

# Tikkun Fellowship 2015

## Concert “Quartet for the End of Time” - Yana Reznik



There is an incredibly meaningful composition by Olivier Messiaen called "Quartet for the End of Time". It was written and first performed in German camps while Messiaen was a prisoner of war in 1940. Because of the appreciation for musicians the Germans gave him an opportunity to compose this piece for the existing musicians at the camp: pianist, clarinetist, violinist and cellist. The story of the premier is a story of struggle, friendship, survival, intense obstacles, hardship and death. And yet through this music there was so much hope given to the prisoners. It was premiered to the hungry, freezing cold, suffering people, all of whom came to experience the healing power of music.

2015 marks the 70th year since WWII and Yana would like to create a production of the Quartet (50 minutes in length in 7 movements) at the Holocaust Museum. She would invite very talented musicians to perform with her live. She would like to find a videographer who can work with her on producing a multimedia presentation depicting the mood and horror of the premier at the camps and the transformation of life, to go from darkness to light, from misery to hope, to depict the saving power of humanity even in the most of inhumane of circumstances. Even though Messiaen was not Jewish, as a victim of the events of the war he experienced its horrors along with millions around him. His faith never died, his hope never vanished. His music saved him and hundreds of prisoners around him.

Having it presented at the Holocaust Museum will give people an extra chance to visit the exhibits before our presentation. Yana will tell the story of this piece in a narrative combined with the multi media productions (photographs, sounds, videos, interviews) so that the public understands its meaning and history. The musical performance will follow.

This project will be a message of hope for all religions, all nations, all humans on earth, as taken from the horrific example of the WWII and Holocaust. Yana wants the people in attendance to leave with a sense of remembrance, hope, light, transformation and PEACE, to be healed by the experience in the same way that the prisoners were healed 70 years ago.

### **Brief Bio:**

Pianist, speaker, producer, host, entrepreneur, and cultural leader, Yana Reznik has been revolutionizing the way classical music affects our society. Yana's passionate performances and captivating storytelling had won the hearts of thousands on her 2010-2014 tour across the United States. Born in Moscow, Ms. Reznik holds a bachelor of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music, a master of music degree from the University of Southern California, and a professional studies certificate from the Colburn Conservatory of Music, where she was under the tutelage of Phillip Kawin and John Perry. She has also studied at the Rachmaninoff School of Music in Moscow, Russia with Raisa Bekerman, the Interlochen Arts Academy with Stephen Perry and Chapman University with Joseph Matthews. Since moving to Chicago in 2014, Yana has performed at the Myra Hess Concerts Series and PianoForte Foundation. Both concerts were broadcasted live at WFMT 98.7 Radio. In February 2015 Yana launched "Playful Talk" show at PianoForte Studios. As a founder, producer, pianist and host Yana collaborates with the members of Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Lyric Opera Orchestra, Ars Viva Orchestra, Las Vegas Philharmonic, Ensemble Dal Niente, Kontras Quartet and New Millennium Orchestra. Monthly episodes broadcast live via [www.yanareznik.com](http://www.yanareznik.com) as well as live from the studio.

For more info: [www.yanareznik.com](http://www.yanareznik.com)

## Connecting children with the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Victory Day - Julia Bikbova



Julia would like to implement a community-wide effort to connect younger generations with Russian-speaking WWII veterans and to have a community-wide celebration and commemoration of 70th Anniversary of Victory in WWII that will include children from pre-schools, elementary schools and high schools. She believes that whether through attendance of the events, visits with the veterans or working in a classroom on thank you cards and art pieces to present to veterans will create memorable and unforgettable experiences for the children and put a seed that will keep the traditions going for years to come and appreciate the history and our heritage. Specifically:

