

## Michael Baker IAYC Scholarship Recipients

**ASYA VAISMAN** was born in 1983 in Chernovtsy, Ukraine, and grew up in Moscow, Russia and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She received her B.A. with Honors from Barnard College of Columbia University, majoring in Yiddish and Linguistics. Her senior thesis was on Yiddish language change in Warsaw in the early 20th century. At Barnard, she founded the Columbia Klezmer Band. She was the president of Columbia's Yiddish Club and an active member of Yugntruf - Youth for Yiddish.

Asya is working on her PhD in Yiddish at Harvard University. Her research for the PhD is about the Yiddish language and songs of modern Chasidic women in New York and Jerusalem. She conducts fieldwork, interviewing Chasidic women in Williamsburg, Boro Park and Mea Shearim.

She is a teaching fellow for Elementary Yiddish and Yiddish poetry classes at Harvard and is the musical director and singer with RecKlez—the Harvard Klezmer Band, which she co-founded.

Asya has been an Orthodox Union Congressional Intern and has worked in the Hebraic Section of the Library of Congress on parts of the Yiddish collection. She compiled a bibliography of Yizkor books and organized the collection of Yiddish sheet music. She also worked at the New York Public Library, at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies in the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and for the "Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry" at Columbia.

At the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, she researched Russian and Yiddish documents for the forthcoming Encyclopedia of Camps, Ghettos, and Internment Sites. Asya created an online Yiddish-English-Russian-German-Hebrew-French Picture Dictionary, which has been a popular online resource for learning basic Yiddish vocabulary.

Her article on the history of Yiddish song was published in the book "The Music of Yiddishkayt" (Moscow: Dona-fest, 2005). She has received the Aaron Rabinowitz fellowship for Jewish studies at Harvard, a Dorot fellowship for working at the Holocaust Memorial Museum, Fishman foundation fellowship and a DAAD grant for language study.

Asya has participated in Yiddish and Klezmer programs, such as Yiddish Vokh, KlezKamp, KlezKanada, Klezmer Wochen Weimar, the Medem Yiddish Summer Program, IAYC Conference, the Yiddish seminar for graduate students in Israel and the Columbia/YIVO summer program

**YERMIYAHU AHRON TAUB** currently is Senior Cataloger, Hebraica Team Library of Congress and catalogs Hebrew and Yiddish materials.

Since 2003 Ahron's cataloging of both Hebrew and Yiddish materials has permitted him to continue developing his Yiddish background. Prior to coming to Washington D.C. he was the Senior Yiddish cataloger and Acquisitions Librarian at YIVO in New York City.

His educational training includes a Master's degree in library science from Queens College, City University of New York, an M.A. in history from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and a B.A., summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. His Yiddish education consists of intermediate and advanced Yiddish at the Uriel Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture, Columbia University and YIVO.

Ahron has been a contributor of Yiddish poems to *Tsukunft*, *Yugntruf*, *Five Fingers Review*, *Jews*, *The Forward* (both English and Yiddish versions) among other publications.

He has been a reader of Yiddish poetry at numerous readings sponsored by the Congress for Jewish Culture in New York and participant in a Yiddish poetry panel at City Lore.

His work with the Folksbiene Yiddish Theater includes translations of these Yiddish plays:

*The Jewish King Lear* by Jacob Gordin  
*Motl Peysi, the Cantor's Son in America* by Sholem Aleichem dramatized by Khaver-Paver;  
*Raisins and Almonds* by Peretz Hirschbein;  
*Romeo and Juliet* by Khaver-Paver;  
*Wind on Trial* by Mendl Elkin; based on an adaptation of a Talmudic legend by Y.L. Peretz and  
*With the Current* by Sholem Ash  
These translations were read aloud via headphones during the production to audience members who did not understand Yiddish.

In addition to the above, Ahron has been a member of Yiddish reading groups in Brooklyn and Washington D.C. as well as a member of Yiddish of Greater Washington.

Both Ahron and Asya will be introduced at the conference, and attendees will have the chance to meet two young people who will be leaders in the Yiddish community in the near future