

A HEBREW LIEDERABEND

An Evening of Hebrew Song

TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2019

ANNE E. LEIBOWITZ MEMORIAL CONCERT

PROGRAM

6:00pm Pre-Concert Lecture
7:00pm Concert

Performed by
ILANA DAVIDSON
RAPHAEL FRIEDER
ELIZABETH SHAMMASH
YEHUDI WYNER
and guest artist RONN YEDIDIA

Devised by
NEIL W. LEVIN



*This event is part of the
Smithsonian Year of Music.*

Including music by
JOSEPH ACHRON
JOEL ENGEL
ALEXANDER KREIN
PAUL BEN-HAIM
OFER BEN-AMOTS

and poetry by
SHAUL TCHERNICHOVSKY
AVIGDOR HAMEIRI
YEHUDA HALEVI
LEAH GOLDBERG
RACHEL
HAYIM NAHMAN BIALIK

and others...

YIVO INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH RESEARCH
in the Center for Jewish History
15 WEST 16TH STREET · NYC



PROGRAM

THEY SAY THERE IS A LAND | אומרים: ישנה ארץ

Music by Naomi Shemer | 1930-2004 | נעמי שמר
Words by Shaul Tchernichovsky | 1875-1943 | שאול טשרניחובסקי

THEY SAY THERE IS A LAND | אומרים: ישנה ארץ

Music by Joel Engel | 1868-1927 | יואל אנגל
Words by Shaul Tchernichovsky | 1875-1943 | שאול טשרניחובסקי

TWO LETTERS | שני מכתבים

Music by Joel Engel | 1868-1927 | יואל אנגל
Words by Avigdor Hameiri | 1890-1970 | אביגדור המאירי

IN EXILE | גלות

Music by Heinrich Schalit | 1886-1976 | היינריך שליט
Words by Yehuda HaLevi | 1075-1141 | יהודה הלוי

LONGING | שנת עולם

Music by Heinrich Schalit | 1886-1976 | היינריך שליט
Words by Yehuda HaLevi | 1075-1141 | יהודה הלוי

SNOW ON MY CITY | שלג על עירי

Music and Words by Naomi Shemer | 1930-2004 | נעמי שמר
Arranged by Raphael Frieder | 1930-2004 | רפאל פרידר

THE SOUND OF SILENCE | קול דממה

Music by Dov Zamir | 1928-2002 | דב זמיר
Words by Fania Bergstein | 1908-1950 | פניה ברגשטיין
Arranged by Hanan Winternitz | 1928-2002 | חנן וינטרניץ

DAY OF NISAN | יום ניסן

Music and Words by Dov Zamir | 1928-2002 | דב זמיר
Arranged by Miri Zamir-Capsouto | 1928-2002 | מירי זמיר קפסוטו

ANCIENT WINE | יין עתיק

Music by Yehezkel Braun | 1922-2014 | יחזקאל בראון
Words by Leah Goldberg | 1911-1970 | לאה גולדברג

FROM MY WINDOW | מחלוני

Music by Yehezkel Braun | 1922-2014 | יחזקאל בראון
Words by Leah Goldberg | 1911-1970 | לאה גולדברג

FROM MY WINDOW | מחלוני

Music by Nurit Hirsh | 1942- | נורית הירש
Words by Leah Goldberg | 1911-1970 | לאה גולדברג

IN THE MORNINGS TEARS WAKE ME | בקר תעירני דמעתי

Music by Alexander Krein | 1883-1951 | אלכסנדר קריין
Words by Abram Markovich Efros | 1888-1954 | אברהם אפרת

BARREN WOMAN | עקרה

Music by Rivka Levinson | 1906-1951 | רבקה לוינסון
Words by Rachel Bluwstein | 1890-1931 | רחל

SEA OF GALILEE | כנרת

Music by Marc Lavry | 1903-1967 | מרק לברי
Words by Avigdor Hameiri | 1890-1970 | אביגדור המאירי

TO THE DESERT | למדבר

Arranged by Stefan Wolpe | 1902-1972 | שטפן וולפה

WHITHER YOUR BELOVED | אנה הלך דודך

Melody by Emanuel Amiran-Pougatchov; Gil Aldema
עמנואל עמירן-פוגצ'וב; גיל אלדמע
Arranged by Menachem Wiesenberg | 1950- | מנחם ויזנברג
Words from The Song of Songs | שיר השירים

INTERMISSION

LIGHTS OUT | כיבוי אורות

Music and Words by Naomi Shemer | 1930-2004 | נעמי שמר
Arranged by Menachem Wiesenberg | 1950- | מנחם ויזנברג

THE HYACINTH | שיר ליקינתון

Melody by Rivka Gwily | 1911-1970 | רבקה גוילי
Words by Lea Goldberg | 1911-1970 | לאה גולדברג
Arranged by Menachem Wiesenberg | 1950- | מנחם ויזנברג

BEHOLD, THOU ART FAIR | הנך יפה רעיתי

Music by Yedidiya Admon | 1894-1982 | ידידיה אדמון
Words from the Song of Songs | שיר השירים

AH, YOU ARE FAIR MY DARLING | הנך יפה רעיתי

Music by Ofer Ben-Amots | 1955- | עופר בן-אמוץ
Words from the Song of Songs | שיר השירים

A STAR FALLEN DOWN | כוכב נפל

Music by Paul Ben-Haim | 1897-1984 | פאול בן חיים
Words by Matti Katz | 1944-1964 | מתי כץ

CANOPY | אפיריון

Music by Eytan Pessen | 1961- | איתן פסן
Words by Jonathan Ratosh | 1908-1981 | יונתן רטוש

AT TWILIGHT | לפנות ערב

Music by Sasha Argov | 1914-1995 | ששה ארגוב
Words by Yaakov Shabtai | 1934-1981 | יעקב שבתאי
Arranged by Arbel

CANZONETTA: DREAMY LIGHT | אורות חולמים

Music by Joseph Achron | 1886-1941 | יוסף אחרון
Words by Avraham Ben-Yitzhak | 1883-1950 | אברהם בן יצחק

WITH GENTLE FINGERS | באצבעות ענוגות

Music by Alex Weiser | 1989- | אלכס וויזר
Words by David Vogel | 1891-1944 | דוד פוגל

NOW I'LL TAKE | הנה אקח

Music by Abraham Schwadron (Sharon) | 1878-1957 | אברהם שבדרון (שרון)
Words by Rachel Bluwstein | 1890-1931 | רחל

THE SKY IS ACROSS FROM ME | ממוולי השמיים

Music and Words by Ronn Yedidia | 1960- | רון ידידיה

NEITHER DAY NOR NIGHT | לא ביום ולא בלילה

Folksong
Words by Hayim Nahman Bialik | 1873-1934 | חיים נחמן ביאליק

NEITHER DAY NOR NIGHT | לא ביום ולא בלילה

Music by Samuel Alman | 1887-1947 | שמואל אלמן
Words by Hayim Nahman Bialik | 1873-1934 | חיים נחמן ביאליק

THERE COMES PEACE | באה מנוחה

Arranged by Kurt Weill | 1900-1950 | קורט וייל
Melody by Daniel Sambursky | 1910-1970 | דניאל סמבורסקי
Words by Nathan Alterman | 1910-1970 | נתן אלתרמן

WE'VE COME | באנו

Arranged by Aaron Copland | 1900-1990 | אהרן קופלנד
Melody by Joel Walbe | 1950- | יואל ולבה
Words by Nathan Alterman | 1910-1970 | נתן אלתרמן

NOTES ON THE COMPOSERS

Composer and violinist **JOSEPH ACHRON** (1886–1943) belongs to the school of musicians, ethnologists, folklorists, and other artists and intellectuals in the Tsarist Russian Empire who, during the first decade of the 20th century, attempted to establish a new Jewish national art music based on ethnic as well as religious heritage. Intrigued and encouraged by both the Russian and the more recent Russo-Jewish national-cultural pursuit of folklore, that coterie—founding the New Jewish National School in music—formalized itself in 1908 as the *Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik* (Society for Jewish Folk Music) in St. Petersburg. Branches followed in Moscow, Riga, Odessa, and elsewhere in the Tsarist Empire as well as, later, in Vienna albeit only unofficially connected there and under a different appellation. The name of the St. Petersburg society and its branches, however, is misleading. Although the initial phase of its activities centered around harmonizing and arranging Jewish folk music collected from various parts of the Russian Empire, its long-range purpose turned out to be more artistic than ethnological. Its second transitory stage involved shaping such arranged folk material for concert rendition, and in its ultimate stage, the New Jewish National School aimed at original composition—based on or inspired by that Jewish heritage—which its members and proponents saw as accumulating eventually to become a national Jewish art (read ‘classical’) music. Musical publication was therefore an important part of the society’s efforts. It founded its own press, which published three of Achron’s early works.

To some extent, the “Russification” path among Russian composers and in the Russian classical music world became a model for a Jewish counterpart. But the mission espoused by the *Gesellschaft* and New Jewish National School composers also had been kindled and bred by a number of deeper forces operating among the Jewish intelligentsia in the Russian sphere, including the awakening of a national consciousness, the revival of Hebrew and the rejuvenation and reinforcement of Yiddish, the interest in a secular Hebrew as well as Yiddish literature, and, of course, Zionism, with its cultural and historical ramifications. Underlying those currents were the powerful cultural forces of the movement known as the Haskala—the Jewish “Enlightenment”—which had sought to implant secular culture and literature, humanistic thought, and Western European-style social liberalism within eastern European Jewry. Indeed, the middle-class intelligentsia’s very embrace of “the folk” and its music was one manifestation of a liberal worldview

fostered by the Haskala.

Achron’s brief *Gesellschaft* experience turned out to be his guiding inspiration for much of his artistic life. Though a relative latecomer to the group, he was one of the leading musical personalities to come out of its milieu.

Achron was born in Losdzey [Lozdzieje], in the Suwalky region of historic Lithuania (then part of Russian Poland; now Lazdijai, Lithuania) into a comfortable middle-class family. His father was an amateur violinist as well as a *lay ba’al t’filla* (amateur precentor, or cantor). Joseph’s younger brother, Isadore, was an accomplished pianist who later became Jascha Heifetz’s accompanist for a time in America. The family moved to Warsaw, where Joseph began violin lessons at the age of five. He soon emerged as a child prodigy, and at seven years old he wrote his first known composition—a lullaby for violin (an unpublished manuscript now in the British Museum). He made his debut at the age of nine (reviewed in a St. Petersburg newspaper) and his first tour at thirteen, which took him to many European parts of the Russian Empire: Kiev, Odessa, Łódz, Białystok, Grodno, and St. Petersburg, where he played at one of the imperial palaces at a birthday celebration of the Tsar’s brother, Grand Duke Michael. On that occasion he he was presented with a gold watch by the Tsar’s mother, Tsarina Maria Fedorovna.

In 1898 the family relocated again, this time to St. Petersburg, where Achron entered the conservatory with monetary assistance from the Grand Duke and joined the class of the legendary violin teacher, Leopold Auer, whose other students included at various times Jascha Heifetz, Mischa Elman, Efram Zimbalist, Nathan Milstein, and Tascha Seidl. Achron also studied composition with Anatoly Lyadov, best known today outside Russia for his descriptive orchestral pieces and for his rejection of Diaghilev’s commission for a Firebird ballet score, which then went to Stravinsky and launched his brilliant career.

By the time Achron graduated from the conservatory in 1904, he had written a dozen compositions. He demonstrated an affinity for Judaic themes well before his *Gesellschaft* association. His *Variations on Kamarinskaya*, op. 12, for example, has a theme and variation (no. 9) marked “Hebraïque.” He went to Germany for three years, where his concerts met with great success. His performance of Beethoven’s violin concerto with the Leipzig Gewandhaus, conducted by Arthur Nikisch, incorporated his own cadenza. On his return to St. Petersburg, he became increasingly interested in composition, and he studied orchestration with Maximilian Steinberg, Rimsky-Korsakov’s

son-in-law. Analysts of Achron's music have observed that of all the Russian composers, Scriabin exerted the most significant influence on his work. On Scriabin's death, in 1915, Achron wrote an Epitaph (op. 38) in his memory.

Achron considered himself primarily a violinist and a composer, hopeful for inclusion in the general mainstream of Russian music. However, around 1911 he became attracted to the work and mission of the Gesellschaft/New Jewish National School circles, intrigued by their reactions to the musical assimilation of many Russian-Jewish composers who demonstrated an obliviousness to Jewish roots. Solomon Rosowsky (1878–1962), an officer of the main St. Petersburg section of the Society, became friendly with Achron after hearing him play, introducing him (according to the former's 'recollections') to the Gesellschaft's activities and its discovery of Jewish heritage and folklore as a source of artistic creativity. Achron joined the Gesellschaft that year and later became chairman of its music committee. Rosowsky considered himself Achron's mentor, a relationship that continued throughout their lives after both had settled in the United States.

