

Daniel Galay

Daniel Galay—composer, pianist, teacher, and playwright—has earned international recognition as a versatile composer bridging the worlds of classical music, avant-garde, and Jewish music. He is the recipient of the Prime Minister's Prize for Composition 2009, the Lifetime Achievement Award for Musical Creation from the National Authority for Yiddish in Israel 2020, the Rubinlicht Prize for creative and cultural activity in Yiddish, and the Sarah Gorby Prize for his Jewish music works 1983. Recently, Galay won the 2025 Composition Competition from the Israel Composers' League, and his piece “Desacuerdos” was recorded by the Tel Aviv Soloists Ensemble conducted by Barak Tal. Galay received numerous creative grants including the Rabinovich Foundation of the Tel Aviv Municipality, the Sholem Aleichem House, the Goldmark Festival Hungary, ACUM, the National Authority for Yiddish, *Mifal HaPais* (Israel's national lottery), the British Council, Chicago Arts Council, and the America-Israel Cultural Foundation.

The broad spectrum of his work includes four symphonies, seven concertos, four chamber operas, four cantatas, chamber music, solo works, and vocal music. His works have been performed in Israel, USA, Canada, Argentina, Italy, France, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, Poland, Croatia, Slovenia, Moldova, Ukraine, Hungary, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Spain, and China. They have been broadcast on various radio stations worldwide and are in the repertoire of leading musicians such as Giora Feidman and Professor Michel Gringras, who have also recorded his compositions.

His orchestral works have been included in the programs of the Lublin Philharmonic, Poznań Philharmonic, Wrocław Philharmonic, Bydgoszcz Philharmonic, National Philharmonic of Moldova, Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, Haifa Symphony Orchestra, Ashdod Symphony Orchestra, Budapest Hungarian Virtuosos Orchestra, Szolnok Symphony Orchestra, Mendoza Symphony Orchestra, Rosario Chamber Orchestra, Mayo Chamber Orchestra, Tel Aviv Soloists Ensemble, and the String Ensemble of the Israel Chamber Orchestra. His works have been conducted by leading conductors including David Robertson, José Maria Florencio, Zsolt Nagy, Lior Shambadal, Jeffrey Styles, Barbara Schubert, József Bali, Piotr Wiatkowski, Luis Gorelik, Fernando Ciraulo, Fernando Lozano, Amos Talmon, Gheorghe Mustea, Barak Tal, Gal Alterovich, Peter Rabel, and Zsolt Serei.

Daniel Galay is the chairman of Leyvik House—the Association of Yiddish and Journalists in Israel and the Israeli Center for Yiddish Culture. He has published plays, a book of poetry, children's books, dozens of articles, and written libretti for Yiddish operas. His play "The King of Klezmer" was produced in 2024 at the National Yiddish Theater of Romania. Daniel Galay has composed music for texts by great Yiddish writers such as "The Twins" by Abraham Sutzkever, "The Mound" by Peretz Markish, and "In the Kingdom of the Cross" by Uri Zvi Greenberg—the latter was recorded and broadcast by the First Channel of Israeli Television. His wide-ranging musical language, together with his deep connection to Jewish heritage and culture, has produced a rich corpus of contemporary Jewish music. His works in this context include chamber operas with his own Yiddish libretti, symphonic works in Jewish style, original klezmer tunes, chamber works, and music that incorporates narration of stories from Jewish folklore.

Daniel Galay has been invited to give lectures, master classes, and improvisation and klezmer workshops in Germany, France, Romania, and the United States at universities including Berkeley, Stanford, the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois, and Northwestern. He is regularly invited to international festivals and conferences such as the Week of Jewish Culture in Dresden, the Yiddish Theater in Romania, the Conference of Artistic Music from Israel in London, the Bruno Schulz Festival in Ukraine, the Acqua-Termi Contemporary Music Festival in Italy, the Bydgoszcz International Festival in Poland, the Jewish Cultures Festival in Madrid, and more.

Galay was born in 1945 in Argentina and immigrated to Israel in 1965. He holds a master's degree in composition from the University of Chicago (1979) and completed his musical studies and previous degrees in piano, theory, and composition from the National Conservatory in Buenos Aires and Tel Aviv University, Rubin Academy of Music. Among his piano teachers were Waldemar Axel Roldan, Yahli Wagman, Arie Vardi, and his composition teachers: Josef Tal, Leon Schidlowsky, and Ralph Shapey. His works are included in the catalogs of the Israel Music Institute, IMI, Or-Tav, Dorn (USA), Edipen, Ut Orpheus Edizioni (Italy), and Svitzer (Denmark).