

### Postdoctoral Fellows



**Derek Burrell**

University of Arizona >> Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Derek Burrell received a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship to carry out his research project titled “Characterizing and Denoising Hyperspectral Imagery for Super Resolution Object Detection in Scattering Media” in the Photonics and Electro-Optics Unit at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He earned his BS in electrical engineering from Michigan Technological University and his MS in optics and photonics from the University of Central Florida. As an undergraduate he participated in a European Project Semester at Oslo Metropolitan University on a Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. He received his PhD in optical sciences from the University of Arizona. While working on his PhD, he collaborated with the US Air Force Research Laboratory to study and mitigate effects of coherent noise in tracking and wavefront-sensing systems. Derek also supports field experiments on long-range active imaging with performance comparisons in various spectral bands and gain configurations.



**Jeffrey Cross**

University of Minnesota Twin Cities >> The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Jeffrey Cross was awarded a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship to pursue his research project, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Hellenistic Stoicism: Contributing to a More Equitable Intellectual History,” under the mentorship of Professor Noam Mizrahi at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In this project Jeffrey examines conceptual similarities between the Dead Sea Scrolls and texts representing the views of Hellenistic Stoicism. In addition to demonstrating philosophical engagement between Jews writing in Hebrew, and Greek and Roman intellectuals, this research challenges the study of these literatures in isolation and models a more equitable intellectual history of the ancient Mediterranean. Jeffrey studied classics for his BA at Baylor University. He then received his MA and PhD in classical and Near Eastern religions and cultures at the University of Minnesota. There he wrote his dissertation on scribal rewriting and textual development in the legal texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, under the direction of Professors Bernard Levinson (University of Minnesota) and Molly Zahn (Yale Divinity School).



**Erika Garcia**

University of Colorado Denver >> The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Erika Garcia was awarded a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship to pursue her project titled “An Integrative Approach to Evaluating the Diversity of the Elusive Camel Spider in Israel” at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In this project Erika will be conducting research on the solifuge diversity of the region, much of which has not been rigorously studied for several decades. Her project will be collections-based research out of the National Natural History Collections, and she will be utilizing next-generation sequencing, microscopy, and modeling techniques to understand the region’s solifuge biodiversity. The goal of this research is to provide an updated taxonomic key of the Israeli solifuge diversity for future biological studies of the group.

Erika received her BS from San Diego State University and her MS from San Francisco State University. At both institutions she was involved in researching the evolution and systematics of arachnid groups. She then pursued a PhD at the University of Colorado Denver, studying the arachnid order Solifugae. Her doctoral research involved understanding the morphological evolution and historical biogeography of four genera of Eremobatidae to inform new taxonomic boundaries.



**Rachel Neve-Midbar**

University of Southern California >> The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Rachel was awarded a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship to pursue her research project, “Poetics of a Survivor: The Long-Term Effects of Trauma in the Poetry of Holocaust Poet Abba Kovner,” with Professor Amos Goldberg from the Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Rachel received her PhD in literature and creative writing from the University of Southern California, where her research focused on the poetics of the deep body. Her first full-length book of poems, *Salaam of Birds*, was published by Tebot Bach.

Rachel plans to work on translating the complete collected poetry of Holocaust survivor and poet Abba Kovner (1918–1987). Kovner was a leader of the Jewish rebellion in the Vilna Ghetto during World War II and the author of the first manifesto naming the Nazi’s intent to eliminate world Jewry. Rarely translated into English, Kovner’s poetry is historically vital, serving as both witness and a record of the long-term trauma that recurs well after the victim is safe from harm.



### Alex "Eli" Pottash

University of Maryland, College Park >> Weizmann Institute of Science

Alex "Eli" Pottash was awarded a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship to pursue his research project, "Enabling Inhalation of mRNA Therapies to Treat Lung Disease," with Professors Yinon Rudich and Gideon Schreiber at the Weizmann Institute of Science. His research aims to solve underlying problems in mRNA delivery and could be adapted to the treatment of lung cancer, infection, and other lung diseases.

