Yehonatan Indursky is a graduate of the acclaimed Ponevezh Yeshiva in Bnai Brak and of the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School in Jerusalem. He grew up in a Haredi or Ultra-Orthodox home in Jerusalem, but he eventually made the difficult decision to break from a strictly Orthodox way of life. While many people who walk away from such a strict way of life tend to expend tremendous energy criticizing their former way of life and the people who remain in that lifestyle, Indursky chose a different path. He continued to respect his orthodox background, and he maintained as best as possible his relationships with his family and friends. Such commitments enabled him to become a bridge in many ways between the orthodox world and the secular world, helping one better understand the other.

Today in Israel the relations between the ultra-orthodox (Haredi) and secular communities are complicated by a host of social, educational, economic, political, and, obviously, religious differences. Indursky’s bridging efforts have resulted in several successful projects that deal with relations between the orthodox and secular communities in Israel. Perhaps the most well known of his works is the award-winning television drama series “Shtisel,” which follows the lives of Rabbi Shulem Shtisel and his family as they in complicated ways engage with or resist secular Israeli values and lifestyles. The show opens windows into what is a closed society. It has been a hit among both Haredi and secular Israelis, and has been watched by millions on Netflix.

In his lecture Yehonatan Indursky will discuss the connection between the themes in Shtisel with his own life as he emerged from and yet remains concerned for the Haredi, ultra-orthodox community. He will also discuss how Israelis and people around the world are engaging with the Shtisel series and his other work. His work seeks not simply to reveal the Haredi world to the secular world, but also to build understanding and bridges between the two.

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