Keynote Address
Etched In Time and Grooves: The Sounds of North African Jewish History

Christopher Silver

Description: Does music remember what history forgets? To answer that question, this interactive talk will focus on the outsized role played by Jewish musicians in crafting North Africa’s soundtrack in the first half of the twentieth century. More broadly, by treating recorded music as a valuable historical source, we will explore how listening for the past might help us rethink modern Jewish history itself.

Christopher Silver is the Segal Family Assistant Professor in Jewish History and Culture in the Department of Jewish Studies at McGill University. He earned his PhD in history from UCLA. Recipient of grants from the Posen Foundation, the American Academy of Jewish Research, the American Institute for Maghrib Studies, and the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, Silver is the author of numerous articles on North African history and music, including in the International Journal of Middle East Studies, Jewish Social Studies, and Hespéris-Tamuda. He is also the founder and curator of the website Gharamophone.com, a digital archive of North African records from the first half of the twentieth century. His first book, Recording History: Jews, Muslims, and Music Across Twentieth Century North Africa was published in June 2022 by Stanford University Press.