Eli completed his BS and PhD in bioengineering at the University of Maryland, College Park. In his graduate work under Dr. Steven Jay, he investigated the loading of RNA into extracellular vesicles, which are cell-derived nanoparticles used as vehicles for gene therapy. In addition to the technical aspect of his project, Eli is interested in how culture shapes the invention and acceptance of technologies, such as inhalable drugs.

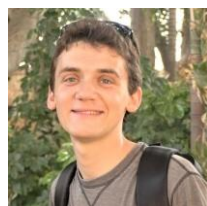


### Levi Prombaum

University College London >> The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Levi Prombaum was awarded a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship to pursue his research project, "Exhibiting & Collecting Palestinian Art in Israeli Art Institutions, 1967–Present." In this project, he analyzes field-wide patterns of inclusion and omission of Palestinian art and artists within the Israeli art world, with a particular focus on understudied exhibition and collection practices, originating from within Israeli art institutions, that have amplified the perspectives of Palestinian art and artists during the last fifty-five years.

Prior to his studies in Jerusalem, Prombaum was a curator at Colby College Museum of Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. He was an American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) postdoctoral fellow at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art and a Getty/ACLS postdoctoral fellow in the history of art. He holds degrees from University College London (PhD in art history), the Courtauld Institute of Art (MA in art history), and the University of Wisconsin-Madison (BA in art history and political science).



### Zachary Sercel

California Institute of Technology >> Technion – Israel Institute of Technology

Zachary Sercel was awarded a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship to pursue "The Development of a Nickel-Catalyzed 'Cut and Sew' Ring Expansion of Highly Substituted Cyclopropanes" with Professor Ilan Marek at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology. The envisioned chemical reaction would, in a single step, transform readily accessible cyclopropanes into valuable, highly substituted cyclopentenones with potential applications in organic synthesis. Zachary's research interests lie in the synthesis of complex molecules and the development of synthetic methods.

Zachary completed his PhD in chemistry at Caltech, where he primarily studied the total synthesis of a bioactive marine alkaloid. He received a BS in chemistry from California State University, Los Angeles.

## Senior Scholars Fellows



### Diana Berman

University of North Texas >> Tel Aviv University

Diana Berman is an associate professor of materials science and engineering at the University of North Texas. She received her PhD in physics from North Carolina State University in 2012. After graduating, she worked as a postdoctoral researcher in the Argonne National Laboratory, at the Center for Nanoscale Materials, in Illinois. Her research interests are in the synthesis and characterization of nanostructures, surfaces, and interfaces of ceramic and carbon-based materials for precise control and improvement of their tribological properties and functionality. She has published more than seventy papers in peer-reviewed journals and two book chapters. She also holds ten patents (both US and international). Among her awards are: TechConnect Innovation Award, Ralph E. Powe Junior Faculty Enhancement Award, Society of Tribologists and Lubrication Engineers Early Career Award, UNT Early Career Professorship Award, UNT Research and Creativity Award, and NSF Early Career Award. She was awarded a Fulbright Senior Scholar Award to support her work with researchers at Tel Aviv University, focusing on reversing the energy losses and damage to materials by incorporating self-adaptive protective coatings.



### Eva Collakova

Virginia Tech and State University >> ARO, Volcani Institute M.P. Negev

Eva Collakova is an associate professor in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). She received her BS in biochemistry from Pavol Jozef Safarik University in Kosice, Slovakia, and her PhD in plant biology from Michigan State University. Her research focuses on investigating complex molecular interactions in algae and plants under climate change-related stresses and their combinations using multiomics approaches and developing novel analytical approaches for monitoring different combinations of climate change-related stresses in plants as part of digital agriculture. She was awarded a Fulbright Senior Scholar Fellowship for her project designing resilient plants in Israel with digital agriculture.



### Brandon Gellis

University of Wyoming >> Shenkar College of Engineering, Design and Art

Brandon Gellis is an associate professor of visual communication design, co-director of the Center for Design Thinking, and an adjunct founding faculty fellow in the School of Computing, at the University of Wyoming. He earned a BA in American studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and an MFA in emergent digital practices from the University of Denver.