Achron's first composition following his joining the Gesellschaft was his *Hebrew Melody for violin and piano* (op. 33, 1911) based on a theme he remembered hearing in a Warsaw synagogue in his youth. It remains his most famous piece, part of the standard repertoire of virtually all concert violinists and a frequent encore number. It has been played and/or recorded by Heifetz, Milstein, Elman, Henryk Szeryng, and Itzhak Perlman, to name only a small handful of violinists, and it usually provides the primary if not only recognition of Achron's name in the classical music world. It was first performed in St. Petersburg in 1912 at a ball-concert given by an adjutant to the Tsar, where Achron played it as an encore after a program of classical works. The immediate success of *Hebrew Melody* actually changed the course of Achron's musical life, since from that point on, he devoted a significant part of his energies and gifts to music with Jewish connections. His next piece was a ballad on Hebrew themes for cello and piano, *Hazzan* (op. 34). A number of pieces related to Jewish themes followed: *Three Pieces on Jewish Folksongs*; *Hebrew Dance*; *Hebrew Lullaby*; *Dance Improvisations*; *Variations on El yivne ha galil*, for piano; and *To the Jewess*.

Achron became preoccupied with developing a "Jewish" harmonic and contrapuntal idiom that would be more appropriate to Jewish melodies than typical Western techniques, but he opposed the notion of an artificially superimposed "Jewish style." He was convinced that any possible stylistic development of

a Jewish national art music required an evolutionary course, just as Western music had evolved over centuries. In his essay, "On Jewish Music," he wrote that any serious Jewish art music must "be developed by gradual assimilation" and that if Jewish composers were to express their own Jewish experiences musically, the creative product would be "welcome and accepted as an important and integral part of music as a whole." That is, any Jewish national art music—music pertaining to Jewish experience as a people—must first stand as music, and then as a subset of cultivated Western music, rather than the reverse. In this he presaged misunderstood sentiments articulated decades later by composer Hugo Weisgall, who said that for serious music to be "Jewish," it first had to be "good music." Achron rejected as naïve any chauvinistic perceptions of "purity" and "authenticity." "Such purity does not and cannot exist," he wrote. "This is as true of art as of life's other constituents, since inter-influences are not only unavoidable but desirable."

During the First World War, Achron served in the Russian Imperial Army and saw action at the Western Front. He then joined the music corps of the Russian army and was headquartered in Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg and renamed from the German to the Russian as a patriotic gesture when Russia went to war with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian as well as the Ottoman Empires in what became the Great War, subsequently known as the First World War). After Russia's exit from the war following the October Revolution (the Bolshevik coup) and during the first few years of the Revolution, he continued his performing career and began to solidify his reputation as a composer. In 1922 he moved to Berlin, where, with a few other émigré colleagues, he tried to replant the Gesellschaft, which disbanded in Petrograd shortly after the Revolution and then, a bit later, in Moscow as well. Among his major works of that period is his *Children's Suite*, based on motives of biblical cantillations. Achron became increasingly attracted to both biblical cantillation (*ta'amei hamikra*) and secular Jewish folksong as sources for compositions, but unlike many of his colleagues, he grew less interested in Hassidic music as a mine from which to draw.

While in Berlin, Achron became interested in the work of the Habima (Hebrew) theatrical studio, then on tour from its home base in the Soviet Union and in residence in Germany (and later to become the national theatre of Israel), which inspired his original score for *Belshazzar*. His Berlin experience proved to be short-lived, and in 1924 he went to what was then known as Palestine for several months, as did many former Gesellschaft associates. That visit had a profound effect on his subsequent music, both

spiritually and in terms of various melodies, modes, and cantillations he heard there for the first time. He came to America in 1925—first to Chicago, and then New York for nine years. Although he devoted himself ever more diligently to composition during those years, he still performed frequently. At an eightieth birthday tribute to Leopold Auer at Carnegie Hall, Heifetz, Zimbalist, and the honoree played Achron's cadenza in their performance of a Vivaldi concerto for three violins (a concert that also included performances by Sergei Rachmaninov, Joseph Hoffman, Ossip Gabrilowitch, and other supreme giants of the music world at that time).

In New York, Achron wrote several scores of incidental music for productions at Maurice Schwartz's Yiddish Art Theatre, building on his Berlin experiences with Habima and the Teatron Eretz Israeli. Among the plays for which he wrote music were Goldfaden's *The Tenth Commandment*, Leivick's *The Golem*, Sholom Asch's *The Witch of Castille*, and two by Sholom Aleichem: *Kiddush hashem* and *Stempenyu*. The score for the last was later reworked into a piece for violin and piano with the same title, premiered by Joseph Szigeti and later programmed by Jascha Heifetz.

Also in New York, Achron wrote his one serious synagogue work, a complete Sabbath evening service according to the Reform format of that day. It was commissioned by Temple Emanu-El—where the music director, Lazare Saminsky, had also been a key figure in the Gesellschaft circle in Russia—and it was published in 1932.

In 1934 Achron moved to Los Angeles, which was then playing host to a significant group of émigré composers, intellectuals, and performers, such as Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Schoenberg, Toch, Zeisl, Thomas Mann, Stravinsky, Arthur Rubinstein, Gregor Piatigorsky, and Heifetz. Achron became part of that circle, and like many fellow émigré composers, he took advantage of opportunities for involvement in film scoring (in his case, with minimal success) and playing in Hollywood studios. He also became active in some of the intellectual organizations of Jewish musical life there.

Achron completed his second (1936) and third (1937) violin concertos in Los Angeles, the latter on commission from Heifetz, and he played the premieres of both with the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Otto Klemperer. Unlike his first violin concerto, written in New York and premiered in 1927 by the composer and the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Serge Koussevitsky's baton and dedicated to Heifetz, neither the second nor the third concerto utilized any Jewish material; nor was either purported to be Judaic or Jewish art work. (The first violin concerto is entirely

based on Judaic as well as Jewish secular folkloric themes: Ashkenazi cantillation motives for the Book of Lamentations, *eikha*, in the first movement along with other liturgical references, and two Yemenite Jewish folk dances in the second. (It was recorded only in 1998 for a Milken Archive NAXOS CD, played by Elmar Oliveira and the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin conducted by Joseph Silverstein.) Although the second concerto received favorable reviews, some heard in the third a loss of the charm and inspiration so evident in the first concerto. Indeed, at that point in his life, Achron was attempting to join the avant-garde, and he sometimes allowed a forced theoretical approach to crowd out his natural inclination toward emotional freshness.

Achron's opera is considerable, comprising chamber and orchestral works; solo piano pieces; violin pieces in addition to the concertos; songs and choral settings; eight cadenzas for Paganini, Brahms, Mozart, Beethoven, Vivaldi, and Haydn concertos; and at least thirty-three known violin-and-piano transcriptions of songs and piano miniatures by composers such as Grieg, Brahms, Liszt, Rameau, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Schumann. Found among his papers and other effects were sketches for a planned seven-movement symphonic work.

All of Achron's Jewishly-related music was indelibly affected by his association with the New Jewish National School in music and the Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik. It reflects both his and that school's central thesis that creation of a genuine "Hebrew music" was possible. In spite of the argument that by the 20th century Jews had been without national roots for too long, and therefore could no longer resurrect an individual musical character, Achron insisted that it was still possible to ferret out and define at least some national characteristics of style, especially since some of the fundamentals of ancient Hebrew music could be traced through continuous usage (especially biblical cantillation and modal motifs and modalities), even allowing for transmutation and acculturation over time. To those opponents who posited the argument that the length and geographical breadth of the Diaspora—and its crystallization of host influences—precluded a freely created Jewish national music, he replied in an interview that "the same thing could be said about any music at the time of its creation;

Always and everywhere, dependence upon others precedes the liberation of one's own artistic idiom and self-determination. In the first 'real Russian' compositions, (Glinka) for example, we find Italian influences.

In stating further that a valid Jewish art music must actually incorporate at least some of the acculturated aspects in order to go beyond the narrowness of pre-Diaspora elements, he demonstrated a profound understanding of the issue both historically and aesthetically.

Achron's artistic path as a composer was thus partly a life-long search for a new language of musical expression. Over the course of that search he underwent a series of stylistic transformations, ranging from mid-19th-century Romantic idioms to some of the most important forces in 20th-century Western music—from Russian nationalist and French Impressionist schools, and even to some of the post-tonal influences of the Second Viennese School. But underlying much of his work, overtly or not, was his preoccupation with Jewish elements. Arnold Schoenberg referred to Achron as "one of the most underestimated of modern composers." Albert Weisser, the first thorough historian and critic of the Gesellschaft/New Jewish National School phenomenon, offered one explanation: "Achron's music stood, as it were, between two poles, the specifically Jewish public and the general music audiences; and it could not be wholly accepted by either."

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Born in Ukraine in 1894, **YEDIDIYA ADMON** emigrated to Palestine in 1906, studying music at the Teacher's Seminary in Jerusalem with famed ethnomusicologist and Jewish music historian Abraham Zvi Idelsohn. His musical style is known for its eclectic combination of influences from East European Jewish music as well as Yemenite, Persian, and Arabic influences. Admon served as the chair of the Israeli Society of Composers and Authors (ACUM) from 1950 to 1967 and received the Israel Prize for Music in 1974.

Justifiably claimed by Anglo-Jewry as its most celebrated liturgical composer, his audibly eastern European background and aesthetic orientation notwithstanding, **SAMUEL ALMAN** (1877–1947) continues to be recognised in the wider Ashkenazi cantorial world in general for his wealth of sophisticated yet traditionally informed but original synagogue music that interweaves classical *hazzanut* and inventive choral writing with unsurpassed elegance. Indeed, he reigns internationally as one of the most deservedly prominent figures in the pantheon of artistic synagogue composers. A number of his settings—some chorally intricate as well as broadly conceived, and others equally imposing by their deceiving simplicity and restraint—remain standard repertoire for learned

cantors and skilled choirs of orthodox and/or traditional bent not only in the British Isles, but in North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Israel. A bit less known or remembered, however, but no less artistically significant, is his secular music including both Hebrew and Yiddish lieder, instrumental chamber music, and a major stage work.

Alman was born in Podolia, in the Tsarist Empire. He studied at Odessa's major conservatory, after which he served as a musician in the Russian Imperial Army. He immigrated to London in 1905, amidst the turmoil of that year's Revolution intertwined with continuing pogroms that had begun in the 1880s. He furthered his music studies at the Royal College of Music in London. As choirmaster of the Dalton, or Great Synagogue at Duke's Place for a number of years, he soon became known as well as highly revered for his introduction to England of stylistic features and overall aura of eastern European *hazzanut* and liturgical choral music, which he approached and treated with classical techniques and an abundance of artful taste. He later served the pulpit of the Hampstead Synagogue as its choirmaster, a post he held for twenty-two years. He also directed several other London Jewish choruses, among them the Halevi Choral Society and a chorus of London cantors. He edited a supplement to the *Voice of Prayer and Praise* (1933) and contributed articles to academically-oriented "Jewish music" periodicals such as the *Jewish Music Journal*, published in New York.

Alman is credited with composing the first (insofar as we know from the present state of research) grand opera entirely in Yiddish, *Melekh Akhaz*, or *King Ahaz*. With his own Yiddish libretto drawn from a Hebrew novel by the Haskala novelist, Avraham Mapu, the opera was completed and produced in 1912 at the opening of the Feinman Yiddish People's Theatre on London's East End—then a principal area of residence and cultural activity for London's Yiddish-speaking, immigrant-era Jews. Reviews in the Anglo-Jewish as well as the general press were unusually favorable.

The poet Haim Nahman Bialik features prominently among Alman's Hebrew lieder, many of which were published in London.

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SASHA ARGOV (born Alexander Abramovich) was born in Moscow in 1914 and migrated to British Mandate Palestine in 1934. Argov wrote hundreds of popular songs in Hebrew and was recognized for his work with the Israeli Prize in Hebrew song in 1988. Argov died in Tel Aviv in 1995. Born in Haifa, Israeli and American composer **OFER**

BEN-AMOTS gave his first piano concert at the age of nine, and at sixteen he was awarded first prize in the Chet Piano Competition. Following composition studies with Joseph Dorfman at Tel Aviv University, he was invited to study at the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva, where he was a student of Pierre Wismar and Alberto Ginastera. He received degrees in composition, theory, and piano from the Hochschule für Musik in Detmold, Germany, and in 1987 he came to the United States to begin studies with George Crumb and Richard Wernick at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received his Ph.D. in composition (1991).

Ben-Amots's music has been performed by such orchestras as the Zurich Philharmonic, the Munich Philharmonic, the Austrian Radio orchestra, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Moscow Camerata, the Heidelberg, Erfurt, and Brandenburg Symphonies, the Filarmonici di Sicili, the Colorado Springs Symphony, and the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra. Some of these orchestras, and many others—including the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig—have recorded his works.

