

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2025 | NO.10

Department of Humanities and Arts



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With the opening of Winter Semester 2025/6, we look forward to continuing our academic activities.

This period marks a return to routine and a renewed sense of stability within our department.

We are grateful for the safe return of all the hostages and continue to hope that all those who fell will soon be brought back to Israel.

We are delighted to share an outstanding achievement:

in this year's teachers' survey, our department ranked in the top percentile among all Technion units, with an impressive average score of 4.651, placing us in second place, just after the Faculty of Education in Science and Technology (4.666).

This ongoing accomplishment reflects the dedication, professionalism, and commitment of every one of our teachers, and the meaningful contributions we make to the students' learning experience.

We take great pride in the quality of our teaching and in our continuous commitment to academic and educational excellence.

In this spirit, we wish all our students, faculty, and staff a productive, creative, and inspiring year.

Ron, Orit and Meital

In this newsletter you will find:

New Academic Appointments, latest projects, workshops, research, and more. Keep Reading!

New Academic Appointments

During the past semester, several significant changes occurred within the department.

Dr. Tzipora Rakdezon completed her term as Associate Head of Department after four years of dedicated service. Throughout her tenure, Dr. Rakdezon led the Teaching Committee, advanced important pedagogical initiatives, contributed to the development of new academic programs, and supported both faculty and students with great commitment. We would like to thank her warmly for her many contributions to the department and wish her continued success in her academic path, in both research and teaching.

Dr. Orit Rabkin has been appointed as Associate Head of Department for teaching. Dr. Rabkin brings extensive experience in curriculum development, pedagogical reform, and leadership in the field of English for Academic Purposes within the department. We wish her great success in her new role.

Prof. Eitan Globerson has been appointed Associate Head of Department for Graduate Affairs and the Arts.

We are delighted to welcome four new faculty members, each contributing unique expertise that enriches and strengthens the department's academic and research activity:

Associate Prof. Orit Wolf – a pianist and multidisciplinary creator who began her engagement with the department as Artist in Residence in 2022/23.

Dr. Topaz Halperin – Senior Lecturer and philosopher of science, whose research focuses on the philosophical implications of theories in ecology and evolution, and on the relationship between theoretical modeling and empirical work.

Dr. Matthew Perkins-McQuay – Senior Lecturer and interdisciplinary scholar working at the intersection of the history and philosophy of science, the history of medicine, psychiatric categorization, historical epistemology, and the epistemic meaning of exceptional states of consciousness.

Dr. Asaf Wexler – Senior Lecturer specializing in the philosophy of cognition and psychology, with an emphasis on perception, consciousness, and mind-body relations.

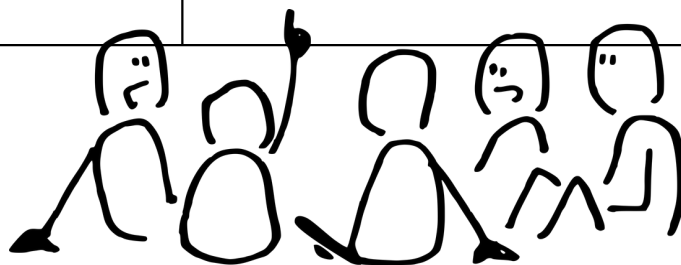
We also express our appreciation to **Dr. Enrico Piergiacomi**, who concluded his time at the department. We thank him for his academic and personal contributions and wish him success in his future endeavors.

Seminar - Winter semester 2026

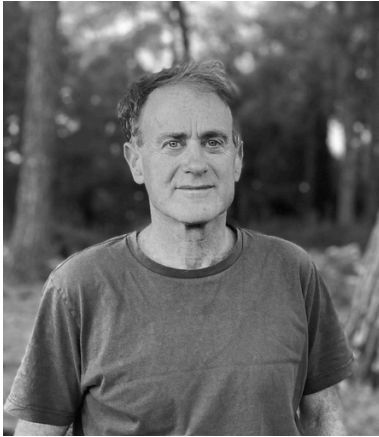
We are pleased to invite you to take part in the upcoming departmental seminar series this semester. The series will explore the links between science, technology, the humanities & social sciences. It aims to create a space for interdisciplinary reflection and to explore together how scientific and technological knowledge is produced, takes shape, and gains meaning within cultural, social, philosophical, and ethical contexts, as well as to investigate the links between scientific and technological knowledge and broader human questions. The series is intended for both faculty members and students to strengthen & expand the dialogue on the humanities and social sciences at the Technion.

