Thursday, November 5, 2026 at 7:30pm



Alice Tully Hall

Please turn off your cell phones and other electronic devices.

3rd Jewish Media Awards:

About JITC Hollywood Bureau: The Jewish Institute for Television & Cinema (JITC) Hollywood Bureau, launched in 2021, improves Jewish representation using the same narrative story change mechanisms other marginalized groups use. We champion proud, authentic portrayals of Jews, Judaism, and Israel in the entertainment industry and challenge tropes and stereotypes in media. Our goal is to combat antisemitism by sharing stories of our people, history, culture, and traditions with global audiences and increase understanding and appreciation of Jewish contributions to the world.

Our Story: JITC Hollywood Bureau is an initiative of Jew in the City, which began as a YouTube channel in 2005, to push back at negative perceptions of Orthodox Jews. What has developed as a leading voice in the Jewish community, over the last twenty years, has a deeper meaning. To be a "Jew in the City" is to be able to fully lean into one's Jewishness with pride and confidence, while engaging with the larger world. This is in opposition to a mindset that began during the Enlightenment: be a Jew in the home but not on the street. While Jew in the City originally harnessed the power of social media to tell a better story about Orthodox Jews, after discovering that every group, but Jews, had been formally advocating in Hollywood for decades, Jew in the City established the first and only Hollywood Bureau to advocate for the entire Jewish community. JITC employs the researched-based mechanisms other groups have successfully used to improve their public perception.

THE THREE BRANCHES OF JEW IN THE CITY: Much of the hatred and misunderstandings about Jews centers around Jewish practice, homeland, and traditional interpretations of Judaism. Jew in the City changes negative perceptions of Jews and makes engaging and meaningful Judaism known and accessible. Painful experiences within the religious Jewish world, caused by dysfunction and ignorance have tarnished the opinions of a sizable minority of insiders who find themselves Jewishly displaced. These traumatic versions of Judaism then get amplified in modern day media without the much needed nuance they require. This results in a distorted public perception of Jews and Judaism, pushing less affiliated Jews away, creating shame around being Jewish, and fueling antisemitism. Jew in the City addresses these challenges on every level: by repairing systemic issues from within - through our **Tikun** branch, rehabilitating and re-educating disenfranchised Haredim - through our **Makom** branch, and holding traditional media accountable for accurate depictions of Jews and Israel in our Hollywood Bureau through our **Keter** branch.



A Note From Our Founder & Executive Director, Allison Josephs:

Thank you for joining us at JITC's 3rd Jewish Media Awards: The Greatest Night In Jewish Representation. The number three has a beautiful significance in Jewish tradition. When something is done three times it is called a *"chazaka,"* which stems from the word *chazak*, meaning "strong" or "holding." Doing an action three consecutive times transitions it from a random occurrence into a fixed reality, an assumptive state, or a legally binding track record. This idea originates from a verse in Ecclesiastes 4:12, *"A threefold cord is not quickly broken."*

Our tiny group has persevered to make it to our 3rd Jewish Media Awards, after literally decades and millions of dollars behind every other minority community. Since we last gathered in this iconic hall, we conducted the most extensive study on Jewish representation in 25 years with USC's prestigious Norman Lear Center. We have presented this research across the various entertainment guilds, at Sundance, and at the Television Academy, and have begun studio trainings. We are also now Jewish subject matter experts at multiple studios. It is all of these accomplishments and the six studio sponsorships for this event (check out the last page!) that show that we truly are establishing a track record.

Tonight, we find ourselves in a different place than at the last Jewish Media Awards. Our hostages are, thank God, finally freed, and the war has more or less subsided in Israel. But hatred of Jews continues to rise. This is alarming to us all, and we are running out of time to right this ship.