Ben-Amots was the winner of the 1994 International Competition for Composers, in Vienna, where his chamber opera, *Fool's Paradise*, was premiered. He is also the recipient of the 1988 Kavannagh Prize for his composition *Fanfare for Orchestra* and the Gold Award at South Africa's 1993 Roodepoort International Competition for Choral Composition. His *Avis Urbanis*, for amplified flute, was awarded first prize at the Kobe International Competition for Flute Composition. In 1999 he was awarded the Aaron Copland Award and the Music Composition Artist Fellowship by the Colorado Council on the Arts.

Ben-Amots is a Jerusalem Fellow of the Center for Jewish Culture and Creativity and a member of the Editorial Board of the Milken Archive for Jewish Music. He is a professor of music at the Colorado College, in Colorado Springs, where he is also chairman of the music department and, in addition to composition and music theory, he teaches a wide variety of liberal arts subjects.

His work for soprano, male-voice chorus, and clarinet, *Mizmor: Seven Degrees of Praise*, an imaginative setting of Psalm 150, received its world premiere at Lincoln Center in New York in 2003.

In 2004 he won the *Festiladino*, an international competition for Judeo-Spanish songs that is part of the Israel Festival in Jerusalem; and in 2015 he won first prize at the Fourth Smareglia International Composers Competition in Udine, Italy. Ben-Amots's innovative multimedia opera, *The Dybbuk*, has had ten productions thus far in the United States, Germany, and Israel. The opera was reviewed as "a uniquely

beautiful and powerful new work . . . a service to music and to what is best in our humanity."

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PAUL BEN-HAIM [Frankenburger; 1897–1984] was born in Munich, where he began his musical studies at the age of nine, studying violin and, later, piano, harmony, and counterpoint. His family—the Frankenburgers—though not committed to religious or ritual observances, identified with the Liberal Jewish community there. His mother came from a completely assimilated family, many of whom were converts to Christianity. But his father (whose own father had been an occasional lay cantor in the local synagogue in Ühlfeld, in Franconia) was active in local Jewish affairs from time to time. According to Ben-Haim's recollections, his father attended the major Liberal synagogue in Munich with some regularity, often bringing the young Paul; and prior to the First World War he held an honorary office as deputy president of the Munich Jewish Community (Israelitische Kultusgemeinde München). Shortly after beginning his piano and composition studies at the Akademie der Tonkunst in Munich, Ben-Haim was called up for army service and fought at the French and Belgian fronts. By that time he had been composing intensely and, for his age, prolifically, with a particular focus on lieder. When he resumed his conservatory studies after the armistice, he became a composition student of Friedrich Klose, who had been a pupil of Bruckner, and he pursued conducting as well.

Between 1920 and 1924 Ben-Haim was an assistant conductor at the Bavarian State Opera, where he worked under Bruno Walter and Hans Knappertsbusch. After that he conducted the Augsburg Opera until 1931. Between 1926 and his immigration to Palestine, in 1933, he wrote a number of choral as well as solo Psalm settings and motets on biblical texts (Isaiah, Ecclesiastes, Job)—all in German. Although his biographer has alluded to some of these pieces as "works of Jewish character and content," no evidence is provided to the effect that they were so intended; it is difficult to see them as anything other than biblical expressions well within the western European art music tradition, notwithstanding the composer's obvious interaction with the spiritual significance of their texts. Many truly Judaic and Judaically inspired works were to come, but only after his *aliya*. Indeed, Ben-Haim described his biblical motets as "religious music in the widest sense, without a specific liturgical purpose."

Ben-Haim was befriended in Germany by the Jewish composer Heinrich Schalit (1886–1976), who

was born in Vienna but lived and worked in Munich beginning in 1907. Schalit, unlike Ben-Haim at that stage, developed solid and overt Zionist sympathies—which he expressed artistically through his settings of poetry by Yehuda Halevi extolling the primacy of “the East” (read Jerusalem and the Holy Land) for Jews. Schalit, who turned his attention increasingly to Judaically related as well as specifically functional liturgical music, became the organist and choral director in 1927 at Munich’s prestigious Liberal synagogue (the Great Synagogue), where he worked with the brilliant cantor and cantorial composer Emmanuel Kirschner. Following Schalit’s immigration to the United States, he became one of America’s most important synagogue composers—especially in the Reform arena. Despite their mutual respect and admiration, he was unsuccessful in his several attempts to persuade Ben-Haim to contribute his gifts to synagogue music, or at least to Jewish expression. “I felt it my duty,” Schalit reflected, “to try to convince him of the need to channel his talent into the music of the Jewish culture.” Ben-Haim did conduct a concert of Schalit’s Halevi songs, and in 1928 Schalit’s songs and a trio by Ben-Haim were programmed together. Even though Ben-Haim did not surrender to Schalit’s pressure, preferring to perceive himself artistically as historically and culturally German, Schalit always felt that he had at least “kindled the Jewish flame” in him—a flame that would blaze and radiate his art for more than four decades.

Following his abrupt termination from the Augsburg Opera in 1931, Ben-Haim was unable to find a similar full-time post elsewhere in Europe, and he could concertize or present his own works only on a one-off basis. He attempted to ignore or overlook the growing anti-Semitism during that period, but after the virtual handover of power to the National Socialists in 1933 through their invitation into the government—his sense of alienation further fueled by the launching of anti-Jewish restrictions and other persecutions—he determined to emigrate. The party’s perverse racial views vis-à-vis music and musicians—especially with respect to Jews—had been made known in print even before the 1932 elections that led to Hitler’s appointment as chancellor and the National Socialists’ assumption of complete power. Now the musicians’ union ordered its branches to oppose “racially foreign phenomena, Communist elements, and people known to be associated with Marxism”—i.e., largely “Jews,” as Ben-Haim was no doubt astute enough to read it. Moreover, his partially “neo-Baroque” Concerto Grosso was premiered in Chemnitz in March 1933, only to elicit a comment in the local press condemning the management of the orchestra for permitting it to

perform a work by a Jew. In a 1971 autobiographical sketch published in Israel, Ben-Haim defined that incident as the decisive moment in his decision to emigrate. Possibly influenced by Schalit, he gave first consideration to Palestine and made an exploratory trip there two months later.

On that preliminary trip Paul Frankenger changed his name to Paul Ben-Haim—not out of a Zionist cultural incentive to Hebraicize it, but simply to avoid detection by the British authorities for performing concerts, which was a violation of the “noemployment” provision of his temporary visa. Having determined that he could probably make a living and at least survive artistically in the *y’shuv*, he returned to Germany to organize his actual immigration—which occurred in late autumn 1933.

Of the composers who eventually made up the hard core of the “establishment” in the *y’shuv* or in the early decades of the state, and who contributed mightily to the rich musical life there, several were, like Ben-Haim, German Jews who emigrated directly from Germany. Erich Walter Sternberg (1891–1974) preceded Ben-Haim by two years, but Ben-Haim was the first German-Jewish composer of any significance to arrive in Palestine following the installation of the National Socialist regime. There followed Karel Shalmon [Karl Salomon; 1899–1974], Hanoach [Heinrich] Jacoby (1909–90), Joseph Tal, and Haim [Heinz] Alexander (b. 1915). Others who were not German born and hailed from various countries in Central or eastern Europe can—by virtue of study as well as professional life in Germany for some formative period—be considered products of the German cultural orbit and musical sphere. To that category may belong Odeon Partos (1907–77) originally from Budapest but from Berlin since 1929, and Marc Lavry.

Ben-Haim’s association with Bracha Zefira (1910–90), the famous Yemenite Jewish folksinger who had a seminal impact on Israel’s cultural life, had a fortuitous influence on the development of his own musical language. Between 1939 and 1949 he was Zefira’s accompanist for concerts. He also arranged many of the songs she introduced to him, and he quoted from them in some of his orchestral works. Apart from specific songs, the stylistic imprint of her Yemenite, Bokharian, Persian, Arabic, Ladino, and other eastern Mediterranean, North African, and Near Eastern Jewish repertoires is apparent in much of his oeuvre—especially insofar as it reflects characteristic modalities, ornamentation, evocative embellishments, and other semiotic patterns and motifs.

Though he arrived in Palestine with no illusions of instant success—in fact with serious concerns about competing for remunerative work—let alone

of artistic acknowledgment in a world to which he was an unknown newcomer, Ben-Haim eventually achieved recognition beyond anything he would have imagined. He served as president of the Israel Composers League in 1948, and he taught at the Jerusalem Academy of Music (1949–54), though he declined an invitation to become its director. He also taught at the Shulamith Conservatory in Tel Aviv. But his role in influencing future serious composers involved private tutorials in his home. One of his first composition students to attain a position of prominence among the second generation of Israeli composers was Ben-Zion Orgad [Büschel; b. 1926]. In 1945, for his first symphony (1940), Ben-Haim shared the Tel Aviv municipality's annual prize in memory of the composer Joel Engel with Mordecai Seter [Starominsky; 1916–94]. (Seter's winning work was his Sabbath Cantata. An honorary prize was also awarded to Solomon Rosowsky [1878–1962], Engel's colleague in Russia in the activities of the Gesellschaft für Jüdische Volksmusik.)

In 1953 Ben-Haim was again awarded the Engel prize—for his second symphony, about which Brod wrote, it “satisfies to a high degree our longing for an explicitly Jewish music.” And in 1957 Ben-Haim received the coveted Israel Prize—the nation's most prestigious award for achievement in the arts, science, scholarship, and public service—for his orchestral suite with soloists, *The Sweet Psalmist of Israel*, which had been commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation. By that time he had become one of the few Israeli composers to enjoy a truly international reputation. His catalogue as Ben-Haim—viz., following his *aliya* in 1933—includes nearly 150 works (in addition to the more than 100 pieces he composed while still in Germany). These encompass numerous other orchestral pieces; solo sonatas, suites, and concertos; chamber music for a variety of combinations; many original songs as well as arrangements; individual choral settings; and larger-scale choral cantatas. Notable in the last category are *The Vision of a Prophet* (Ezekiel 37), which includes a male speaking choir in addition to other choral, solo, and orchestral forces; *Liturgical Cantata*, which comprises concert settings of liturgical texts; and *Hymn from the Desert*—on texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls—commissioned by the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. His oratorio *Joram*, completed in Germany shortly before his decision to leave, received its premiere in Jerusalem in 1979 in a Hebrew version by David Frischmann. It is an intensely spiritual, even religious, but in no way Judaic work based on Rudolf Borchardt's *Das Buch Joram*, and Ben-Haim is said throughout his life to have considered it his magnum opus.

To acknowledge his role in kneading the dough

and molding the material for one prong of a Mediterranean approach—one with his distinctive stamp and that of his time and environment—is not, as some would fear, to reduce the aggregate product of Israeli composers of that era to a dogmatic, artificially academic, or chauvinistic monolithic style. Ben-Haim was neither an ethnomusicologist nor a folklore collector, and he never claimed that personal systematic field research among ethnically distinct communities constituted the source of his compositional ingredients. He relied instead, as did most of the Israeli composers associated with the Mediterranean sobriquet, on secondary—i.e., concert—performances, which in his case involved principally his close work with Bracha Zefira, and to some extent on notated collections. Some revisionists have suggested that because he relied only on such secondary transmission of indigenous properties—and therefore they could not have gestated within him—he did not actually contribute to modeling a style. This may be an exercise in summoning a purely academic adversarial argument out of the aurally obvious. One cannot dismiss the transparency of assimilated eastern Mediterranean and Near Eastern elements in Ben-Haim's music or that of some of his contemporaries. That is not to say he necessarily operated as an ethnological theorist. As a composer of his time and place, he naturally reflected his atmosphere, absorbing its ubiquitous sounds in his own music. Of the intersecting albeit individual stylistic planes of Israel's musical creativity during that period, Ben-Haim's was certainly one. That it represents a natural rather than a contrived process need not preclude its perception as one Israeli style.

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YEHEZKEL BRAUN (1922–2014), who can be considered a representative of the generation of Israeli composers immediately following that of Ben-Haim, Lavry, et. al., was born in Breslau—historically and culturally, as well as politically at that time, part of Germany, but now Wrocław, Poland. Two years later his parents emigrated to what was then Palestine under the British mandate, where he began his studies at an early age. At the Israel Academy of Music (formerly the Rubín Academy and now the Buchman-Mehta School of Music) he studied with Alexander Boskovich. Braun also earned a master's degree in classics (Greek and Latin philology) at Tel Aviv University.

Braun harbored a lifelong interest in both Hebrew and Gregorian chant. In 1975 he spent a year at the Benedictine Monastery at Solesmes, France, studying Gregorian chant there with Dom Jean Claire, one of its leading authorities. In 1966 he became a professor

of music at Tel Aviv University, a post he held until his retirement.

Braun's twin interest in liturgical chant and Jewish folk music is reflected in many of his compositions. Among his important works inspired by Jewish subjects or Judaic themes are *Psalm for Strings* (1960) and *Illuminations to the Book of Ruth* (1966), an orchestral piece. His catalogue includes many other choral and orchestral works, chamber music, lieder, and music for theatre, film, and dance.

