

Ruth HaCohen Pinczower – CV – June 2026

Ruth HaCohen Pinczower is Arthur Rubinstein Professor Emerita of Musicology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Born and educated in Jerusalem, she received her B.A. in Musicology and Jewish Thought, her M.A. in Musicology, and her Ph.D. from the Hebrew University, graduating with highest honors.

Her research explores the role of music in shaping and reflecting cultural, religious, and political processes in Western and Jewish societies from the early modern period to the present. Combining historical, philosophical, and semiotic approaches, her work has addressed transformations in aesthetic conceptions of music in the early modern era, questions concerning meaning in music; the history of musical emotions, and the shaping of religious time and space through music.

Among her major publications is *The Music Libel Against the Jews*, which investigates the historical construction of the Jew as a producer of noise within a Christian world imagined as governed by harmonious sound. The book received the Otto Kinkeldey Award of the American Musicological Society in 2012. Her book *Composing Power, Singing Freedom: The Interplay of Music and Politics in the West*, co-authored with Yaron Ezrahi, examines the relationships between music and political authority. Both books received the Polonsky Prize for Creativity and Originality in the Humanities.

Her most recent book, *Listening to Job: Men of Sorrows in Jewish and Christian Sonic Traditions*, offers a wide-ranging study of the sonic dimension of the Book of Job and its embodiments in Jewish and Christian traditions from antiquity to the present.

At the Hebrew University, she directed the Martin Buber Society of Fellows in the Humanities and Social Sciences and served as Head of the School of Arts. She was a member of the Board of Directors of the National Library of Israel (2018–2024) and has served for the past decade on the Board of Trustees of the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute. She is an editor of the *Yale Journal of Music & Religion* and served on the international committee for the 2012 Balzan Prize in Musicology, awarded for the project “Toward a Global History of Music.”

She has held fellowships and visiting appointments at leading institutions worldwide, including the Institutes for Advanced Study in Berlin, Princeton, and Rockefeller Foundation, and lectured, among many others, at Oxford, Cambridge, and the University of Chicago, where she served as Greenberg Professor in Jewish Studies.

Ruth HaCohen Pinczower received the Rothschild Prize in the Humanities in 2022 and was elected an Honorary Member of the American Musicological Society in 2017. She was elected to the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities in 2026.