris Reff Ronen, CEO

# Our History

Since 1939, the America-Israel Cultural Foundation (AICF) has played a leading role in developing and promoting Israeli art and culture. Our early support for nearly all of Israel's largest artistic institutions and the ever-higher standards we have set have rendered the name AICF synonymous with cultural excellence in Israel.

Over eight decades, AICF has provided over \$160M in life-changing scholarships and professional support to more than 18,000 outstanding young artists, many of whom have gone on to have stellar careers, represented in prominent orchestras, dance companies, museums, theaters, film festivals, opera companies and jazz clubs all over the world. Among the artists who were identified and nurtured by AICF early in their careers are such now world-renowned artists as Itzhak Perlman, Ohad Naharin, Menashe Kadishman, Pinchas Zukerman, Gil Shaham, Yefim Bronfman, Idan Raichel, Ron Leshem, Michal Rovner, Rita, Eytan Fox, and Vania Heymann.

*"As a concert cellist, teacher and musician, I've witnessed AICF's remarkable impact on Israel's artists past and present. Now, more than ever, young artists need our help. I am proud to support AICF, which has been at the forefront of supporting great talents since Israel's founding, ensuring their invaluable contributions to the world bringing light, culture and art to enrich the lives of all."*

*Dr. Kristina  
Reiko Cooper,  
AICF Vice President*



# Our Vision

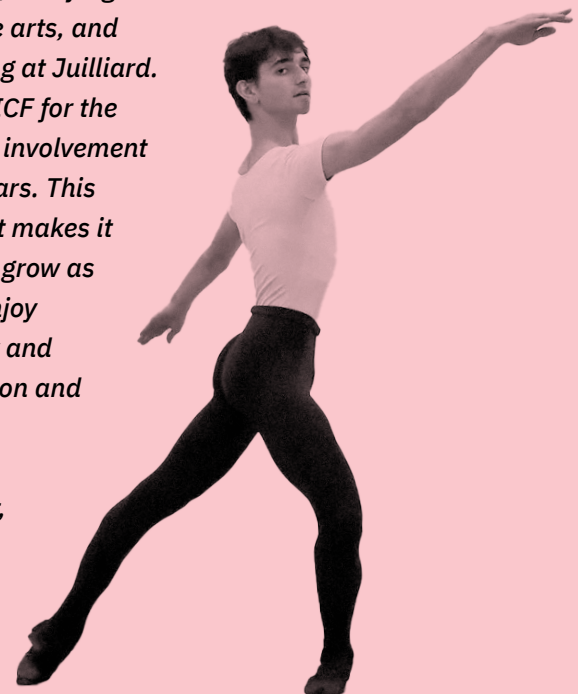
By encouraging and funding young Israeli artists, AICF adds to cultural life and vitality worldwide, and unites Israel with the United States through a shared passion for the arts.

AICF grant recipients have set the bar for artistic excellence and have driven Israel's high-profile reputation on stages, in theaters and galleries across the globe. Much as VCs have been vital to Israel's development as a "start-up nation," AICF's early investment in artists and its expertise play a vital role in forging Israel's international reputation as an artistically vibrant nation.

AICF's impact on Israel's cultural life to date allows us to continue to provide programs and resources to Israeli artists but more support is critical for the future. At AICF, we are committed to strengthening Israel's cultural infrastructure and to constantly fine-tuning our programs to ensure that the next generation of artists has the necessary resources to succeed.

*"Throughout the years, AICF's scholarships allowed my family to finance my dance training in the best way possible, including courses in Israel and abroad, studying in a high school for the arts, and eventually studying at Juilliard. I am grateful to AICF for the opportunities and involvement throughout the years. This consistent support makes it possible for me to grow as an artist and to enjoy interest, creativity and freedom as a person and as a dancer".*