Braun's *Hallel Service* was commissioned in 1984 by Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in Minneapolis to celebrate its one-hundredth anniversary. One of its movements, Psalm 114, is based on a traditional North African Hebrew tune, while the others are entirely original. Braun also composed a number of other works on commissions from American synagogues, including a Sabbath evening service, *V'haya... (And it Shall Come to Pass)*, on verses from Isaiah; *shir hama'alot*, a setting of ten Psalms for vocal quartet and string quintet; and various other Psalm settings. He wrote analytical studies of melody and modality, and he published translations into Hebrew of classical Greek poetry. He also compiled and edited an anthology of traditional Jewish melodies. In 2001 he was awarded the Israel Prize for music.

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Dating to his *aliya* in 1924, and although his untimely death less than three years later precluded a more substantial opera of new works from the Land of Israel than might otherwise have been the case, **JOEL [Yuli/lulii Dmitrevich] ENGEL** (1868–1927) came to be considered in many estimations the initial composer of the classically-oriented music of modern Israel. For, his unfortunately brief period in what was then known as Mandatory Palestine preceded the arrival beginning in the 1930s of composers such as Ben-Haim, Lavry, Boskovitch, et, al., who would fashion new styles and approaches that came to be heard as emblematic of the high music culture of the *y'shuv* and its extension into the culture of the sovereign state. And upon his death Engel was celebrated internationally, if a bit simplistically, as “the father of modern Jewish music”—a perception reinforced by Gershon Swet's memorial tribute, and perpetuated vis-a-vis his role in the course of the music of modern Israel by the city of Tel Aviv's Engel Prize for Israeli composers. Yet, with the benefit of perspective, he is remembered appropriately as much if not more so for his landmark contributions to Jewishly-related music (viz., music of Jewish life and experience) as an ethnographer, collector, musicologist, and music critic. In Russia,

prior to his *aliya*, he had been a seminal figure of the New Jewish National School in music and a leader of the Moscow chapter of the *Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik*.

Engel was born to a comfortable middle-class and for the most part Russified family in Berdiansk, Taurida Province, in the eastern Crimea—outside the Pale of Settlement. Like many others who would eventually be among the founders of the New Jewish National School, his interest in Jewish culture, including Yiddish language and literature as well as modern Hebrew, did not stem from his Russian-speaking parents or home environment—which was mostly devoid of Judaic religious practice or observance. He attended the local gymnasium (secondary school, modeled in principle on the German pattern). He studied at the University of Kiev and then at the University at Kharkov, from which he received a law degree in 1890—a typical Jewish middle-class pursuit at that time. Only during his studies in Kharkov did he become intensely interested in music, and he was already seventeen when he began formal music lessons. After military service, he commenced music studies on a part time basis at the Imperial Russian Music Society in Kharkov. His encounter in that city with Tchaikovsky, who happened fortuitously (for Engel) to be in that city on his travels, turned out to be a turning point for him. Tchaikovsky was impressed with his talent and encouraged him to enter the Moscow Conservatory in composition. On the basis of Tchaikovsky's recommendation he was accepted. For most of his student days at the conservatory, due to a tightened quota system concerning Jews living in Moscow, Engel is said to have been the only Jew in his composition class.

During those Moscow days, Engel became part of a coterie of Jewish students in the city, the *Zakharinka* circle, that espoused ethnic consciousness and discussed, encouraged awareness of, and advocated for Yiddish folklore and the Yiddish language. From his participation in that group's intellectually infused meetings, he became aware of the breadth and richness of un-Russified traditional Jewish culture as it still flourished in the towns and villages of the Pale on a level he had not imagined. And he was particularly fascinated by the musical dimensions. He soon tried his hand at utilizing such folk elements in an operetta, *Esther* (the score for which has not not been found). His discovery of Jewish musical along with other folk materials, and the attention these attracted among Moscow Jewry, impressed him as a potentially new spirit of Jewish ethnic nationalism and national rebirth, even though not yet attached specifically to Zionist thought or commitments. The more he worked with Jewish melodies, he proclaimed,

“the more Jewish I became.” But at that point this was more personal than professional or a vision of any movement, and it was then still Russian music that occupied his principal efforts.

Two of Engel’s most inspiring professors and mentors at the conservatory were Sergei Taneyev and Nikolai Kashkin. In addition to composition, both influenced him to become interested in the scientific study of music—its history, theory, analysis, and criticism, in part along the lines of the disciplines of musicology (*Musikwissenschaft*) that had emerged in 19th-century Germany. After graduation from the conservatory and through Kashkin, he became a junior or quasi-apprentice music critic and writer on music for Moscow’s primary liberal newspaper among its intellectual circles, *Russkie vedomosti* (“the voice of the bourgeois”), for which Kashkin had been writing music criticism and related articles about music for many years. When Kashkin retired, Engel became the chief music critic and music editor, and he continued in that capacity until 1922 (some accounts suggest 1918 or thereabouts).

By the closing years of the nineteenth century, Russian musical ethnography—collection and study—was an established and expanding field. Together with the recently budding Jewish ethnic-national consciousness and pride among a growing number of students, intellectuals, and artists in urban cosmopolitan surroundings—sentiments that, for some, would proceed eventually to various levels and manifestations of Zionism—the stage was set for a Jewish counterpart to the endeavors vis-a-vis Russian music and its traditions. At the twilight of the nineteenth century, Engel, now imbued with the importance of preservation and awareness of Jewish folk heritage in the Russian empire, started collecting Yiddish folksongs.

Also in that roughly two-year time frame, two members of the Russian Jewish intelligentsia, Haskala adherents, avid music aficionados, and historians-become folklorists (both with law degrees and one also an accountant), Pesach Marek and Saul Ginzburg, embarked on an ambitious collecting project that would culminate in their joint 1901 St. Petersburg publication, *Jewish Folksongs in Russia* (*Evreiskie narodnye pessi v Rossii*). Although not based on actual fieldwork, relying largely on second-hand sources, and containing only the words/lyrics of the songs, the volume marked an historic moment in Jewish musical ethnography. It confirmed the validity of what had been a novel proposition, at least in Russian historical thinking: that the history of Jewish folk music throughout the empire was itself an essential component of Russian Jewish history in general—not merely a matter

of musicological interest. It was the first serious and comprehensive collection of Yiddish folksongs, even as it was confined to the words/lyrics that could reveal much about Russian/eastern European Jewish folk life and culture (376 song and variant entries identified as emanating from four regions of the empire: Lithuania, Kurland, Poltava, and Podolia). Despite the plethora of subsequent collections and publications by more advanced field researchers and trained ethnologists and ethnomusicologists, it has served ever since as a major resource for students and scholars—notwithstanding its unavoidable view of “the folk” in many cases from the elite perspectives and sensibilities of the Jewish urbanized middle classes.

There remains some question about Ginzburg and Marek’s omission of the music—whether this was a conscious decision from the outset, as is maintained by some contemporary historians, or the result of necessary but reluctant compromise in the face of certain unavoidable obstacles. Although some contributors included musical notations along with the Yiddish words, which were then given to Engel to edit and prepare for publication, the volume went to press without them. Unexplained “exhaustive technical problems” is the reason cited in the Preface for this omission, along with an unfulfilled promise that the music would be issued in a future publication. In any case, it was not until 1905 in Moscow that Engel self-published his *First Album of Ten Jewish Folksongs*.

Meanwhile, perhaps as a preview to their publication, Marek and Ginzburg included Engel in a 1900 public lecture-recital at the Moscow Polytechnic Museum, sponsored by the music division of the Imperial Society for Natural Science, Anthropology and Ethnography. Marek lectured on the literary components of Jewish folksong, and Engel addressed the musical dimensions—followed by soprano performances of his Yiddish folksong arrangements by a professor of voice at the Moscow Conservatory with Engel’s wife at the piano. So successful was that event and so much of a stir did it create, reviewed in the Russian as well as the Yiddish press with unprecedented favor and enthusiasm—and attended by many non-Jews as well as Jews of varying degrees of assimilation—that it was repeated in the spring of 1901 in a small hall at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. At that second event Ginzburg and Engel gave the lectures, and the vocal renditions were offered by a well-known baritone.

Those twin events raised the status of Jewish folksong in Jewish and general musical and intellectual circles. Moreover, they appear by most assessments to have solidified Engel’s reputation as not only a widely recognized and respected critic, but now as

the foremost expert on “Jewish music” in the Russian Empire.

Engel grew increasingly impassioned, perhaps sometimes uncritically, about Jewish folksong—not only in terms of its objective merit, but also for its potential as a genuine symbol and ignition of his own and his people’s Jewish consciousness. His developed views and convictions concerning authenticity could put him at odds with certain well-known personalities in the Yiddish cultural world as well as with Gesellschaft colleagues. He engaged in vehement, even acidic debates in the press with Sholom Aleichem and with that author’s “discovery” and promotion of the popular amateur songwriter Mark Warshawski, whose best known and most widely remembered (but obviously romanticized) song undoubtedly remains *Oyfn [afn] pripetshik*. At issue in these polemical exchanges were, from Engel’s perspectives, questions about what does or does not qualify as genuine folksong; the decisive, determining role of oral transmission; distinguishing actual folksong from “popular art” consciously, deliberately, and/or professionally or quasi professionally created for its perceived if well-meant appeal to the “folk masses”; and, as the first thorough historian, critic and analyst of the New Jewish National School phenomenon, Albert Weisser (if now legitimately supplemented and in certain respects and details superseded by more recent scholarship utilizing sources unavailable to him), framed the dilemma, ascertaining “where the traditional folk material begins and the personal invention ends.”

“It is true that we have such songs that have come down to the folk masses from unknown sources of olden, long-forgotten times,” Engel wrote in his “Answer to Sholom Aleichem” in a 1901 issue of a Krakow periodical, *Der yid*, “or they may have been written recently, almost before our very eyes. But these (the latter) have become widely accepted among the folk masses because of their folk character (*nusakh*) [sic].”

The necessary ingredient for Engel was “folk character” in terms of an established folk *melos* as well as the legitimacy of the words’ reflections. *Viz.*, a crucial element is a song’s *Volksggeist* (folk spirit, or character)—its reflection not only of the true, unromanticized (for commercial or entertainment value) folkways, lifestyles, customs, themes, and sensibilities of a cultural group, but also the familiarity of its own particular or peculiar folk *melos* that would resonate in those with folk temperaments and established melodic attachments.

By far Engel’s most famous public polemical exchange concerning authenticity and appropriateness, however, was that which began in 1915 with

fellow Gesellschaft composer, “Jewish music” advocate, and student of what he believed were the oldest extant traditions, Lazare Saminsky. (Saminsky’s curiosity and research took him beyond the Pale and Yiddish-speaking regions to such so-called “exotic” places as the Caucasus and Georgia, partly in search of materials for future compositions and arrangements.) Saminsky sharply challenged Engel’s views and assumptions concerning secular Jewish—and Yiddish in particular—folksong from the Pale and his focus on the genre as authentic reflection and documentation of Jewish history, musical or otherwise, let alone Judaic roots. For Saminsky, the Yiddish folksong could represent artificial acquisition, especially in its *melos* so heavily borrowed from neighboring or host cultures: melodic structures, intervallic stereotypes, emblematic modalities, and rhythms. Authenticity for him resided instead in naïvely presumed echoes of Jewish antiquity: biblical cantillation motifs, skeletons of psalmody, and some synagogue prayer modes or modalities (but not those mirroring or originating in Polish, Ukrainian, eastern European Gypsy, or other musical cultures; nor, for that matter, those with Arabic or Turkish origins).

Key factors for Saminsky were age and original “Jewishness.” And, of course, even though the elements to which he assigned the weight of greater age and authenticity cannot be traced to antiquity in any audible or recognizable form, their emergence in the sacred and liturgical traditions of Judaic practices does predate Yiddish folksong, whose features may not even have been acquired much earlier than the 19th century—and even less likely prior to the 18th century. Whatever evidence we might have is simply insufficient for determining this. It can take several or many generations to establish a folk tradition, which may seem older than it is, but not necessarily centuries.

But the very notion of a Judaic musical continuum dating to antiquity (*viz.*, the era of the Temples in Jerusalem or even a few centuries following the Second Temple’s destruction), with neither adulteration nor acculturation—nor invention or adaptation—was both egregiously wishful and necessarily devoid of any supporting scholarship or tangible evidence. Similarly oblivious to reality is the romantically chauvinistic but unscientific as well as dangerous suggestion of musical (or other) “purity”—all the more misguided when cited as a prerequisite for, or confused with, authenticity. For Saminsky had no qualms about referring to traditional Judaic sacred *melos* as “a superiority flowing from its racial purity.”