Brandon was awarded the Fulbright Senior Scholar Award for his project “Visualized Culture Wars: A Photographic Ethnological Study of Street Art and Mark Making.” He will investigate how street art, graffiti, and mark making are critical, often temporal, responses to political, socioeconomic, and religious culture wars. He will be a visiting lecturer and will collaborate with scholars at Shenkar College of Engineering, Design and Art, and Tel Aviv University.

Brandon has exhibited and presented his scholarship both in the United States and internationally. He has received several solo and interdisciplinary grants and is a recipient of a 2022/23 UW Presidential Faculty Research Award.



### Siegfried Glenzer

Stanford University >> Tel Aviv University

Siegfried Glenzer was awarded a Fulbright Distinguished Scholar Fellowship to pursue his project “High-Energy Proton Acceleration with High-Intensity Laser Beams” with Dr. Ishay Pomerantz at Tel Aviv University. Siegfried completed his PhD in physics at the Ruhr-Universität-Bochum, after which he was a postdoctoral fellow in the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in the United States. He is currently a professor of photon science at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory and a professor, by courtesy, of mechanical engineering at Stanford University. Glenzer’s research spans the areas of laser fusion, laser particle acceleration, and X-ray interaction with matter. He recently collaborated on the successful demonstration of ignition and fusion gain from deuterium-tritium plasma at the National Ignition Facility. His work and publications can be found at: <https://heds.slac.stanford.edu>.



### Yotam Haber

University of Missouri-Kansas City >> The Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance

Yotam Haber received his undergraduate degree from Indiana University and his doctorate from Cornell University, both in music composition. Haber is an associate professor of composition at the UMKC Conservatory, and artistic director emeritus of MATA, a non-profit organization dedicated to commissioning and presenting new works by young composers from around the world.

Yotam was born in the Netherlands and grew up in Israel, Nigeria, and Milwaukee. He is a recipient of many awards, among them a 2022 commission from Chamber Music America, the 2022 Third Annual Henri Lazarof International Commission Prize, the 2021 Benjamin Hadley Danks Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the 2020 Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music, a 2017 Koussevitzky Commission for the Library of Congress, a 2013 Fromm Music Foundation commission, a 2013 NYFA award, the 2008 Rome Prize in Musical Composition, and a 2005 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. He has also received grants and fellowships from Civitella Ranieri, the MAP Fund, New Music USA, the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, Yaddo, Bogliasco, MacDowell, the Hermitage, ASCAP, the Copland House, the Aspen Music Festival, and Tanglewood.



**Dan Klerman**

[University of Southern California](#) >> [The Hebrew University of Jerusalem](#)

Daniel Klerman is the Edward G. Lewis chair of law and history at the University of Southern California (USC) Gould School of Law. Dan received his BA from Yale University and his JD and PhD in history from the University of Chicago. He clerked for the Honorable Richard A. Posner, judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, and for the Honorable John Paul Stevens, associate justice of the United States Supreme Court. He has also taught at the University of Chicago Law School, Harvard Law School, Stanford Law School, the California Institute of Technology, Sichuan University, Tel Aviv University Law School, and the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya. Professor Klerman was copresident of the Society for Empirical Legal Studies in 2008/09. His current research focuses on civil procedure, comparative law, and empirical legal studies, and he hopes to commence research soon on immigration law and policy.

## Master's Degree Fellows



**Nick Bowman**

[Wesleyan University](#) >> [University of Haifa](#)

Nick Bowman received a BA in archaeology and classical civilizations from Wesleyan University. During his studies, he conducted international archaeological and marine science field-based projects in Israel, Scotland, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. This summer he will return to Israel as a geographic information systems (GIS) specialist at the archaeological excavation at Tel Shimron. His undergraduate thesis explored maritime connectivity and mobility in the southeastern Aegean and eastern Mediterranean during the Neopalatial period of the late Bronze Age. Using modern wind speed and direction data in conjunction with sailing performance metrics of Neopalatial vessels, he approximated sailing times and likely routes of travel between coastal settlements using GIS, which he compared to extant ceramic assemblages from those sites. Nick has been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue an MA in maritime civilizations at the University of Haifa, where he plans to expand on his undergraduate research by exploring interregional maritime connectivity between sites on the Israeli coast and other coastal settlements across the eastern Mediterranean during the late Bronze Age.