List of meetings for the upcoming semester:

Oded Rechavi Tel-Aviv University	Can memory be inherited and what are the limits of the brain?	5.11.25
Amit Zoran The Hebrew University of Jerusalem	Hybrid Creation: Sacred Trees, Magical Tools, Robots, and Artificial Intelligence	26.11.25
Clemence Paulin Pinel Ben-Gurion University	TBD	10.12.25
Vered Aviv Bezalel Academy of Art and Design	Dancing from the chair: From motor empathy to social understanding	7.1.26
Aviv Hoffmann The Hebrew University of Jerusalem	TBD	28.1.26



Prof. Ohad Nachtomy



Recent Academic Activities

We are pleased to share the recent activities and publications of **Prof. Ohad Nachtomy**.

His article, "An Experience of Infinity in Leibniz's Philosophical Laboratory," was published on [Hypotheses.org](https://www.hypotheses.org) (March 2025) and is also featured on the [Dr. Gindi Foundation website](https://www.dr.gindi.org).

In this thought-provoking essay, Prof. Nachtomy explores a remarkable note written by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in 1676, in which the philosopher describes a reiterative act of thinking about his own thinking. Nachtomy shows how this early reflection experiment anticipates Leibniz's mature ideas about infinity, self-awareness, and the shared capacity for self-reflection between the human and divine intellect.

This year, Prof. Nachtomy spent a research leave at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin and a month at the École Normale Supérieure in Lyon, France.

He organized the annual New York City Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy, held at Humboldt University in Berlin, presented a joint paper on Self-Sufficiency with Alik Pelman at the annual meeting of the Isreal Association for Philosophy in August.

In addition, Prof. Nachtomy was invited to deliver a plenary lecture at the Spinoza Congress in Morelia, Mexico (October 30, 2025), titled:

"How Does It Feel to Be a Finite Model of an Infinite Substance."

The event was hosted by the Facultad de Filosofía, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, and featured leading international scholars of early modern philosophy.

Learn more about the Spinoza Congress [here](#).

Prof. Nachtomy also won an ISF research grant in July for two years.



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Dr Tzipora Rakedzon's Language and Communication Lab

Article

Our article (Caterina Scaccia, Dustin Lazarovici, Tzipora Rakedzon) entitled "The persuasive function of humor in scientific discourse: the case study of 'Against 'Measurement' by J.S. Bell" has been accepted to the International Journal of Humor Research (HUMOR).



Tzipora Rakedzon was invited to the Princeton Neuroscience Institute to present a series of workshops entitled, "Practical AI-based Tools for Science Communication" (July 2025).

Dr. Amani Jaber presented her previous research project, "Women Leading Linguistic Change: Sociolinguistic Reflexes of Modernization in Multilingual Societies" at the 16th International Conference on Linguistic Research and Applications Preliminary Programme, 22–24 October 2025 at the Sorbonne Université, Paris, France.

Dr. Laila Haddad-Najjar presented her previous work from her PhD, "Bidirectional cross-linguistic transfer of orthographic and morphological awareness in Arabic (L1) and English (EFL)" at the ICER – The Israeli Conference for Education Research, Acco, Israel (2025, September 15–17).



Ilana Shlomov, a PhD student, received a full scholarship to attend and present her PhD research at the SNSF Workshop: Re-Imaging Intellectual Development: Epistemic Skills for Human-AI Interaction, October 7–10, 2025, at Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW), Zurich, Switzerland.