One suspects that Saminsky’s chief grouse was more aesthetic than historical or academic, in the sense that the nature of much Yiddish folksong (and

certainly pseudo-folksong or popular songs passed off as folk tradition)—and especially what he termed ‘domestic song’ bearing the stamp of surrounding eastern European influences—simply failed to appeal to, even offended, his own personal and artistic sensibilities. Still, he may have had a point in his rejection of Yiddish folksong as well as Hassidic music of the Pale as the dominant, conclusive symbols or artifacts of genuine Jewish heritage; the more so if he felt that primary attention to these genres eclipsed the significance of sacred music’s entrenched features to the religious history of Judaism and the Jewish people. Yet, at the same time, neither was Engel necessarily wrong in his embrace of folksong as an authentic heritage, however and under whatever influences it had evolved to become “Jewish.”

What ignited the polemical exchange was Saminsky’s article, “Recent Works of the Jewish Folksong Society,” published in St. Petersburg in a 1915 issue of *Rasviet*. He criticized severely the Gesellschaft’s publication (presumably with Engel’s blessing) of folksong or supposed folksong arrangements he considered—not entirely without cause in several cases—banal, trite, hackneyed, cheap, or false; and, in his judgment, anything but authentic components of tradition. Engel responded in the next issue, and the duel was on, fought out in more than one periodical. Saminsky derided what he called the “naïve belief in the sanctity of everything that our people sings,” insisting that “Hebrew [read Jewish] music should cultivate the old sacred chant . . . the basic material of Jewish folk music.” Engel’s rebuttal centered around the question of whether or not a folksong had, or had acquired, a specifically Jewish character, regardless of origin or influence: “Everything which the Jewish song gathers from its neighbors it changes to its own manner. . . the spirit of the people is expressed.”

Engel was not opposed to synagogal or sacred Jewish musical traditions, whether liturgical chant or melodies, psalmody, or biblical cantillation, as valuable sources for a new Jewish musical art. It was simply that he could not abide Saminsky’s doctrinaire insistence that this new, modern art should—indeed must—be based on them alone.

Eventually, the match became more one about emphasis than about total delegitimization of either genre—a question of which should take precedence over the other, if either, in the mission of the New Jewish National School. Yet, sacred and secular musical elements are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as the history of Western music in general or that of cultivated music of Jewish experience demonstrates; and symbiosis has often yielded enriched music. In the end, the entire polemic appears to have little meaning

when revisited now armed with the fruits of modern scholarship coupled with liberal aesthetics. And it is perhaps with this in mind that Weisser referred to the bout as one “fought with ‘theoretical’ boxing gloves.”

Engel played a major role in the historic 1911-1914 Jewish Ethnographic Expedition throughout significant regions of the Pale of Settlement in the Russian Empire—notably Podolia and Volhynia. The expedition was organized through the offices of the Jewish Historico-Ethnographic Society in St. Petersburg and pursued in the name, or memory, of Baron Horace Guinzbourg, from whom—or from his family or estate—some financial underwriting might have come. The purpose of the expedition was to gather and collect folklore, artifacts, music, and other documentation of still unmodernized Jewish life in the towns, cities, villages, and hamlets of those regions of the Pale, as well as to photograph old synagogues, tombstones, folk types, and folk scenes. All of this was to be brought back to St. Petersburg for scientific and scholarly study as well as artistic use—largely out of prescient awareness that this folk culture would one day become extinct as modernization would eventually spread and envelop it.

Presiding over much of the expedition, and in particular with regard to the literary-historical aspects—folk tales, folk sayings, folk poetry, stories, and, where possible, written or notated accounts—was the celebrated author, playwright, and folklorist S[emyon Akimovitch] An-Ski [Solomon Zainwil Rappaport]. Hence, the informal, common reference to the project as the An-ski Expedition. Engel, together with Saminsky and Sussman Kisselgov, headed the music division. The undertaking was monumental. In 1912 alone, for example, Engel and An-Ski visited sixty-six locations in Podolia and Volhynia. The fruits of Engel’s collecting and recording of folk music during the course of the expedition occupied at least twenty-nine phonographic cylinders of musical specimens.

Engel is said to have been together with An-Ski when an innkeeper’s wife related the tale of demonic possession, which she and the townsfolk believed out of entrenched superstition to have been a real-life incident, and which inspired An-Ski to write his famous play, *The Dybbuk*. (Some doubt about Engel’s presence as a witness has been raised recently by music historian Jascha Nemtsov, though no conclusions have been drawn.) An-Ski wrote the play in Russian, and only afterwards, when it was rejected by the Moscow Art Theatre, did he make his Yiddish translation. A Hebrew translation as a stage version followed by Bialik. Apparently, if indeed Engel was

a witness to the telling of the tale, he was similarly artistically inspired. In any case, he wrote incidental music for the Hebrew version, which came to be perceived as inseparable from productions of the play in any language. (The music for the 1937 film, however was written by Henoch Kon.)

Since An-Ski's construction of the play relied on a question posed as the principal motif in a Hassidic song (perhaps also learned from the expedition), *Mipnei ma* (Why did the soul descend from the supreme height to the deep pit?), the tune of that song was used in the 1920 premiere, given in Vilna (now Vilnius) in Yiddish by the Vilner Truppe. Engel incorporated the *Mipnei ma* tune in his incidental music along with other authentic folk and Hassidic melodies. In 1926 he published the score as an independent concert work, *Suite hadibbuk*, op. 35, or *Suite from the Dramatic Legend, The Dybbuk* (Berlin and Tel Aviv, Yuwal). When Aaron Copland attended an English version of the play in New York, he was so taken with the incorporated tune that he seized upon it for his piano trio, *Vitebsk*.

In addition to his pursuits in the realm of Jewishly-related music, Engel lectured and published about both Russian and the wider surrounding sphere of European music in general, as critic, historian, commentator, and translator. He published his own translation into Russian of Hugo Riemann's famous encyclopedic *Musiklexicon*, and his various writings included studies ranging from opera to the music of Alexander Scriabin.

After the 1905 revolution he taught at a modest music school he helped to found in Moscow, the People's Conservatory. Following the 1917 October Revolution, he headed a children's school or colony in Malachovka, a Moscow suburb. And he devoted significant energy to his work with the newly-formed Habima theatrical studio (later the national theatre of Israel), for whose Hebrew productions he wrote a number of scores in addition to the incidental music for Bialik's Hebrew version of *The Dybbuk*— which Habima staged in Berlin during its 1925–26 residency in Germany.

In 1922 Engel left the Soviet Union permanently and lived for two years in Berlin. There, he organized and gave concerts and lectures on 'Jewish music' and founded the Yuwal music publishing firm, for which he served as its editor. In that time frame Yuwal published many reissues or reprints of Gesellschaft publications (copyrights, if any had applied to these pieces in the first place in Russia, would not have been in force following the demise of the Gesellschaft in the Soviet Union) and other, new pieces by Russian Jewish composers, including some of his own. Many

if not most of Yuwal's publications were then available at a thriving Judaica store on the Kantstrasse. Its inventory served as the (usually surprising) introduction to music of the New Jewish National School and the Gesellschaft for many émigrés and sojourning Jewish musicians in Berlin, not only from Russia, but from elsewhere in Europe—as well as for German or German-speaking Jewish musicians—who had never previously heard of the movement or its repertoire. During that same period, Engel was also involved in the establishment of a second, smaller Jewish music press known as *Yibneh*.

Upon his *aliya* in late 1924, Engel settled in Tel Aviv and participated in a host of musical activities: teaching at the Shulamit Conservatory and at a teachers seminary as well as giving private lessons; conducting choirs; writing for various journals; and performing and lecturing. He continued to compose, writing, among other things, incidental music for theatrical productions of the Ohel Studio. His music from that brief period in the *y'shuv* of Mandatory Palestine—much of which has never been published—reflects his enthusiasm for the pioneering spirit in what he easily embraced as his new home. In one moving poem that attracted him, and which he chose to set with appropriate and deliberate simplicity and slightly modernistic harmonic language, quotes a touching exchange of letters between an aging mother who chose to remain in the "old country" and her son who had made *aliya*. She asks him to "come home" because otherwise they may not see each other again. But, though this pains him deeply as he very much wants to be reunited, he must urge her instead to come to him in *eretz yisra'el* (the Land of Israel)—because he IS home!

Engel's catalogue includes much vocal music, the best-known works of which are his *Fifty Children's Songs*, *Three Songs to Poems of Tchernikovsky*, and *Three Series of Jewish Folksongs*; two violin-and-piano pieces as well as solo piano music; chamber music for various combinations; choral settings; and incidental music to four plays by Itzhak Leib Peretz that were produced in Israel in the year before his death.

Although he lauded Engel's contributions to Jewish music ethnography, his advocacy of Jewish folksong, and his furtherance of the New Jewish National School's mission, Albert Weisser was dismissive of his gifts as a composer. He referred, to Engel's arrangements, for example, as too often exhibiting a "spineless salon style" filled with "period mannerisms." But in his judgment Weisser seems to have bypassed most of Engel's original works, and especially those from his post-*aliya* period, which, in all fairness, were mostly unavailable to Weisser. Indeed,

much of his music displays artistic melodic invention, a solid sense of structure and development, harmonic exploration less simple than it might seem, natural communication, and, above all, an abundance of taste. Revisiting the full range of his opera tells us that it is time for a reassessment of Engel the composer.

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Highly regarded by the Russian music world of his day, **ALEXANDER KREIN** (1883–1951) was also one of the most gifted and compelling composers of the New Jewish National School in music as well as an active participant in the Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik. He made valuable contributions to a sophisticated repertoire of Jewish-related, artistically developed ‘classical’ or concert music.

Of the significant composers of the New Jewish National School who chose for one reason or another to remain permanently in the new Soviet Union, however, Krein’s story following the October Revolution is perhaps the most disturbing. At best it contains incidents and elements that continue to puzzle us; while some of the most egregious patterns of his conduct—including choices he made, activities in which he participated, and some of the works he composed—leave little room for allowance.

Krein was born in Nizhny Novgorod (later renamed Gorky) to a musical family that came from Lithuania in the 1870s. His father, Abraham, was a violinist who played in Jewish wedding bands of *klezmorim* or quasi-*klezmorim*, as did the young Alexander. (It remains uncertain whether or not his father was actually a member of the guild that qualified one to use the term *klezmer*.) And he is said also to have been an amateur collector of Jewish folksongs. Of his ten children, seven became professional musicians. Alexander’s brother David was concertmaster of the Bolshoi Opera Orchestra in Moscow, and another brother, Grigori, was a recognized composer.

At the age of fourteen Krein entered the Moscow Conservatory as a cello student, and about three years later Grigori joined him there to study violin. During those conservatory years, Krein also began private lessons in theory and composition with L.V. Nikolayev and Boleslav Yavorsky—and, according to some accounts, with Taneyev as well.

Around the time of the first (1905) Russian revolution, and still as a typically impressionable student, Krein was introduced by friends and acquaintances to the writings of Marx, Engel, and Plekhanov. These appear to have ignited his concern with social, political, and socio-economic issues, which would persist in one form or another throughout his life. Participation

in student agitations connected to that 1905 event probably also helped inform his developing socialist worldview, even though the revolutionary goals of that 1905 uprising were more democratic-socialist than truly communist, or what would seventeen years later begin to engulf Russia and parts of the former tsarist empire as the fascist totalitarianism of Marxist-Leninist ideology and its call for an entirely new world order at any cost to human lives. The leanings Krein developed in the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century would eventually mutate into acceptance if not embrace of the demanded doxology under Lenin, and then Stalin, which culminated in a campaign of terror and mass murder to be defended by Party and regime ideologists as necessary sacrifice for the successful, unobstructed “progress” of the Revolution.

Beginning in the mid-1910s, if not a bit earlier, the influence of Scriabin was manifesting itself in Krein’s artistic path, and that influence continued to grow to become easily recognizable. The two became acquaintances and then personal friends—a relationship that lasted until Scriabin’s death in 1915. Krein completed his Conservatory residence in 1908 (the year, coincidentally, of the formal founding and chartering of the Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik in St. Petersburg). In 1909 the society known as “Evenings of Contemporary Music” was organized in Moscow, reflecting a budding interest not only in Russian composers such as Scriabin, but also in French Impressionists—primarily Debussy and Ravel—who were considered ‘modern’ at the time among those circles. Krein’s music was performed publicly for the first time at one of that society’s concerts of its first year, along with music by his brother, Grigori. The reception seems to have been favorable.

Within the year, at the society’s request for a new work, Krein composed his *Jewish Sketches* (op. 12)—two suites for clarinet and string quartet based on folk themes he claimed to have heard in his father’s improvisations.

From 1912 until the second revolution (February, 1917) and then continuing to the Bolshevik coup later that year that became known as the October Revolution, Krein taught at the Moscow People’s Conservatory.

By 1916 Krein’s place in Moscow’s musical life had increased in importance, and he appeared that year in a concert of his own chamber music in Maly Hall at the Moscow Conservatory. Also in 1916, his symphonic music had its first public hearing: his 1914 symphonic poem *Salome*, inspired by Oscar Wilde’s literary work and conducted by Serge Koussevitsky at the Nezlobin Theater (later renamed the Central

Children's Theater).