We do not claim to have answers that will rid all media of antisemitism, but the slice we have taken on is significant. Though, with the rise of social media, Hollywood does not hold as much power as it once did, it continues to be the place from which culture trickles down. Its stories and characters are lasting, and stay with viewers far beyond the latest TikTok trend. As you will see here tonight, we are making significant progress in television and film. We have trustworthy partners in the industry who are listening and learning. Tell your network about what we do, invest in our work however you can. We promise you - this is only the beginning!

Evening Schedule:

6:30 Red Carpet, VIP Pre-Party

7:00 Doors Open

7:30 Awards Show
Comedy by Ami Kozak; Magic by Shlomo Levinger; Musical performances by violinist Nesya Fertel and pianist Yuval Chen and Distant Cousins

9:15 After Party

ALL STAR AWARDS

Honoring proud, observant Jews excelling in Arts and Entertainment



JORDAN GORFINKEL
Inspired Dark Knight Rises, former Editor at DC Comics/ Manager of the Batman franchise

Gorfinkel is the veteran editor-manager of the Batman franchise for DC Comics. For nearly a decade he was part of the Batguys editorial team at DC Comics, his creations (Batman: No Man's Land; Birds of Prey) generating source material and critical and commercial success for film, television, and games (box office: $2 billion). He is the creator/producer of the #1 bestselling Passover Haggadah Graphic Novel and the Tanakh Graphic Novel Series (Koren Pub., Jerusalem), and founded the non-profit Jewish Graphic Novel Experience organization.



JACOB STEINMETZ
First Orthodox Jew selected in MLB draft

Steinmetz is a professional pitcher in the Arizona Diamondbacks organization and a trailblazer in both baseball and the Jewish community. In 2021, Steinmetz made history when the Diamondbacks selected him in the third round, 77th overall, of the MLB Draft, making him the first practicing Orthodox Jewish player ever selected in Major League Baseball Draft history. Since beginning his professional career, Jacob has appeared in 66 Minor League games, including 58 starts, throwing 241 innings and recording 252 strikeouts. Steinmetz has also proudly represented Israel on the international stage. At just 19 years old, he pitched for Team Israel in the 2023 World Baseball Classic, becoming one of the youngest pitchers in the history of the tournament. Throughout his career, Steinmetz has remained committed to his Orthodox Jewish faith while pursuing his goal of reaching the Major Leagues. His accomplishments have helped break barriers and create a path for the next generation of Jewish athletes, making his impact extend well beyond the baseball field.



FREIDA ROTHMAN
Founder & CEO of eponymous jewelry brand sold in high-end major department stores

Rothman is a Brooklyn-born, second-generation jeweler, entrepreneur and mother of five whose work is rooted in strength, resilience and heritage. The granddaughter of four Holocaust survivors, Freida grew up surrounded by stories of perseverance and new beginnings, shaping both the woman and designer she is today. Since founding her namesake brand in 2010, she has personally designed each piece of jewelry, drawing inspiration from the grit, beauty and architecture of her hometown. Through meaningful design and storytelling, Freida carries her family's legacy forward, creating jewelry that celebrates strength, inspires confidence and honors the stories women carry with them. Her jewelry is sold in over 200 stores nationwide, including Nordstrom, Bloomingdales, and Neiman Marcus.

LION OF ISRAEL AWARD

Honoring public figures for their steadfast support of Israel



DONNY DEUTSCH
Ad exec, TV personality, regular commentator on MSNBC's Morning Joe

Deutsch is a renowned American advertising executive, television personality, and author. He gained widespread recognition as the Chairman of Deutsch Inc., one of the top creative agencies in the U.S., where he led innovative campaigns for major brands like IKEA and Johnson & Johnson. Donny later transitioned to television, hosting The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch on CNBC, a show focused on entrepreneurship and innovation. He also serves as a regular commentator on MSNBC's Morning Joe, offering sharp insights on politics, business, and culture. Known for his charismatic style and bold opinions, Donny continues to influence the media landscape while exploring new ventures in both television and writing.