Shallom Lumor, a PhD student, presented her work entitled "The role of hashtags in academic communication on social media" at the 8th International HINET Conference, September 16–17, 2025.

Associate Artist Prof. Orit Wolf



A new concert series, “PoeMix”, established by Associate Artist Prof. Wolf and Prof. Hagai Peretz, is dedicated to exploring the intersections of poetry and music. The inaugural session, titled “On Absurd, Paradox, and the Impossible,” will feature guest speakers Prof. Rafi Weichert, Prof. Irad Yavne, and Prof. Eldad Yechiam. Between the live poetry readings, Wolf and selected Technion students will perform musical works related to the session’s theme. Wednesday, November 12, 1:00 PM | Batler Auditorium, Samuel Ne’eman Institute | For registration, click [here](#).

New Album Release

This season marks the release of “Piano Encores”, a new album by Orit Wolf, presented in eight singles issued sequentially throughout the season. In addition, her newly composed work “Stillness” will be available for streaming. Listen on Spotify, [click here](#).

Masterclass in Performance

On December 28 at 15:00, Orit Wolf will lead a masterclass at the Technion Visitor Center dedicated to performance, interpretation, and artistic communication across disciplines. Prof. Eitan Globerson will join as guest pianist and co-host, contributing to the discussion and musical demonstrations. The masterclass is open to students from all faculties and degree levels [Registration details will be announced soon].

“Music, Science and Inspiration” – Fourth Season

The “Music, Science and Inspiration” series, founded and led by Associate Professor Orit Wolf, returns for its fourth season. The series provides a platform for dialogue among musicians, scientists, and scholars, highlighting how artistic creativity and scientific inquiry mutually inform one another. The opening session, dedicated to “The Art of Memory,” will feature Prof. Shahar Kvatinsky, Prof. Omri Barak, and Prof. Gal Richter-Levin.

Wednesday, January 14, 12:30. | Churchill Auditorium | Further details and registration information will follow.

Dr. Elad Shniderman

Vocal Coupling and the Dynamics of Spontaneous Group Synchrony

Exploring how humans self-organize vocal timing and coordination within networked systems

Dr. Shniderman, in collaboration with Prof. Naama Brenner and Dr. Nir Ofek from the Biological Network Lab at the Technion, conducted a series of experiments exploring how human groups spontaneously synchronize their vocal behavior.

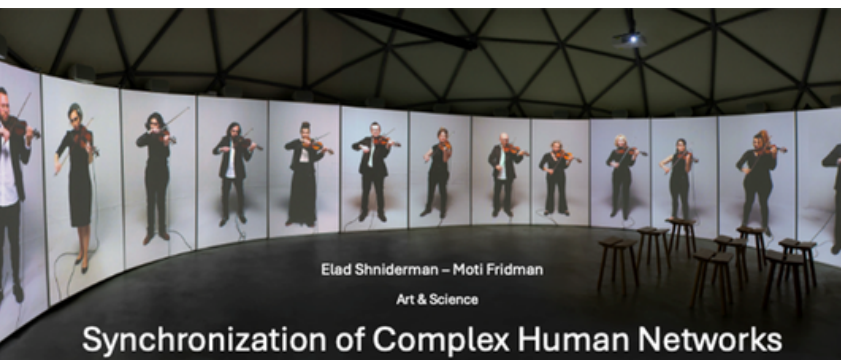
Participants, connected only through microphones and headphones without visual contact, repeated short vocal patterns while receiving different types of auditory feedback.

The studies, conducted with Technion students, Bar-Ilan music students, and soldiers in rehabilitation, revealed how vocal synchronization can emerge naturally within networked systems and suggested potential applications for group therapy and social rehabilitation.



New Publication in Scientific Reports

In July 2025, Dr. Elad Shniderman and collaborators published their third paper on the synchronization of complex human networks, titled "Tempo Oscillations in Rhythmic Human Networks."



The study used a system of coupled violin players connected through computer-controlled auditory feedback to explore how connectivity, delay, and tempo affect collective rhythm and coordination.