During his conservatory days Krein became attracted to Russian (as well as French) Symbolist poetry: for example, Alexander Blok and Konstantin Balmont. Not only his settings of Symbolist poetry, but other works from the 1910s and 1920s, have been shown to reflect Symbolist influence. Examples of Krein's carefully worked-out pieces exhibiting the impact of Blok's poetry, along with traces of Scriabin and Ravel, are his symphonic fragments composed as incidental music for the play, *The Rose and the Cross* (1916–17; op. 26). That music was commissioned by the Moscow Art Theater, but never used (he also wrote vocal pieces for that play). The symphonic fragments waited until 1925 for a premiere as a single work by the Bolshoi Theater orchestra. (Krein's fellow Jewish composer and active participant in the New Jewish National School movement, Mikhail Gnesin, was also commissioned by the Moscow Art Theater for music to the same play; and this, too, was never used for the production.)

For the harmonic language he developed, both for his pieces of explicit Jewish connection and for those unrelated to deliberate Jewish expression, Krein chose not to turn to the path of musical Russification, paved by composers of the Russian cultural-national movement which rejected 'foreign' Western European precedents in its pursuit of an authentic 'Russian character'. Instead, the principal influences, in addition to some of the spiritual mystique emblematic of Scriabin, are usually heard as Grieg, Debussy, and Ravel, along with others of the French Impressionist school. From them, in various ways, he gained his rich palette of tone colorations, coloristic effects, and color combinations, which he brushed with innumerable nuances and shades. But perhaps Scriabin had the greatest impact overall. Krein is reported to have remarked on a number of occasions that his desiderata was to develop Scriabin's devices to a new level.

In his 'Jewish pieces', unlike Engel, Saminsky, and others among his fellow advocates of a new Jewish national cultivated music, Krein was not inclined towards direct quotation of secular folk music or sacred/liturgical sources such as biblical cantillation or synagogue prayer modes. Rather, he worked instinctively at creating original themes and melodic material, while employing what critic and historian of the movement, Albert Weisser, called "characteristic substances in both areas."

Benefitting consciously or subliminally from the various influences that have been detected, Krein began while still a conservatory student to develop his distinctive approach to original music of Jewish inspiration. He continued to pursue that course and

its stylistic ramifications in his treatment of echoes (almost never replications) of melodic curves, modalities, spirit, and other features of Yiddish folksong, Jewish or Jewishly-adopted instrumental folk music, and sacred music traditions.

By the October Revolution he had come to consider himself—and was so viewed by the Russian music world—well within the modernist camp. Towards the end of the 1920s, although he had already established himself as a key player in the New Jewish National School, he began an accelerated increase in reliance on the substance and characteristics of received Jewish as well as perceived 'oriental' folk *melos*, which he cast within the harmonic frameworks, instrumental timbres, and other techniques he had absorbed from the French Impressionist school.

Krein stood aside from the famous Engel-Saminsky polemic about the relative or competing merits of Jewish folk music versus older albeit romantically-perceived 'ancient' or 'Hebraic' components of sacred/liturgical music traditions. He was prone to cull from both sources, sometimes in a single work in which traces of cantorial ornamentation, non-metrical recitative styles, and prayer modes could be interwoven with folksong features. But folk music derivations predominate in many pieces; for example, in his 1922 *Hebrew Caprice* for violin and piano, in which one can hear Yiddish lullaby reverberations in one theme and tune styles of *klezmerim* in the other.

Also composed in the early-to-mid 1920s are some of Krein's most important works in larger forms, which, to varying degrees, reflect both Jewish folk and Judaic religious sources and the fruits of his search for a manifestly 'Jewish' soundscape: his first piano sonata and first symphony; and, one of his most intriguing, even surprising works, *Kaddish* (op. 33)—a symphonic cantata for tenor solo, mixed chorus and orchestra. Although dedicated to his parents' memory, the orchestral introduction is based on the long-established and canonically fixed (probably from the late medieval period) motifs of the *hatzi kaddish* exclusive to its rendition introducing the *mussaf* services on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur in all Ashkenazi practice, without alternatives. But this version of *kaddish*—both the text variant and those musical motifs—have nothing to do with *kaddish yatom*, the 'mourner's' *kaddish*, recited—never sung—to honor the memory of one's parents, spouse, or siblings.

Obviously, the text of *kaddish yatom* has no musical counterpart or attachment. We cannot know if Krein, who certainly was not inclined towards regular synagogue attendance, was aware of the distinction between the two *kaddish* versions or variants, or if he might legitimately have availed himself of artistic

license. Either way, he did set the *kaddish* yatom text for all choral sections save one. (In 1928, Universal Editions in Vienna published a piano reduction of *Kaddish* with the text in Russian, German, and English translations. The full score and parts were left with Universal in anticipation of an impending performance that never occurred. Following the Anschluss in 1938, when Austrians voted overwhelmingly, freely, and enthusiastically to dissolve their polity and become part of the Third Reich, the authorities saw to it that all works in Universal's hands by 'non-Aryan' composers were destroyed. As of 1996, and unless a subsequent discovery has been made, the score of *Kaddish* is thus irretrievably lost.)

At least in part for reasons deemed to be advantageous to the Party, the period of the NEP (New Economic Policy) witnessed a resurgence of Jewish theatre, which included an accepted recurrence of "Western" (viz., not specifically Russian or Communist-driven) presence in terms of plays and playwrights such as Peretz and Sholom Aleichem. Music played an important role in that episode. In that time frame, two theaters operated prominently in Moscow: HABIMA, whose plays were in Hebrew; and GOSET, the State Jewish Theater, which produced Yiddish plays and was led by Solomon Mikhoels, widely and even internationally regarded as the greatest serious dramatic Yiddish actor of his day. (By the Great Patriotic War, i.e., the Second World War, Mikhoels had become the de facto spokesman for Soviet Jewry, a role that led after the war to his grisly murder on Stalin's orders, after which Stalin had flowers sent to his funeral.) Krein wrote music for both theaters, as well as for the State Jewish Theaters in Kiev and Minsk. Some have opined that HABIMA's productions had the greatest overall influence on Krein's own musical path outside the theatre. For example, he appears to have been enchanted by what was then viewed as eroticism in a motif of the Ashkenazi cantillation for *Shir hashirim* (the biblical Song of Songs), which was incorporated into the production of An-ski's famous play, *The Dybbuk*—for whose Hebrew version (in Bialik's translation) Joel Engel wrote the incidental score. Krein utilized that motif in both his first piano sonata and his first symphony.

Yet, his most enduring theatrical score is the one he wrote for the Moscow State Jewish Theater's 1924 production of Peretz's *The Night at the Old Market Place*. He later turned the score's sixteen musical fragments into a concert suite under the same title, which was published in Vienna in 1934. By that time, in line with, or bowing to, Party doctrine and its twisted view of "progress," Krein described the theme of the suite in political-ideological terms:

... the death of the old ghetto, the end of the age-old system of autocracy [by 'the rabbis'] and exploitation of the Jewish small town (*shtetl*), oppressed by cruel poverty, a stagnant way of life and the scourge of religion . . . driven out by the cleansing whirlwind of the Revolution.

Was he parroting a Party-line "updating" of Peretz's play with superimposed contemporary significance to satisfy the political correctness of the day? Or was he protecting himself from politically incorrect nostalgia for traditional Jewish life? Or, had he been seduced actually to believe what he wrote?

Krein's opera, *Zagmuk*, was commissioned by the Bolshoi Theater in 1928. Based on the play of the same title by A. Glebov about a fictitious uprising of slaves in ancient Babylonia, *Zagmuk* has been cited frequently as one of the Soviet era's first operas to address social and class struggle. It is not, however, one of Krein's Jewishly-related works, as some 21st-century music historians have assumed erroneously because of the historical (and biblical) fifth-century B.C.E. destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonian Empire, followed by the Babylonian Captivity. But the biblical account is as much a part of the Christian Old Testament as it is of the Hebrew Bible. (Analogous mis-assumption often surrounds Verdi's *Nabucco*, though as a result of no such claim by Verdi.)

There is little doubt that Krein was enthusiastic about the October Revolution. He lost no time in participating quite voluntarily in its proclaimed "new revolutionary socialist culture." By 1918 he was working as the secretary of the artistic section of *MUZO NAR-KOMPROMSA*; and he subsequently became secretary of the academic and ethnographic department (also head of the academic department) of the State Musical Publishing House.

Krein is reported to have been deeply grieved by Lenin's death in 1924. The Commissariat of Culture commissioned him to write his *Mourning Ode* (1925-26) in Lenin's memory. The work, for chorus without words and symphony orchestra, was performed quite a few times on anniversaries of Lenin's death, and even in the United States under Leopold Stokowsky's baton. (At the time, of course, the full unwhitewashed truth about Lenin, the tyranny and brutality of his regime, the extent to which it may have paved the way for Stalin, and, for that matter, the generic dangers of any unfiltered or unmediated utopianism, were not yet fully appreciated—or necessarily known—even among anti-Communist and non-leftist but liberal circles in America.) From post-Soviet era perspectives, it can be nearly impossible to reconcile Krein's adoration

of Lenin—by all accounts genuine—and his enthusiasm for the Revolution, with his embrace of Jewish national heritage and his inner drive to foster a Jewish national art music. For it was no secret that, as early as 1913, Lenin had reviled openly what he condemned as “Jewish petit bourgeois nationalism” and “national separatism,” claiming that “Jewish nationalist culture is a slogan invented by the rabbis and the petit bourgeois, by our enemies”; and he had proposed that:

Jews of the ‘civilized world’, who do not see themselves as having to ‘live like a caste’, can be viewed as on the great universal progressive side of Jewish responsiveness to the progressive forces of the age Whoever speaks directly or indirectly of a Jewish national culture (however good the intentions may be) is an **enemy of the proletariat**—a supporter of the old caste system in Jewry, and an **accomplice of the rabbis** and petit bourgeois,

On the other hand, Jewish Marxists who join the Russian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian workers in international Marxist organizations in creating an international culture for the workers’ movement, those Jews working against the separatist ideas of the Bund, are continuing the best traditions of Jewry in the struggle against a national culture, [Emphasis added]

It must be acknowledged, of course, that legions of Jews were passionately if naïvely seduced by the supposedly antidotal notion of ‘internationalism’, which they were led to believe would put an end to the former plight of the unprivileged Jewish majority through ideals such as an international proletarian brotherhood. And many were convinced that the new world order would also put an end altogether to anti-Jewishness and anti-Judaism (read “antisemitism”). Nonetheless, Krein’s acceptance of Leninism at *that* early stage, when he was actively engaged at the same time with—and cared very much about—the “separatist” music reflecting warmly Lenin’s condemned traditional Jewish life, is not easily explained. Moreover, while we now understand why so many Jewish artists and writers shied away reluctantly from Jewish expression from the 1930s on—or, conversely, why and how others justified employment of Yiddish culture in the service of Stalin, as the perceived bulwark against both Western European Fascism and the feared bourgeois hindrance of the progress of the ‘new order’—it is nonetheless stranger still to consider Krein’s apparent **comfort** with abandoning ‘Jewish music’ altogether after 1937. For that choice cannot be understood simply by invoking the very real contemporaneous pressures and well-founded fears that did not apply to him and his particular case.

Claims in student dissertations and otherwise respected published sources that Krein continued to compose ‘Jewish music’ after 1937 and “well into the 1940s” are without basis, resting, or so it would seem, on non-objective, quasi-defensive wishful guesswork or groundless interpretations of what a piece might ‘mean’—almost as if to have Krein appear better, less cowardly, or less ready to forsake his past association with Jewish national culture. It is fantasy, for example, to report casually as fact that his second symphony is a “meditation on the historic sufferings of the Jewish people from ancient times through the Holocaust.” One may—and many do—choose to read or hear into a piece of music whatever one would like to hear, or whatever one might wish the composer to have intended. But passing off uninformed personal reactions as information is another matter. The symphony was written in 1945, when even by then—with signs already evident of Stalin’s soon-to-be-launched full-fledged campaign against Soviet Jewry as a reversal of self-serving wartime leniency and strategic use of major Jewish figures—no prescient Jewish composer would have thought to risk charges of cultural-nationalist regression by musical expression of particularist solidarity; nor, for that matter, of anything Jewish.

Nor, as has been claimed irresponsibly, did Krein write anything for Jewish theatre as late as 1941. It is true that even after the bulk of Soviet Jewish secular-cultural institutions had been suppressed or liquidated—a reversal of their earlier toleration, even encouragement, by Stalin as a strategy of Realpolitik that was no longer applicable or necessary—some token remnants, such as the Yiddish art theater in Moscow, were left in place as “show” propaganda for the West and as public relations instruments. Krein could have written for the Moscow Jewish theater had he wished to do so. But he did not. His last known theatre score was written in 1926: incidental music for the Moscow State Jewish Chamber Theatre’s production of *137 Kindergartens*.