*Ori Manor, Dancer,  
Study Abroad  
Recipient*



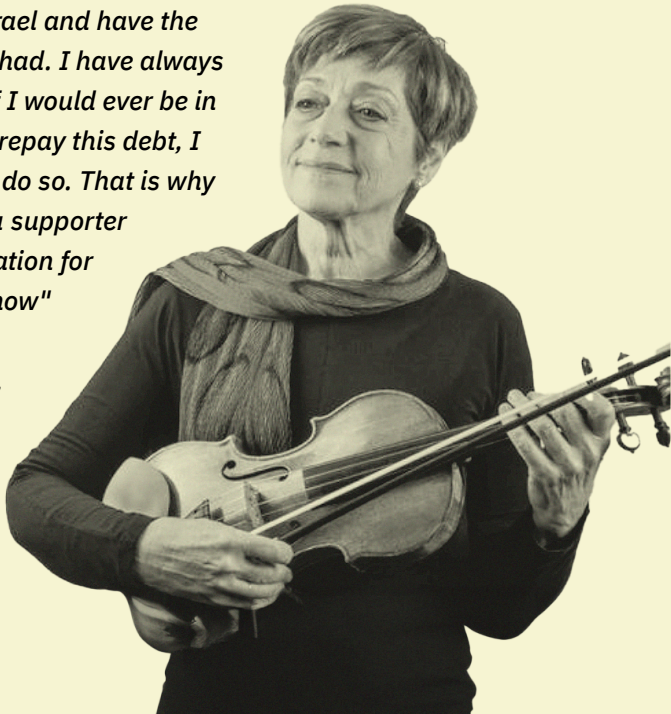
# Our Mission

AICF provides scholarships and opens necessary doors for highly talented young artists to help them develop their skills in Israel, the US, and around the globe. AICF provides crucial early, middle, and advanced support through distinctive programs such as the Creative Excellence Scholarships, Periphery Outreach Program, Study Abroad Scholarships, Aviv Competition, Israeli Artist Network, and William A. Schwartz Instrument Loan Program.

All our programs and initiatives seek to ensure that Israel's most outstanding artists – in music, dance, theater, visual arts, and design – receive the support they need to reach their fullest potential. In the process, AICF creates a cadre of artistic ambassadors who promote Israel's rich culture worldwide.

*"The support I received from AICF during my years as a student both in Israel and abroad were pivotal to my development. Without this support, I doubt very much that I would have been able to continue my studies outside of Israel and have the career that I had. I have always known that if I would ever be in a position to repay this debt, I would gladly do so. That is why I have been a supporter of the Foundation for many years now"*

*Miriam Fried,  
Violinist*



*"The Aviv Competitions were amazing. It was an exceptional opportunity to compete at a very high level, with artists that I admire and love and with colleagues with whom I wish to share prominent stages. My work with my teacher, Professor Tamar Rahum Roth, and with pianist Raphael Skorka - both former AICF scholarship recipients - was no less meaningful than winning the Competitions themselves."*

*"The Aviv Competitions helped me in so many ways, especially with exposure. As a result of winning 1st place, I have been invited to perform many concerts this year as well as next year. My calendar is already full!"*

*"The scholarship I received along with the win allows me to continue taking lessons and to travel abroad to attend workshops and masterclasses in my field. The biggest win is the privilege to perform music that is here to stay, to pay respect to classical music by being a vessel through which it is shared with the world, humbly and with much joy."*

*Rona Shrira, AICF Recipient, Aviv Competition Winner*



# 2022 Accomplishments

We are thrilled to share the exciting achievements of AICF this year, made possible by your generosity.  
To learn more about our programs, please visit: [www.aicf.org/our-programs](http://www.aicf.org/our-programs)

**OVER 450** candidates auditioned for 2022 scholarships.

**23 ARTISTS** were awarded **STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS** to study at world-renowned conservatories and institutions - including Juilliard to Barenboim-Said Akademie and Berklee College of Music.

**2** new Abroad **SCHOLARSHIPS** for one exceptional visual artist, Mia Gourvitch, to study at Belas Artes (Portugal) and one dancer, Ori Manor, to study at Juilliard (US).

Top-performing **MUSICIANS** are **43** using instruments from our **WILLIAM A. SCHWARTZ . INSTRUMENT BANK**

extremely talented **YOUNG 5** hetsicians participated in um .**PERIPHERY OUTREACH PROGRAM**

**376 SCHOLARSHIPS** were awarded to deserving artists.

**29 MUSICIANS** aged 21-33 competed in 2022 **AVIV COMPETITIONS** in Piano, Brass, Cello, and Voice. Winners received a \$6,000 prize, as well as performance prizes, professional mentoring support, and a recording prize.

The exceptional **WINNERS** of this year's **AVIV COMPETITION** include: Assif Binness (Cello), Rona Shrira (Voice), Elai Grisaru Drori (Brass and Israeli Instrumental Piece), Tom Zalmanov (Piano), and Tamara Navoth (Israeli Voice Piece). We look forward to our next Aviv Competitions in 2024.

AICF proudly granted **165 CREATIVE EXCELLENCE GRANTS** (Sharett).