CHAVERIM AWARD

Celebrating Jewish Unity



KEVIN BRIGHT
Executive Producer
and
RABBI LEVI CUNIN
of **Chabad of Malibu**

Bright began in 1977, producing network variety shows featuring artists such as Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, and Glenn Campbell. He produced 6 Emmy Award-winning "Magic of David Copperfield" specials, including "*Vanishing of the Statue of Liberty*" and "*Walking Through the Great Wall of China*." In 1982, Bright began focusing on comedy, starting with the award-winning HBO special "*The History of White People in America*," and later winning an Emmy as supervising producer on Fox's "*In Living Color*." As Executive Producer of the decade-long hit NBC series "*Friends*," Bright, along with Partners Marta Kauffman and David Crane, received the Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Series, as well as 10 People's Choice Awards for Favorite Comedy Series. Kevin also directed over 60 episodes of Friends, including every season finale. Kevin was Executive Producer of the 2016 documentary, "*Best and Most Beautiful Things*." He produced and directed the 2021 documentaries "*Nureongi*" and "*Never Too Late -The Doc Severinsen Story*"; is Executive Producer of "*It's Dorothy*," which premiered at Tribeca 2025; and is Producer on his most recent documentary, "*The Bridge*."

In 1994, following the passing of the Rebbe, Levi Cunin and his wife Sarah founded Chabad of Malibu to share the joys of Judaism with their local community. Today, Chabad of Malibu hosts the Gan Malibu Early Childhood Center, leads various community programs and projects, and actively contributes to the worldwide publication of Chasidic teachings.

KETER SHEM TOV AWARDS

Honoring proud, authentic Jewish representation in TV and Film



ABC/DISNEY+/
BBC STUDIOS'
DANCING WITH THE STARS

Presented by Barbie Pascual, star of Bravo's *Below Deck*, to Alan Bersten, professional dancer and choreographer who's been a pro on *Dancing with the Stars* for ten seasons.

"We kindle these lights [to commemorate] the saving acts, miracles and wonders which You have performed for our forefathers, in those days at this time..." - Henerot Halalu Candle Lighting Prayer

There's a running joke in Hollywood that Chanukah is worse than Christmas. The joke often includes why Jews should feel badly about their holiday. But not on *Dancing With the Stars!* Choreographer Alan Bersten gave voice to the millions of Jewish children and adults who have been patiently waiting for Chanukah to get its due representation on national television with the pride and joy that it deserves. And boy did he nail it!



SONY PICTURES
TELEVISION/
FOX'S *DOC*

Presented by two-time Tony winner, two-time Emmy winner, and two-time Academy Award nominee Judd Hirsch to executive producers Barbie Kligman, Hank Steinberg and Russell Fine, along with actors Jon Ecker and Samantha Massell, and casting director Julie Tucker. "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread" - Exodus 12:15

Jewish characters often apologize for their identity or mock their food or traditions when other cultures and groups have been showing up with pride for some time now. According to the latest research that JITC conducted with the Norman Lear Center at USC, Jewish men are often portrayed as nebbish and Jewish identity is usually hidden on screen. That's why *Doc* is groundbreaking on so many fronts. Jon Ecker plays a handsome, confident Jewish doctor, Jake Heller, who proudly and literally wears his Jewish identity for all to see. He celebrates his food and traditions, instead of explaining why they are less than. Dr. Heller models how a confident and proud Jew conducts himself in the workplace and the world at large.



PRIME VIDEO'S
GUNS & MOSES

Presented by Deputy Speaker of the New York City city council Dr. Nantasha Williams to Salvador Litvak, director, writer and producer and Nina Litvak, writer.
"The world is built with kindness"
- Psalm 89:3

We have become accustomed to seeing clips of vulnerable religious Jews being attacked by Jew haters all over the world. It's a helpless feeling. In *Guns & Moses*, we finally get to see one fighting back! Chabad Rabbi Mo Zaltzman, played by Mark Feuerstein, doesn't just learn how to protect himself, he protects his family, his community and the truth. His beautiful lifestyle and traditions are woven into the movie for all to see. JITC's research with USC showed alarming rates of othering and dehumanization of Orthodox Jews. Guns & Moses is the exact kind of representation the researchers recommended, showcasing

joyous traditions and Orthodox Jews as the people next door.