Until 1937 Krein continued to intersperse some of his music with elements of Jewish national culture, albeit even then sometimes cleverly couched in revolutionary interpretations. Indicative of his simultaneous enthusiasm for the ‘new order’ and its leadership, however, was his 1931-32 oratorio *The U.S.S.R.—Shock Brigade of the World Proletariat*, with narrated excerpts from one of Stalin’s speeches, quotations of revolutionary songs and hymns, and of course the *Internationale*. The main thrust of the work was the utopian, ideally seamless fusion of “the masses” of all nationalities into a world proletariat. Yet Krein was anything but a member of any proletariat. And, whereas composers could have benefitted from

such prostitution in the mid-1940s and afterwards, or bought into it to ensure immunity from official denunciation, there was neither pressure nor force on Krein at play in 1931,

Throughout the Great Terror and show trials of the 1930s, when very many artists “disappeared,” were sent to the Gulag, were victims of denunciation upon whom friends and even family members could be induced to inform, committed suicide, or, at best, lost positions, Krein was able to live and work undisturbed. He was awarded the designation “Honored Artist of the Soviet Union” in 1936—the same year in which Shostakovich was publicly denounced by the Party through its organ, *Pravda*, in an article that was also understood by all as an official warning against all modernism in Soviet music. And the subservient puppet entity, the Union of Soviet Composers, quickly took the cue and joined in the campaign to root out composers and music that could be considered counter-revolutionary and not in the interests of proletarian progress.

Krein wrote his last Jewish piece, *Ten Yidische Lieder*, in 1937. By then the results of the Terror were everywhere to be seen, but he was never in danger of being branded an “enemy of the state”—nor of the Party or the Revolution. He lived comfortably and safely as a well-compensated functionary of the State Publishing House. He was given important commissions, such as the ballet score, *Laurencia*, in 1939, which was intended as disguised commentary from Communist perspective on the Spanish Civil War, whose mass atrocities were abundant on both sides however much a difference between spontaneous and planned ones might be argued. That commission and the ballet’s production only further solidified Krein’s reputation and position as one of the Communist elite composers. It is probably thanks to that status that he was included in a group of prominent artists (Prokofiev and a “rehabilitated” Shostakovich among them) that was evacuated to safety in areas far from the fronts during the Second World War.

The Stalinist postwar paranoia coupled with a renewed, reinvigorated campaign against Soviet Jewry (camouflaged, of course, by disingenuous political ideological accusations), as well as Party denunciations of major Russian composers, had no effect on Krein.

In 1946 the Jewish composer Moses Milner “disappeared,” and his body was never found. (We are able now to assume the year of his death with the help of descendants.) Milner and Krein had collaborated closely in the work of the New Jewish National School and in their *Gesellschaft* involvement. Yet we know of no concern expressed by Krein over Milner’s unexplained disappearance (read murder). And in the

very year of Mikhoel’s murder on Stalin’s orders, Krein was composing *The Song of the Stalinist Falcon*.

There is no evidence that Krein ever felt demoralized or even uncomfortable with his outward musical support of either the Lenin or the Stalin regime, the Party, or his cooperation. To the contrary, he is described in Yuli Krein and Nina Rogozhina’s 1964 biography as “accepting of the October Revolution with all his heart and an active participant in building socialist culture,” always paying “close attention to the rapidly developing Revolution” with “heartfelt words whenever he discussed it.”

Meanwhile, objective, retrospective musicological analyses have yielded observations suggesting that the musical quality of Krein’s work grew diminished in proportion to the increase in his expression of—or in line with—Party doctrine as well as his glorification of the Revolution’s “progress.”

Having kept himself immune to the fate of so many other artists, and having guarded his reputation as an overtly loyal Stalin admirer, Krein died in comfort in a government-subsidized artists’ retreat—just as Stalin was already looking forward to his next step vis-a-vis Soviet Jewry: his own planned version of the “final solution,” thwarted only by his sudden fortunate death (or murder?) in 1953.

Krein’s motivations behind his behavior will probably always remain an open question. That question was raised transparently in a 1996 masters thesis by Mischa Pizman, a Russian Jewish émigré who had also earned a graduate musicology degree in the former Soviet Union:

Did he [Krein] naïvely believe in the Revolution for the duration of his life despite the obvious butchery and repression? Did he lose his faith in the Revolution and make a cynical decision to play the role that would give him a good life? Or did he, realizing that his dreams and ideals were in ashes, live and die a disillusioned coward driven by fear and the instinct for self-preservation? None of the alternatives is appealing . . . Very possibly he was originally motivated by the highest human intentions, but he ended up the servant of a regime that was inhuman . . . He must have lost his idealism somewhere along the line. He certainly lost his Jewish identity and creative inspiration.

Only a year after Stalin’s death and three years after Krein’s, when nothing of the latter’s puzzling if not disturbing conduct could have been known in the West (and it would be three years before Stalin’s mass crimes and their grisly details would be

acknowledged initially by Soviet Premiere and Communist Party Chairman Nikita Krushchev's famous "secret speech" to the 20th Party Congress in 1956, followed by revelations in the 1950s)—and when only some of Krein's published music was available for perusal in the United States—Albert Weisser undertook a preliminary analysis of his oeuvre. Weisser posited that Krein's once-thought 'radical' harmonic innovations were by then no longer the novelty upon which his recognition as a sophisticated composer of Jewishly-related art music had once rested. Rather, Weisser, wrote, "What we still find moving in him . . . is the sensitive manner with which he can duplicate the folk *melos* and kind of pagan excitement he has been able to engender in certain elements of biblical chant." Now that the entirety of his catalogue of extant works is more or less available to scholars as well as performers, and given more than a half century of perspective, the time may be ripe for a more thorough assessment of Krein's artistic achievements.¹

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Like Paul Ben-Haim, **MARC LAVRY** (Marcus Levin; 1903–1967) was one of the most successful and prominent composers of modern Israel's early musical establishment, beginning with his important contributions to the musical life of the *y'shuv*—the organized Jewish settlement in what was then known as Palestine under the British Mandate following the First World War and until the formal founding of the sovereign Jewish state. And, like Ben-Haim, he is most often associated with the embrace of indigenous eastern Mediterranean and Near Eastern musical elements and *melos* within the context of Western forms and the development of a perceived "Mediterranean style." Also like Ben-Haim as well as other composers in the *y'shuv* and then the young state, he contributed to a synthesis that became emblematic of the new cultivated art music of modern Israel.

Lavry was born in Riga, Latvia, but he received his major musical education in Germany. He studied composition at the Leipzig Conservatory with Paul Graener, and conducting privately with Hermann Scherchen and Bruno Walter. He also studied architecture at the Technical College in Oldenburg. After

two years as conductor at the opera house in Saarbrücken, he went to Berlin, where he became music director and conductor for Rudolf von Laban's dance theatre. He wrote music for Max Reinhardt's theatrical productions and for films, and in 1929 he assumed the post of conductor for the Berliner Sinfonieorchester (Berlin City Symphony Orchestra).

During his years in Germany, Lavry began to address Jewish subjects in some of his music. His orchestral piece, *Hassidic Dance* (Op. 22) and his *Jewish Suite* for string quartet (or string orchestra) were both premiered in Berlin in 1930 and 1931 respectively. He also evinced an interest at that stage in artistic conceptions of other folksong traditions, as demonstrated by his *Variations on a Latvian Folksong* (Op. 11), which received its premiere by the Berliner Sinfonieorchester.

Lavry returned to Riga in 1933, two months after the National Socialists (Nazi Party, i.e., National Socialists German Workers Party) assumed—viz., were granted—power in Germany. The following year, the Riga Radio Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra gave the performance of his symphonic poem *Ahasverus, the Eternal Jew*, written the same year. But in the wake of the Fascist coup there, he determined to emigrate permanently. He had not yet become involved with Zionism, so that Mandatory Palestine represented only one of several options for him; he briefly considered both the United States and the Soviet Union as well. Like Ben-Haim, he made an exploratory trip to what was then known as Palestine, after which he decided on *aliya*. He and his wife arrived there to settle in 1935. He was able to extend his otherwise temporary visa through the political department of the Jewish Agency for Palestine on the grounds that he was composing incidental music for the Ha'Ohel Theatre in Tel Aviv.

Within his first year in the *y'shuv*, Lavry wrote a symphonic poem for string orchestra, *Al naharot bavel* (By the Rivers of Babylon), programatically related to Psalm 137 and the Babylonian Captivity. However, he came to straddle the line between art music and popular folk-oriented song. He not only incorporated indigenous folk materials and echoes in his concert pieces—on the "Mediterranean" model—but he also composed original folk-type songs, the first of which was his *Shir ha'emek* (Song of the *Emek* [Valley]), which referred to the Jezreel Valley in the north and evoked and celebrated the pioneering spirit of land reclamation and agricultural settlement there. He then developed it into a symphonic poem, titled simply *Emek*, which became one of his best-known pieces. It was premiered by the Palestine Symphony Orchestra—the first time that ensemble programmed a *y'shuv* composer—and was later included in its first world

¹ "If you become a teacher, by your pupils you'll be taught," proclaims Anna in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I*. Indeed! For I am indebted to my former graduate student and thesis advisee, Mischa Pizman, for much information and many clarifications in his masters thesis on Krein as the fruits of his research. As an émigré from the former Soviet Union, he had had access to archives, music, and other sources not then available in the United States.

tour as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. A preview of the premiere in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* dubbed it the "first symphonic hora"—referring to the quintessential emblematic modern Israeli folk dance pattern that pervades the piece.

There followed Lavry's oratorio *Shir hashirim* (Song of Songs, 1940), and his opera *Dan Hashomer* (Dan, the Watchman, 1945), premiered by the Palestine Folk Opera and generally considered the first Hebrew opera composed in the *y'shuv* to be produced in modern Israel. Written to a libretto by Max Brod and based on Sh. Shalom's play *Shots on the Kibbutz*, the opera was performed thirty-three times in eight cities and towns in Mandatory Palestine. Throughout the music Lavry juxtaposes eastern European musical clichés and motifs against Near Eastern ones as a way of representing distinctions, almost as typological leitmotifs, between the older generation of immigrants from eastern Europe and the young generation of pioneers and kibbutz workers.

Lavry conducted the Palestine Folk Opera from 1941 until 1947. From 1950 until 1958 he was music director of Kol Tziyon Lagola (The Voice of Zion to the Diaspora), a short-wave radio network that broadcast to Jewish communities outside Israel.

Also among Lavry's important works are four Symphonies; four additional oratorios; two piano concertos; violin and viola concertos; chamber music for various small combinations; *Song of Israel*, a children's cantata; *From Dan to Beersheba*, a concert overture for orchestra; theatre, ballet, and other dance music; *Carmel*, a symphonic poem; many songs; numerous orchestral arrangements of popular melodies and songs; and another opera, *Tamar*. His *Sabbath Eve Sacred Service*, commissioned in 1958 by Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco, reflects Lavry's understanding of both the "new Mediterranean style" and its points of departure from eastern European traditions.

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RIVKA LEVINSON (1906–1983) was born in Poland and made *aliya* in 1933 to what was then British Mandatory Palestine. She was an ardent enthusiast of modern Hebrew poetry (her husband, Avraham Levinson, was a well-known poet). In addition to setting verse of some of the most important modern Hebrew poets as well as composing other works, she contributed to the life of the *y'shuv* in other ways as well—including teaching eurythmics. Her most widely known song is the Zionist *halutz* hymn, *Shir hanamal*, with words by the eminent poet, Lea Goldberg. Written in 1936, that song anticipated—and would be sung

to celebrate—the opening of Tel Aviv as a seaport in 1938. It then joined the folk- or quasi-folksong repertoire of *shirei am*—songs of the people.

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EYTAN PESSEN studied piano and composition at the Tel Aviv University, the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and at Juilliard, when he started his career as coach of the Metropolitan Opera Young Artist's Programme. Pessen has been featured in concerts at the Berlin Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall, the Rheingau, Miskolc, Bad Wildbad Festivals as well as theaters of Darmstadt, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Dresden. He was artistic consultant to Teatro Massimo Palermo and Teatro San Carlo Napoli. Before that he was opera director of the Semperoper Dresden, casting director of the Stuttgart Opera and artistic advisor to the Ruhr 2010 European capital of culture. He is a busy teacher of singing and piano, currently at the Opera academy of the Polish national opera. He teaches regularly at Oper Frankfurt, Theaterakademie München, IOS Zürich, the Mikhailovsky theatre, Scuola d'Opera in Bologna, Paris Opéra Bastille, Richard Tucker foundation, Meistersinger Akademie and San Francisco opera. As a composer he has written numerous songs and has specialized in arranging folk songs, many of them from the Yiddish and Ladino heritage.