The findings reveal distinct oscillation patterns and demonstrate how increased connectivity stabilizes synchronization in human networks — offering new insights into group dynamics and collective behavior.

Read it [hear](#).

Dr. Avigail Ferdman



Dr. Avigail Ferdman continues to advance philosophical inquiry into AI and technology through multiple scholarly initiatives. Her latest paper, “AI, deskilling and the prospects for public reason” has been published in Minds and Machines, examining how AI-driven deskilling might threaten the cognitive and social capacities essential for democratic deliberation and civic friendship.

Building on this work, Avigail has another paper forthcoming in *AI & Society* titled “AI is a Structural Problem.”

This paper introduces the concept of 'capacity-hostile environments' to analyze how AI mediation could systemically impede human capacity cultivation. Drawing on philosophy of skill and social epistemology, she argues that AI's replacement of human activity risks undermining the habituation processes essential for developing our human capacities, ultimately calling for critical evaluation of AI applications based on their conduciveness to capacity cultivation.

Beyond her research, Avigail has taken on a leadership role as co-chair of the new Society for Philosophy and Technology Special Interest Group (SIG) on Political Philosophy of Engineering and Technology, alongside colleagues from the University of Johannesburg and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, under the auspices of the Society for Philosophy and Technology (SPT). This two-year initiative will facilitate interdisciplinary dialogue through webinars, reading groups, and workshops exploring how technology, political structures and power relations shape and reshape each other and what we should do about it.

Prof. Eitan Globerson

A Musical Journey: From Signal to Experience



The series invites Technion faculty and administrative staff to broaden their musical horizons and engage in dialogue within the Technion community about music, as well as scientific research and technological innovations related to it.

Each event will feature live performances by Technion faculty and students, alongside guest artists, and will explore the rich connections between music, structure, creativity, and interpretation.

[for more info.](#)

Hillel Roman

Artist in Residence



We are delighted to welcome Hillel Roman as the Artist in Residence for the 2025–2026 academic year. Roman is a multidisciplinary artist based in Tel Aviv. His work spans drawing, installation, and performance, integrating technology, science, and philosophy. His major projects include Providence (2024). Welcome Home (Artport Gallery, 2024), Life Science (Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 2020), and High House (Tel Aviv Municipality, 2020). His art bridges technology, politics, and poetics, and has been exhibited internationally. Learn more about his work: <https://www.hillelroman.com/>.

Roman will lead the Artist in Residence Studio during the winter semester:

a multidisciplinary creative studio that fosters dialogue between diverse fields of knowledge and encourages students to explore art as an integral part of life and a tool for social transformation.

Dr. David Manheim

Dr. David Manheim recently authored two significant publications. His forthcoming paper, “Language Models’ Hall of Mirrors Problem: Why AI Alignment Requires Peircean Semiosis,” will soon appear in Philosophy and Technology ([DOI link](#)).

In addition, he has published a new report with the RAND Corporation titled “Understanding the Theoretical Limits of AI-Enabled Pathogen Design” ([Read here](#)).



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Dr. Maayan Tsadka



On November 13, Dr. Maayan Tsadka will take part in the Transmeet Festival for Art and Science, held at the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History in Tel Aviv. The festival brings together artists, musicians, and scientists to explore the intersections between artistic creation, scientific inquiry, and new ways of perceiving the world. As part of the festival, Dr. Tsadka will perform together with the Musica Nova Ensemble, presenting the work *Ways of Listening* – a piece that invites audiences to reconsider the act of listening itself, exploring sound as a living, dynamic process that connects humans,

environments, and technologies. The performance is part of an ongoing artistic and research-based exploration into how we engage with sound, hearing, and attention central themes in Dr. Tsadka's creative and academic practice.

Festival [website](#): About the work: [Ways of Listening](#)

Avia Ben-Ari

We are proud to share that Avia Ben-Ari, a PhD student in the Mindful Learning Technologies Lab at the Faculty of Education in Science and Technology, and a lecturer in the Department, has been selected to represent the Technion at the Global Young Scientists Summit (GYSS 2026) in Singapore this coming January. The prestigious summit brings together outstanding young researchers from leading universities around the world to engage with some of the most distinguished scientists of our time, including Nobel Laureates, Turing Award winners, and recipients of other major scientific prizes.