1. Most veterans live in subsidized housing which are apartment building scattered throughout Chicago, Skokie, Wheeling, Niles, Arlington Heights and other suburbs. There is at least 20-25 such apartment buildings/complexes where more than one veteran lives. In addition to the so far planned individual visits of veterans in their apartments by, Julia would like to have 30-45 minutes events in the gathering/party rooms in these buildings for the veterans and Holocaust survivors whereby local talent, and children in particular, will perform for them, express their thank you-s and socialize. A “bring a piece of festivities spirit” to their homes, so to speak. This set of events will engage the local Russian speaking performers and children studios/theatres.
2. Engage Russian-speaking pre-schools, select private and public schools pupils in Victory Day activities. Such would include preparing by art pieces (cards, drawings, sculptures, poems or writing pieces) depicting children’s accounts or understanding of their great grandparents (or beyond) roles in Victory in WWII who fought during WWII as what has been learnt in families or schools. This is probably most appropriate for elementary and middle school age children. The pre-school children could be engaged in preparing Thank-You cards and art pieces for the school representatives or volunteers to deliver to the veterans.
3. Engage select private and public high schools students (and schools’ administrations) to work on projects part of World Studies or World History classes that involve the learning about the WWII and the contribution of soviet army and in particular, the contribution of Soviet Jews in fighting the Nazis. The projects are to engage the Russian speaking Jewish WWII Veterans and student volunteers who could translate/interpret their presentations in schools. The students could then be assigned projects to express what they learned and complete additional research assignments, which could then be presented at any of this year or next years’ Victory Day events or presented for keep in the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Chicago Association of WWII Veterans.

### **Brief Bio:**

Julia was born and raised in Kiev, Ukraine. In 1992 immigrated with her parents as Jewish refugees to the US. Former member of Ukrainian national figure skating team, continued her ice skating career after moving to US while training at University of Delaware training center and having represented United States at multiple international championships as US National Team member. Earned her undergraduate degree at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Earned a Juris Doctor degree from the John Marshall Law School in January 2007. In 2011 began practicing as a solo practitioner, focusing on civil litigation, immigration and some transactional matters. Jewish community involvement: Started her involvement in 1993 in Chabad House at University of Delaware, Newark, DE (1993-1998). Continued in Chicago when relocated for law school: organized Babi Yar 65th anniversary Commemoration event at John Marshall Law School with multiple speakers/scholars on Holocaust and continued investigation of Nazi crimes during WWII in former Soviet Union (September 28, 2006). Founded Association of Russian speaking law students, comprised primarily of Russian speaking Jewish students born in former Soviet Union (May 2006). Member of the Reklama Newspaper Women’s Board since 2010; the Board regularly organizes fundraising projects in the Jewish community in Chicago area, including annual Children of Sderot project. Sponsored and helped organize the Babi Yar community-wide 70th anniversary Commemoration event at Illinois Holocaust Museum and took part in collecting stories and preparing the Album/Book of stories by Chicagoans. Has been providing pro bono legal aid to Holocaust survivors and WWII veterans from former Soviet Union since 2009. Pro Bono General Counsel, assistant with event management and public relations, Chicago Association of WWII veterans, comprised, for the most part, of the former Jewish refugees from former Soviet Union (2009 – present).

## Tu Ba'Av – Day of Love Israeli Mini Festival - Alex Kislov



Alex wants to organize Tu Ba'Av Israeli Mini Festival for young Jewish Adults (21-40). The event will consist of high end entertainment, musicians, Djs, Israeli food and anything related to “Israeli Love Parade” type of theme. The goal is to show the modern Israeli culture and to unite the Jewish community on a celebration of love and to help emerging Jewish artists and entertainers get noticed.

### **Brief Bio:**

With an innate sense of creativity flowing through his veins that can only stem from his firmly planted musical roots, Alex Kislov is paving his own road in the EDM streets. Moving to the US from Israel at the age of 10, Kislov quickly transitioned to life in the new country. His mother and sister's interest in Electronic music influenced his first musical experience at the early age of seven and eventually lead the way to his calling as an Electronic music artist. Little did he know at that moment that he would go on to become one of Chicago's finest. This same passion drove him to enter his first ever DJ competition, The Jammin' on the Wolf festival mix competition where he took first place and headlined alongside EOTO and Break Science. Later, Kislov would go on to perform at some of Chicago's most elite music venues including Soldier Field for Spring Awakening, North Coast Music Festival, Wavefront Music Festival, the Aragon Entertainment Center, Concord Music Hall, and Congress Theater where he played a remarkable set on New Years Eve for Porter Robinson and friends. Alex is a student at the DePaul University in Chicago. He is involved in J-Life and RAJE Chicago.