**Noam Gal**

[CUNY Baccalaureate](#) >> [The Hebrew University of Jerusalem](#)

Noam Gal graduated from the CUNY Baccalaureate for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies at Baruch College with a BS in mathematics and urban economics. He also received a dual diploma from Macaulay Honors College. Noam has a background in conducting interdisciplinary research that blends mathematics, urban planning, and economics to better understand transportation equity problems in urban areas. During his undergraduate studies, Noam published his thesis, titled "Transit Equity in Southeast Brooklyn," and completed two internships at the New York City Mayor's Office. Noam was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to complete an MA in smart cities and urban informatics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. During his graduate studies, Noam plans to research how data science tools are used by Israeli planning authorities to predict the socioeconomic impact of new transportation infrastructure, such as the Jerusalem Light Rail, on different neighborhoods and communities.



**Emma Hantgan**

[University of Miami](#) >> [Tel Aviv University](#)

Emma Hantgan graduated from the University of Miami with a BA in international studies and Chinese studies, minoring in Judaic studies and Latin American studies. During her undergraduate years, she interned at the US Department of State, SIGNAL (Sino-Israel Global Network & Academic Leadership), and Global Ties Miami. As an intern at the Israel Economic Mission to the East Coast, she gained experience conducting market research on Israeli industry and developed an interest in the connections between public diplomacy, economics, and power politics. Emma was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue an MA in security and diplomacy at Tel Aviv University. As a Fulbright fellow, she will continue to develop her research project, "Power Balancing in the Middle East: A Case Study of the Belt and Road Initiative."



**Zachary Newman**

University of Chicago >> Tel Aviv University

Zachary Newman graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point with a BS in electrical engineering. He served five years on active duty as a US Army officer with the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. After completing the Post-Baccalaureate Pre-medicine Program at Goucher College, Zach entered medical school at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine. He was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue an MA in conflict resolution and mediation at Tel Aviv University. Zach plans to apply this coursework to his future clinical practice so as to better serve victims of violence, as well as to study, implement, and lead violence intervention programs in hospital settings.



**Colette Smith**

University of Maryland >> The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Colette Smith graduated from the University of Maryland with a BA in international relations, a BS in psychology, and a minor in global terrorism studies. While at the University of Maryland, she worked as a research assistant at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), where she conducted open-source research on the demographics and radicalization process of Islamist extremists in the United States. During the summer of 2021, she interned at the Embassy of Jordan in Washington, DC, where she monitored the US military withdrawal from Afghanistan and escalations in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She also worked in the public sector as an intern at the National Defense University's College of International Security Affairs. Upon graduation, Colette will study Arabic in Morocco for two months, on a Critical Language Scholarship. She has been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue an MA in Islamic and Middle Eastern studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. There, she will study Arabic and explore the cultural and historical context of political violence in the Levant.



**Bridget Toomey**

Harvard College >> Tel Aviv University

Bridget Toomey graduated from Harvard College with a BA in government and a minor in modern Middle Eastern studies. Throughout her time as an undergraduate, Bridget interned in foreign policy positions in Congress and in think tanks. She culminated her studies with a senior thesis investigating multilateral influences on state support of armed non-state actors. Bridget has been awarded a Fulbright master's degree Fellowship to pursue an MA degree in security and diplomacy at Tel Aviv University. At TAU she will continue to research security threats in the Middle East and expand upon her work on armed non-state groups and their state sponsors.

