

# HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir

## Jewish Strong: Young People from America and Israel Join In Harmony at Jewish Teen Choir Festival and Concert



by **Hank Levy**

Hundreds of HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir singers from 35 chapters across the U.S. and Israel will join together for three days of “Jewish Strong” group discussions and rehearsals at the annual HaZamir International Festival in March, where teens share Jewish culture, music and values and cultivate international friendships. The Festival culminates in a Gala Performance at Carnegie Hall in NYC on March 23, 2025.

Under the direction of Maestro Matthew Lazar, founder of the Zamir Choral Foundation, and featuring conductors from America and Israel, the HaZamir concert combines music, Judaism, community and spirituality in a powerful blend. A variety of musical styles will be performed, including popular music and classic Israeli and Jewish American selections in English and Hebrew, as well as several pieces that were commissioned or arranged just for HaZamir.

“HaZamir gives young people an outlet to celebrate their Jewish heritage, connect with one another and feel a sense of belonging and pride through the creative outlet of music. Now, more than ever, this supportive community is crucial to teens,” says Matthew Lazar. “By providing a high-quality, structured program, HaZamir’s unique experience helps foster a lifelong commitment to Jewish life through Jewish music.”

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HaZamir teens rehearse regularly in their local chapters with expert conductors and meet for regional retreats and leadership events throughout the year in addition to the annual festival and concert. HaZamir serves as a training ground for the next generation of singers, conductors, composers and leaders. Many HaZamir graduates have gone on to musical careers or have assumed leadership roles in their communities, including seventeen HaZamir alumni who are now conductors or coordinators of their own HaZamir chapters.

“This is a life-changing experience for these teens, as they express their Jewish identities through their love of music. They build leadership skills and strong connec-

tions to peers from a range of backgrounds, resulting in a greater understanding of each other’s similarities and differences,” says Vivian Lazar, Director of HaZamir. “The opportunity to be part of something bigger than themselves and perform on the world’s greatest stages also instills a sense of confidence and achievement.”

HaZamir alumnus JP sums up the unique benefits of the HaZamir experience: “HaZamir taught me invaluable lessons about unity, the power of the collective, Judaism, leadership, and friendship. As I look back on this experience, the many memories, while all exciting and different, share a common denominator: HaZamir brings out the best in everyone.”

The HaZamir choir includes teens in grades 9-12 in American chapters located in Baltimore, MD; Bergen County NJ; Boca Raton, FL; Boston, MA; Brooklyn, NY; Central NJ, Chicago, IL; Cleveland, OH; Detroit, MI; Houston, TX; Los Angeles and LA Valley, CA; Long Island, NY; Manhattan, NY; MetroWest NJ; Miami, FL; Minneapolis, MN; New Haven, CT; Orlando, FL; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Providence, RI; Silicon Valley, CA; South NJ; Washington, DC; and Westchester County NY.

The Israeli HaZamir chapter cities are Ashkelon, Beit She’An, Dimona, Gan Yavneh, Hod HaSharon, Jerusalem, Ofakim-Merchavim and Yerucham.

The 2025 HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir concert takes place 2:30 pm on March 23rd at Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, located at 881

7th Avenue, New York, NY 10019. Tickets are available online at [www.CarnegieHall.org/events](http://www.CarnegieHall.org/events), in person at the Carnegie Hall box office at 57th St. and Seventh Avenue, or by calling CarnegieCharge at 212-247-7800.

For additional information visit [www.hazamir.org](http://www.hazamir.org)

### About Zamir Choral Foundation

*The Zamir Choral Foundation, created by Matthew Lazar, promotes choral music as a vehicle to inspire Jewish life, literacy, and community. The Foundation’s programs include the North American Jewish Choral Festival; the acclaimed Zamir Choral; Zamir Noded for young adult singers; HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir; and HaZamir Preparatory Program for middle school singers.*

*Matthew Lazar, Founder and Director of the Zamir Choral Foundation, is the leading force of the Jewish choral movement in the US. His vision has sparked a renaissance of Jewish choral music across North America which has created a culture of vibrant Jewish identity across the generational, denominational, and political continuums through the study and performance of Jewish music at the highest level of excellence. He has worked with Leonard Bernstein, Zubin Mehta, Elie Wiesel, Theodore Bikel, Dr. Ruth Westheimer, Naomi Shemer and others.* ☆