## Play “Cry Baby Meets Audrey Hepburn” - Marianna Staroselsky



“Cry Baby Meets Audrey Hepburn” is a play loosely based on Marianna’s childhood, immigration experience as Jewish refugee from the Former Soviet Union, and adaptation to modern American society. The play switches between memories and Russian and American cultural realities to present the adaptation and challenges of a Russian Jewish girl much like myself. Her family members and those with whom she has had formative experiences follow her through the play and the audience navigates her worlds with her. Musical interludes utilizing Russian and American songs tie together the protagonist’s worlds. The fragmentation and struggle to adapt, belong, and logically place the emotional and cultural pieces together in a coherent way is the focus of this play. This play was initially conceived and developed under Stockyards Theatre Project in the fall, which encourages the development of strong

roles for women in theatre. Marianna hopes that my play can provide an emotional catharsis for other Russian Jewish immigrants in the US while simultaneously bridging the Russian Jewish adaptation experience with a broader audience. She thinks it would be wonderful to make it available to the Russian Jewish and Jewish community of Chicago as well as the broader community.

### **Brief Bio:**

Marianna is a PhD Candidate in the Social Sciences at the University of Chicago and a theatre artist. Her dissertation examines the psychology and anthropology of performance on and off stage. She writes, acts, directs, and studies various theatrical forms including neo-futurism, improvisation, experimental theatre, and devised playwrighting/performance. She is currently a member of the Writer’s Room with the theatre company The New Colony where she’ll be writing a new play. Marianna was born in Kiev in the Former Soviet Union and emigrated at the age of 6 and a half, just before the fall of communism. She has lived in the US the majority of my life but she has also lived in several other countries (New Zealand, France, Israel, and Brazil,) and being a serial migrant and adventurer has been a very formative aspect of her identity.

## Israeli Board Games Night and Dinner - Julia Grinberg



Growing up both in Soviet Union and Israel, Julia would like to share with the community what it is like to be a child in Israel compare to the Soviet Union. She would like to introduce Israeli Board games to RSJ young professionals during the traditional Israeli dinner. She also wants to tell the participants of her event about various opportunities in Israel such as Masa Israel Journey.

### **Brief Bio:**

Julia just recently moved to Chicago from Israel with her husband. She volunteers at the Jewish Day School and JCC and is looking for a job as a bioengineer.

## Short movies on Journeys of Immigration - Elina Miller



Elina would like to create two professional videos (5 minutes each) that she will produce, direct and oversee editing on. The videos will feature two families' journeys of immigration from an intergenerational point of view. She wants to feature the parents, grandparents and adult children (and in some cases the young children of the parents) recounting the same events. What does each generation remember/notice about their time in the Soviet Union, Italy, Austria or their early days in the U.S. What does each generation appreciate about their life now? What does each generation miss about the Soviet Union?

In addition to recording history, this project will also be a window into the world of young Russian Jewish immigrants who live in Chicago and their parents and highlight how their lives differ now and help shed light on why Russian Jews in their 20's and 30's

differ so much from their American counterparts. She doesn't think it is possible to have gone through the immigration experience and grow up with parents that moved to a foreign county in their own 20's, 30's and 40's along with boisterous Grandparents who have lived through World War II. This is the reality for herself and many of her friends and she wants to delve into the things and circumstances that shape us into who we are.

Elina realizes that recorded history is nothing new but what she can bring to this project is a very professional eye and change the tone. She makes television for a living and wants to make a product that is beautiful and impactful because it is extremely professional and in a tone that is witty and irreverent. A lot of the time things related to the Russian Jewish experience take on a morose narrative. She wants her series to differ and be relatable to a larger audience and highlight the struggle in a relatable way that doesn't depress the viewer but instead paints the Russian Jewish community of today in a new, positive light. One of the main goals of this project is to inspire others to record their family stories.

### **Brief bio:**

Elina is a reality television producer who has lived and worked in New York, Los Angeles and Miami. She has produced such projects as The Real Housewives of New Jersey. In 2011 she co-created and sold Russian Dolls, the first reality show on television to feature an all-Jewish cast and explore Jewish themes. She has been working on a novel since fourth grade that she can't seem to start or finish, enjoys cooking and binge reading.