Participants will discuss today's grand challenges in science, technology, and society, and explore how interdisciplinary research can help address them.

The GYSS 2026 will be held at the National Univ. of Singapore from January 5-9, 2026.



Hebrew Ulpan Tomer Talmor and Efrat Arava

The Ulpan Steps Outside the Classroom

After a break of several years, the Department has once again opened an Ulpan for teaching Hebrew. The students studying in the Ulpan belong to the new program of the Technion International School. In this program, students take courses in English during their first year, and afterward, they join Hebrew-taught courses in various faculties. Therefore,



they study Hebrew intensively, beginning with the Summer Ulpan.

This year, two Hebrew courses are being held in the Ulpan: Hebrew 1, the beginner level, and Hebrew 4, the most advanced level. As part of their studies, the students went on a field trip to downtown Haifa. The advanced class, Hebrew 4, explored interesting and important sites in the lower city through a Street Quest-style game designed by their instructor, Tomer Talmor,

and virtually built using artificial intelligence. The activity had three main goals: to use the vocabulary learned in class, to learn about the history of the city of Haifa, and to strengthen the students' group spirit.

The beginner class, Hebrew 1, received a question sheet to complete in Wadi Nisnas. To answer the questions, students had to look for new and familiar fruits and vegetables, ask vendors for their prices, and find a spice shop and unique restaurants.

After both groups completed their tasks, they met for an Israeli-style meal at "Hummus Nechama" restaurant on Ha'Atzmaut Street.

According to the students, the tour was educational, enjoyable, and—above all—delicious.



Student Concerts and Musical

This past spring semester, the Department of Humanities and Arts proudly hosted a series of student concerts showcasing the exceptional talent and dedication of Technion students participating in the department's music courses and ensembles.

The performances featured the Technion Symphony Orchestra, the Technion Choir, and advanced jazz ensembles, all led by our faculty:

"Between Magic and Swing" & "A Night at the Opera" – July 10, 2025

"Somewhere Over the Rainbow" – July 8, 2025 |

Jazz Duet Concert: "A Tribute to Duke Ellington" – May 14, 2025

Advanced Jazz Improvisation Final Concert – July 8, 2025, 19:00

These concerts brought together students, faculty, and members of the Technion community, highlighting the department's diverse musical activity.

[Click here for more information.](#)



Hava Margalit

Literature Review on the Effects of Physical Activity on Psychological Well-Being



As part of the Technion's response to the growing mental health challenges among students and staff since October 7th, I have developed innovative mind-body programs designed to provide practical tools for strengthening resilience through physical activity.

To validate the scientific foundations upon which these programs will continue to be developed, I conducted an extensive scientific literature review that establishes the

positive effects of physical activity in times of stress.

Over the past two years, the Physical Education Unit has successfully implemented six programs for students and three for academic and administrative staff.

These programs emphasized targeted physical activity as a central tool for coping with current challenges.

The positive results and solid scientific basis highlight the importance of continuing and expanding these initiatives. In doing so, the Technion not only responds to the current crisis but also fosters a long-term culture of well-being that will serve the Technion community for years to come.

To read the review, [click here](#):

The Physiological Foundations of Mental Resilience: A Literature Review on the Effects of Physical Activity on Psychological Well-Being



Our New Studio

We are thrilled to announce the opening of our brand-new Art Studio! This exciting milestone marks a significant investment by the Department in fostering creativity and artistic exploration at the Technion.

The new studio is spacious, bright, and fully modular – designed to serve both as a hands-on creative workspace and as a flexible classroom for future theoretical courses.

It now includes a dedicated storage area and a shaded outdoor pergola, providing students with a comfortable and inspiring environment to work safely and freely.

This new space embodies our department's ongoing commitment to integrating art and science.





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