# AICF Artists Achievements

See some of the exciting highlights and latest achievements of our talented community in the past year:



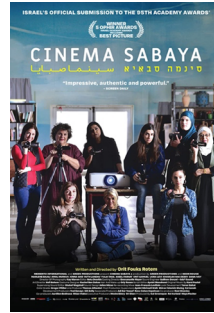
The young violinist Yamen Saadi emerged victorious in his audition for the new concertmaster of the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera / Vienna Philharmonic (Wiener Staatsoper / der Wiener Philharmoniker).



Out of thousands of composers, AICF recipient Ilya Ram was selected to compete in the prestigious Mahler Competition, the internationally renowned conducting competition considered to be one of the most important events of its kind in the world.



AICF recipient Michal Rovner won the 2023 Israel Prize in the field of plastic arts.



Actress and AICF recipient Dana Ivgy was doubly nominated for Best Actress at the Israeli Academy (Ophir) Awards for her leading roles in the acclaimed films Cinema Sabaya and Savoy. Cinema Sabaya won the Israeli Oscars with a sweep of five wins.



Trombonist and AICF recipient Rafi Malkiel won the Best Latin Jazz Album Grammy for his participation in the album *Fandango at the Hall in New York*.



Nahar Eliaz, cellist, won First Place at the Vienna Classical Music Academy.



Tal First joined New York's Metropolitan Opera Orchestra as assistant principal viola. First holds a bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School, where he studied with AICF recipient Itzhak Perlman.



The Rockford Symphony Orchestra (RSO) announced its new Music Director, Yaniv Attar, Israeli classical guitarist, after a year-long search. In addition to being an AICF grant recipient, Yaniv is also a winner of the prestigious Aviv Competition.

# Annual Celebration & ICA Awards

Finally we celebrated, again!

The AICF Annual Celebration & Israeli Culture & Arts (ICA) Awards made a triumphant return this year after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19. It was an unforgettable evening of inspiration, connection, and joy. Our beloved celebration brought together the finest artists, supporters, and friends of AICF at the New-York Historical Society. We commemorated our 83-year history of supporting over 18,000 Israeli artists, and celebrated the transformative power of art to inspire, unite, and uplift us.

**"AICF recipients are true cultural ambassadors for the State of Israel and help to shine a light on Israel as a global hub for the arts and culture." Iris Reff Ronen, AICF Global CEO**

The night was filled with electrifying performances and moving speeches, as we recognized the outstanding achievements of our awardees. The family of William A. Schwartz (z"l) was presented with the AICF Lifetime Achievement Award, while Yefim Bronfman, Shira Haas, Ido Tadmor, and Gal Gadot received distinguished ICA Awards. The awardees eloquently shared their passion for the arts and how being AICF grantees played a central role in advancing their careers.



**"It's important that we stand strong as a community and be proud of who we are and of our heritage." Gal Gadot, Actress**

**"To be a student at the Bat-Dor Dance School, takes a lot of money. So, to have any kind of help, any kind of support, both finically and mentally, is a big deal. A really big deal. I would not have been able to do that without help from AICF." Ido Tadmor, Dancer and Choreographer**



**"Israel is a complex place with a complex story. But I've seen firsthand how people suddenly view Israel differently through watching a TV show or a movie or seeing a concert." Asaf Zamir, Former Consul General of Israel**

Don't miss out on our 85th Anniversary, coming in 2024 - dates to be announced! Join us in celebrating Israel's rich cultural heritage and promising future.



# Click here to donate

**I want to help the America-Israel Cultural Foundation! Visit [aicf.org/contribute](https://aicf.org/contribute) to make a life-changing gift online!**

As we reflect on the past year, we cannot express enough how grateful we are for your unwavering support of our organization. Because of donors like you, we were able to continue our mission of supporting Israeli artists and institutions, even during challenging times.

We hope that our achievements over the past year have inspired you as much as they have us, and we look forward to continuing to empower Israel's most talented artists in the years to come.

Please consider renewing your support so we can continue to celebrate these talented artists. Your donation, in any amount, will make a tremendous difference in the lives of these artists and will help us continue to promote hope, unity, and creativity through the arts.

**Help us create a lasting legacy.**

Consider including AICF in your estate plans to support the future of our organization and Israeli art and culture. For more information or to let us know you have included us in your plan, please contact Lauren at [LaurenE@aicf.org](mailto:LaurenE@aicf.org) or 212-557-1600.