SONY PICTURE CLASSICS' *NUREMBERG*

Presented by Multi Emmy Award-winning actress, entrepreneur and humanitarian, Patricia Heaton, to producer Bradley Fischer.

"To be silent is to be complicit."
- Yevamot 87b

Nuremberg is based on the account of German/American translator Howie Treist, played by Leo Woodall, who spends most of the film hiding his Jewish identity. At the end of the story, he has his Queen Esther moment when he reveals who he is in order to stand up for his people. Echoing ancient Jewish wisdom, Treist reminds psychiatrist Douglas Kelley, played by Rami Malek, that the silence of the German people showed their complicitness and allowed the Nazis to prevail. Dr. Kelley is tasked with evaluating whether top Nazi leaders—including Hermann Göring (played by Russel Crowe)—are mentally fit to stand trial. By the end of Treist's speech, Kelley is moved to help.



APPLE TV/KAN 11'S *TEHRAN*

Presented by Ziv Abud, Nova Music Festival survivor to executive producer Shula Spiegel and producer Tal Leviathan.

"A woman of courage in battle, who can find?...Many have excelled, but you have surpassed them all." - Proverbs 31:10

American television shows often feature overbearing Jewish mothers and materialistic, jappy young women, according to JITC's research in conjunction with USC's Norman Lear Center. Tehran's star female Mossad agent, Tamar (played by Niv Sultan), embodies the countless strong Jewish women, who rarely make it to the screen. Israeli women serve their country proudly day in and day out, though Tamar is just a little more trained in the art of espionage than most! While Tehran has not covered an October 7th storyline (yet), life has imitated art in Israel's ongoing efforts to stop the massacre's chief sponsor - the IRGC - and its terrifying nuclear ambitions. The woman of valor*, Eishet Chayil* (in Hebrew), is an ancient motif in Jewish tradition, dating back to the Bible. Tamar disarming the nuclear warhead at the end of our scene and saving her people from total destruction, is the latest chapter in the real life book of strong Jewish women.



WARNER BROS. TELEVISION/HBO MAX'S *THE PITT*

Presented by Tovah Feldshuh, six-time Emmy and Tony Award nominee, and the founder of The Feldshuh Fund for Women's Health, to Noah Wyle, star and executive producer.

"Listen, my son, to the traditions of your father, and don't forsake the teachings of your mother." - Proverbs 1:8

Great Jewish representation in television and movies is always exciting to see. Great Jewish representation incorporated into an Emmy-Award winning show, by beloved Emmy-Award winning actor, Noah Wiley, whose fanbase spans generations - is thrilling. On a particularly rough day in the ER, when a mass shooting occurs, Dr. Robby is overwhelmed by the carnage and begins reciting the Shema to center himself. He later explains

that this tradition was passed onto him as a child by his grandmother. Seeing the creed of the Jewish people recited on one of the most popular shows on television was a poignant moment that the Jewish community shared this past year.



PARAMOUNT + *RED ALERT*

Presented by Emmy Award winning actress, producer and activist Debra Messing to Lawrence Bender, executive producer, who's received 37 Academy Award nominations and won 9, including three nominations for Best Picture.

"He who saves one life is as if he saved the world entire." - Sanhedrin 4:5

As Israel and Israelis continue to be vilified on every media platform, more than ever since October 7th, Red Alert shows the humanity and the heroes from that treacherous day. Everyday people risked their lives to save others. In the featured scene, Sarit Vino-Elad portrays the real life story of Tali Hadad, who courageously evacuated the wounded in her private vehicle on October 7th and was later awarded the President's Medal. Courage and valuing life above all else are the hallmarks of Judaism and the lived values of Israelis. This masterful show highlights this all.