## PhD Research Fellows



**Anuj M. Amin**

Stanford University >> The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Anuj M. Amin was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship for his project, "Aramaic Incantation Bowls: Traditions of Ancient Healing, Exorcisms, and the Trade of Medical Antiquities." Anuj graduated as a Benjamin Franklin Scholar and University Scholar from the University of Pennsylvania, majoring in religious studies, classical studies, anthropology, and Near Eastern languages and civilizations. He completed his MA at Oxford University, studying Zoroastrian law and demonology. Currently, Anuj is a PhD student in the Department of Religious Studies, specializing in traditions of late antiquity. Working in Mandaic, Syriac, and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, he explores the intersection of demonic possessions, magic, and medicine in Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian communities.





### Jake Beckert

University of Washington >> University of Haifa

Jake Beckert is a PhD student in the Department of History at the University of Washington Seattle. His dissertation, “Profit in the Holy Land: American Capital and Development in Mandatory Palestine,” examines the effects of American capital investment, particularly from Jewish “non-Zionists,” on Jewish industry and agriculture in Mandatory Palestine. Jake’s research focuses on the Palestine Economic Corporation, a for-profit corporation founded in 1926 by some of America’s most important Jewish leaders to support Jewish enterprises in Palestine on a “non-political” and “strictly business basis.” In particular, he is interested in demonstrating that American Jewish support had a more significant impact on the Yishuv (the pre-state Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine) than has been suggested by previous research, and in investigating how the non-Zionist posture of “apoliticism” became increasingly difficult to maintain in the face of intercommunal conflict. Jake recently wrote about his research in the Washington Post’s “Made By History” section. He received a master’s degree in Jewish studies and history from the University of Indiana Bloomington, and a BA in Jewish studies, Hebrew, and history from the University of Wisconsin Madison.



### Lauren Mazurowski

Yale University >> Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Lauren Mazurowski was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue her research project “Elucidating the Effect of pH on Selectivity in Ion Exchange Membranes” at the Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, under the guidance of Dr. Oded Nir. Her research aims to improve the viability of metal recovery from industrial wastewater and increase the global supply of critical minerals while reducing unsustainable mining practices. Lauren is currently a chemical and environmental engineering PhD student and NSF Graduate Research fellow at Yale University, studying precise ion-selectivity mechanisms with Dr. Menachem Elimelech. She received a BS in environmental engineering, and an MS in civil and environmental engineering from the University of Nevada, Reno. Lauren attributes her early passion for water treatment to spending time near the beautiful Lake Tahoe basin, appreciating the clarity of the lake and the natural filtration from the surrounding Sierra Nevada mountains.



### Lauren Urbont

Stanford University >> The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Lauren Urbont is a PhD student in the Department of History at Stanford University. She was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship for her research project devoted to practices of death and mourning among the Jews of medieval German lands between the years 1100 and 1350. Her research addresses the development of cultural and religious attitudes toward the deceased body and its interment, along with the influence, exchange, and competition with the surrounding Christian culture. She will work with Professor Elisheva Baumgarten at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on Baumgarten’s research project, “Contending with Crises: The Jews in XIVth Century Europe.” Lauren holds a BA in literature from Yale University and an MSt in medieval studies from the University of Oxford.

## PhD Research Fellows



### Rachel Van Drunen

University of Texas >> Weizmann Institute of Science

Rachel Van Drunen was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue her research project titled, “Recording Single Cell Oscillations of Treated Brain Cells to Capture Synchronization” in Professor Gad Asher’s lab at the Weizmann Institute of Science. Rachel has a BS in neuroscience from Trinity University and is currently a neuroscience PhD student at the MD Anderson University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. Her current research seeks to better understand how circadian rhythms, the 24-hour internal clocks of the body, affect the role of the paraventricular nucleus of the hypothalamus in maintaining daily energy balance. As a Fulbright fellow in the Asher lab, she will study how neurons synchronize their circadian rhythms in response to certain hormones and neuropeptides. She hopes that this research will lead to a deeper understanding of the neural mechanisms governing metabolic and bodyweight issues in humans.