FOX ENTERTAINMENT STUDIOS/HBO MAX'S *ONE DAY IN OCTOBER*

Presented by actress and activist Selma Blair to producer Chaya Amor.

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you." - Psalm 56:3

Though three years have passed since that fateful day, October 7th continues to haunt world Jewry and our allies. We suffered unimaginable losses and also found strength in our faith, our heritage, and one another. *One Day In October* masterfully showcases the resilience and courage of our people and documents seven stories from the day, to humanize the statistics and bear witness to the stories we must never forget. In our featured scene, Swell Or, portraying the true story of Nova survivor Amit Amar, is trapped in a porta potty for hours, hiding from Hamas terrorists with her friend. As the sounds of shooting get closer, Amit recites Shema Yisrael over and over again, and when a bullet is shot at her porta potty, it misses her head by an inch.

OUR PERFORMERS



SHLOMO LEVINGER

Levinger is a professional mentalist and entertainer who has been captivating audiences for over 15 years. Combining mind-reading, psychology, and magic, Shlomo creates unforgettable experiences that leave people questioning what's possible. A premier entertainer for Major League Baseball, he has performed for MLB teams, professional athletes, celebrities, Fortune 500 companies, and audiences at some of the most prestigious events around the world.



NESYA FERTEL

What can a seventeen-year-old violin virtuoso teach us about life? More than you might expect. Nesya Fertel spent fourteen years mastering the violin, performing across the United States, Canada, and Israel, including as a soloist with the Utah Symphony at thirteen. Now she's taking classical music somewhere unexpected. Her original Keynote-Concert, In Sync, fuses extraordinary violin performance with compelling storytelling to reveal surprising insights about listening, communication, discipline, and the pursuit of excellence.



YUVAL CHEN

New York–based Israeli pianist and composer Yuval Chen recently completed the Artist Diploma at The Juilliard School, where he also earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees. As a soloist, career highlights include performances with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and Albany Symphony, as well as appearances at Carnegie Hall and the Aspen Music Festival. Alongside his performing career, Yuval regularly incorporates original compositions into his solo programs and has collaborated with Hermès, for which he composed and premiered original work. In 2026, he received the Benzaquen Career Advancement Grant and the Salon de Virtuosi Career Grant.



DISTANT COUSINS

Distant Cousins is the Los Angeles-based indie folk-pop trio of Ami Kozak, Duvid Swirsky, and Dov Rosenblatt. Known for rich three-part harmonies and songs featured in film, television, and commercials, the band has toured internationally, including tours with Matisyahu. Drawing on their deep Jewish roots, their EP Out of the Darkness blends Hebrew and English, including words from Psalms, in songs of hope, healing, and resilience inspired by the aftermath of October 7. For more information, visit DistantCousinsOfficial.com

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THANK YOU

To our honorees and their presenters and our performers.

To Our Amazing Team
Rabbi Jack Abramowitz, Hilana Agress, Tammy Friedman, Elie Gabor, Talya Goldman, Kalman Groner, Cindy Kaplan, Dalya Levy, Tess Levine, Ben Madsen, Bonnie Nolan Schwartz, Nechuma Schweitzer, Chaya Teitelbaum, Zeldy Trieff; our volunteers Aliza Gans, Miriam Gardin, Betsy Laikin, Dannah Shinder, Elyse Sholk and Chani Weinberger

To Our Incredible Advisory Board Members
David Baddiel, Andrea Ballas, Jacob Fenton, Andy Fixmer, Brett Gelman, Ginnifer Goodwin, Narumi Inatsugu, Jonah Platt, Malina Saval, Roger Wolfson, Ethan Zohn

And Dedicated Board of Directors
Mayer Fertig, Herman Friedman, Mark Hager, Elliot Klein, Elliot Press, Michael Sage

To Our Fabulous:
Event Planner: Chanie Waxler of Buds Designs
Show Producer: Saul Blinkoff
Show Director: Andrew Berg

To Our Wonderful Event Committee:

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