© EYTAN PESSEN

HEINRICH SCHALIT (1886–1976) is one of the principal names associated with serious mid-20th-century American synagogue music for Reform worship—although some of his settings had currency at one time in liberal Conservative synagogues as well. He was one of the leading figures among the circle of European-born synagogue composers who emigrated to the United States during the 1930s—many of them as refugees from the Third Reich—which included Herbert Fromm, Isadore Freed, Hugo Chaim Adler, Frederick Piket, and Julius Chajes. Collectively as well as individually, those composers established a new layer of repertoire and a new composite aesthetic within the Reform orbit, which—together with the music of American-born colleagues such as Abraham Wolf Binder, earlier arrivals such as Lazare Saminsky, postwar émigrés such as Max Janowski, and second-generation émigrés such as Samuel Adler—pretty much dominated the Reform musical scene until at least the early 1970s. That repertoire has continued to reverberate despite the inroads of more populist styles.

Schalit was born in Vienna, where he studied composition with Robert Fuchs (1847–1927) and with Joseph Labor (1842–1924), who was also one of Arnold Schoenberg’s teachers. In 1927 Schalit was appointed to the position of organist at the principal Liberale synagogue in Munich, whose learned cantor and productive resident composer, Emanuel Kirschner (1857–1938)—a former singer in the choir of Louis Lewandowski in Berlin and a follower in his path, albeit in a more artistically sophisticated vein—appears to have exerted a lasting influence on him. His first synagogue composition was a setting of *v’shamru* for the Sabbath eve liturgy, which he then incorporated into his first full Sabbath eve service, *Eine Freitagabend Liturgie*. That service, published in Germany in 1933 and later revised for American publication in 1951, remains one of his seminal achievements, notwithstanding his substantial subsequent oeuvre. By that time he had grown dissatisfied with what he called an “unorganic mixture of traditional cantorial chants with congregational and choral music in the German style of the 19th century,” and he felt that the synagogue of the 20th century required its elimination. Liturgical composition became for him a sacred calling, with a sense of mission that he posed as a challenge to contemporary Jewish musicians to “prepare a change in style and outlook,” as he wrote in the preface to his first service. His goal was to “create a new, unified liturgical music growing out of the soil of the old-new, significant and valuable source material” that had become available through recent musicological studies. In his own music for worship he therefore consciously avoided the 19th-century harmonic idioms that had become so firmly accepted through Lewandowski’s hegemony, forging instead his own less conventional harmonic language that often incorporates moderate, controlled dissonance within a basically if sometimes gently pungent diatonic framework.

In 1933, following the National Socialist victory in Germany and the appointment of Hitler as chancellor, Schalit accepted the position of music director at the Great Synagogue in Rome, where, despite the Mussolini regime, the racial and anti-Jewish parameters of Italian Fascism had yet to emerge. In 1940, after it had become necessary once again to relocate, he immigrated to the United States. After serving a number of synagogues in the East and on the West Coast, he settled in Denver. After a brief period in Los Angeles, he returned to the Denver area and retired in Evergreen, Colorado.

Among Schalit’s other important works are a Sabbath morning service; a second Friday evening service; a setting of the *k’dusha*; settings of texts by medieval Spanish Hebrew poets; individual prayer

settings; and many Psalms.

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AVRAHAM SCHWADRON [Sharon] (1878–1957) was renowned in his day as a scholar and collector of Jewish portraits and other pictures (photographs, daguerreotypes, drawings, paintings, and other images), handwriting samples, autographs, and other documents of Jewish life and history. Born in Galicia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian, or Hapsburg Empire, he made *aliya* in 1926. Shortly after the founding of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, he donated to it his entire collection, which occupied more than fifty meters of space; and he spent many years cataloguing it for the library. Among his most important scholarly writings is his definitive monograph about the celebrated *klezmer*, Yehiel Mikhl Guzikov (1806–1937), a flutist and *shtrouyfidl* (wood-and-straw xylophone) player from the Belarusian town of Shklov who, uncharacteristically, enjoyed a short period of fame with concerts throughout Western Europe. Schwadron, who, like many European Jews who made *aliya*, changed his German name to one in Hebrew that was thought to resonate more appropriately with the new Zionist spirit of national rebirth and modern Hebrew culture. In his case, he became Avraham Sharon, but at least through the 1930s he published under his original name. He also composed and, for poetry to set, he was particularly attracted to the verse of Rachel [Blaustein], one of the major figures of modern Hebrew poetry. His cycle, *Eight Hebrew Songs*, was published in Vienna in 1936.

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Born on a kibbutz on the shores of the Sea of Galilee in 1930, **NAOMI SHEMER** became the “first lady of Israeli song and poetry.” Most famous for her song *Jerusalem of Gold*, which became something of an unofficial second anthem for Israel after the Six-Day War, Shemer wrote dozens of popular Hebrew songs and was recognized with the Israel Prize for Hebrew song in 1983.

Broad gestures, rich textures, and narrative sweep are hallmarks of the “compelling” (*New York Times*), “shapely, melody-rich” (*Wall Street Journal*) music of composer **ALEX WEISER**. Born and raised in New York City, Weiser creates acutely cosmopolitan music combining a deeply felt historical perspective with a vibrant forward-looking creativity. Weiser has been

praised for writing “insightful” music “of great poetic depth” (*Feast of Music*), and for having a “sophisticated ear and knack for evoking luscious textures and imaginative yet approachable harmonies” (*I Care If You Listen*).

An energetic advocate for contemporary classical music and for the work of his peers, Weiser co-founded and directs Kettle Corn New Music, an “ever-enjoyable,” and “engaging” concert series which “creates that ideal listening environment that so many institutions aim for: relaxed, yet allowing for concentration” (*New York Times*), and was for nearly five years a director of the MATA Festival, “the city’s leading showcase for vital new music by emerging composers” (*The New Yorker*). Weiser is now the Director of Public Programs at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research where he curates and produces programs that combine a fascination with and curiosity for historical context, with an eye toward influential Jewish contributions to the culture of today and tomorrow.

Weiser is currently developing an opera with librettist Ben Kaplan called *State of the Jews*. Based on the life of Theodor Herzl, the opera juxtaposes a historical narrative focusing on the last year of his life, with the more intimate story of Theodor’s conflicted relationship with his wife, Julie Herzl, and the toll his political views and activities took on their family life. The opera is being developed as a part of a two-year fellowship with American Opera Projects, the LABA fellowship of the 14th Street Y, and with support from the ConEd Exploring the Metropolis Composer Residency program.

Recent projects include *and all the days were purple*, a 30-minute song cycle for Eliza Bagg and ensemble featuring songs setting Yiddish and English language Jewish poems reflecting on life and death which is the centerpiece of Weiser’s debut release on Cantaloupe Music, and *Shimmer*, an extended work for eight spatially-arrayed cellos for Ashley Bathgate which will also be released on an album in the coming season. Other recent projects include *Three Epitaphs* for singer Kate Maroney and chamber orchestra *Can-tata Profana*, and *water hollows stone* for HOCKET piano duo.

© ALEX WEISER

Soon after receiving his DMA in Musical Composition from The Juilliard School of Music in 1991, composer/pianist/accordionist **RONN YEDIDIA** decided to abandon all the common trends which represented mainstream contemporary music, and instead embarked on an individual journey toward the re-establishment of traditional tonal principles

such as melody, harmony, form, aestheticism, drama and dialogue. His passion for folk, jazz and other non-classical genres of music which maintain tonality in their essence has helped him enhance his musical language. He has written for all instrumental mediums from solo through chamber to symphonic works, and for most vocal idioms including art song, pop/folk songs, and both sacred & secular choral works. The world premiere of his work “Steps In The Wonderland” was performed by The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in May, 2007. Major commissions include the San Antonio International Piano Competition, the Seattle Chamber Music Society and the Zamir Chorale of New York. In 1994, Yedidia was invited by Wanda Toscanini-Horowitz to edit and record the unpublished piano compositions by the legendary pianist Vladimir Horowitz.

Ronn’s compositions have been recorded by renowned artists and ensembles on many major labels such as EMI Classics, Naxos’ American Classics series, Centaur Records and Sony BMG. His solo album “Yedidia Plays Yedidia,” on Britain’s Altarus label, has galvanized the attention of numerous pianists and composers around the world. In addition to his many national and international awards, Dr. Yedidia has won special grants from both ASCAP and BMI, and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship. He is the co-founder and Classical Program Director of The New York Piano Academy in Manhattan.

DOV ZAMIR (ZINGER) was born during Passover 1908 in Horochów, a town in the Wołyń county, then in Poland, now in Ukraine. As a child, he studied Hebrew in the Tarbut Jewish school, and later made *aliya* as a single *halutz* (pioneer) in 1926. Following a few years of settling in Israel and working as a stonemason, in construction, and as a diamond polisher, he was offered an administrative position at the Netanya municipality where he worked until his retirement as the deputy of the city clerk.

From a young age he always loved poetry, music, theater, and other forms of art, and in spite of not having a formal education he dedicated all his free time to the arts. During the 1950s he founded and conducted a laborers’ choir in Netanya. At the same time he continued to write poetry and music, and published a few poetry books for both adults and children, as well as books of his musical compositions. In the 1960s he founded the *S’nunit* Children Theater in Netanya, and was involved in every possible art endeavor in town.

When he retired at 70, in addition to all his other creative activities, he fulfilled an old dream and started

to study the flute. He played the flute for 10 years, during which time he gave many concerts, primarily in retirements clubs, accompanied by his wife, Ronnie, who was a highly reputed pianist and piano teacher. His mind remained clear and he continued to write poetry and music until his death died in 2002, at 94. His art-song collection has become popular, and many leading classical singers sing his songs in concerts and recitals.

© MIRI ZAMIR-CAPSOUTO

BIOGRAPHIES

DR. NEIL W. LEVIN is a leading musicological and historical scholar and authority on the music of Jewish experience and connection in both its secular-cultural and sacred-liturgical realms. He is the Artistic Director and Editor in Chief of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music and emeritus professor of Jewish music at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Dr. Levin holds B.A. and M.A. degrees from Columbia University and a PHD in Jewish music from the Jewish Theological Seminary. For many years, Dr. Levin was Editor of the scholarly journal, *Musica Judaica*, and in addition to two books, he has published more than 300 articles, essays, and monographs on numerous aspects of Jewishly-related music and its various historical, literary, and cultural contexts.



Soprano **ILANA DAVIDSON** enjoys a busy schedule of opera, concerts, and recitals, performing repertoire from the Renaissance and Baroque to the 20th and 21st centuries. Her performances have included William Bolcom's *Songs Of Innocence and of Experience* conducted

by Leonard Slatkin at Carnegie Hall which earned 4 Grammy Awards, Mahler Symphony No. 4 with Leonard Slatkin and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra which was broadcast live, Mozart Arias at the Royal Concertgebouw Hall, Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre* in the Netherlands, Krenek's *Das Geheime Königreich* in Vienna, Gluck's *Orphée et Eurydice* and Mahler Symphony No. 2 with the Québec Symphony Orchestra,

recital highlights include a tour of the Lieder of Ernst Krenek, New York Festival of Song, appearances with the Bard Music Festival and the Annenberg Center in Palm Desert. Ms. Davidson has performed major works and operatic roles with the Staatsoper Stuttgart, Florida Grand Opera, Nationale Reisopera, Vlaamse Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Berkshire Choral Festival, Harrisburg Symphony, Duke Chapel, Bellingham Music Festival, Nieuw Sinfonietta Amsterdam, Krenek Festival Vienna, Innsbruck Early Music Festival and the Schwetzingen Festspiele.

Recent highlights include Carnegie Hall performances of *Mona Lisa* (Von Schillings), *Der Diktator* (Krenek) and *Songs From Jewish Folk Poetry* (Shostakovich) with the American Symphony Orchestra and TON, a debut with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra as Euridice in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Mahler Symphony No. 4 with Keith Lockhart at the Brevard Music Festival, the Anchorage Symphony, Bellingham Music Festival, Mozart Requiem and Haydn's *Creation*, Mozart Requiem with the Bellingham Music Festival, and chamber music festivals in the United States and Canada.

In 2018/19 Ilana returns to the Berkshire Choral Festival in Haydn's *Creation*, Mozart Requiem, Handel's *Messiah*, Pergolesi *Stabat Mater*, Mahler Symphony No. 2 with Keith Lockhart at the Brevard Music Festival and with Lansing Symphony Orchestra. She also collaborates with Electric Earth Concerts, the Riverside Choral Society as well as the Riverdale Choral Society as Anne in *Annelies* by James Whitbourn and *Ars Antiqua* in works of Haydn.

Ilana has been featured on several commercial recordings including works of Bolcom, Krenek, Weill, Zorn, Britten, Elwood and more. She has been

recognized in several competitions, and was recently awarded a BRIO award from the Bronx Council on the Arts, and received the first prize in the Mostly Mozart Competition of Philadelphia and a Sullivan Foundation recipient.

Ilana received a Master of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music, and received an undergraduate degree in Voice Performance from Carnegie Mellon University. Ilana is the artistic director of ClassicalCafé, a music series dedicated to bringing chamber music to intimate settings.



A sabra with a rich baritone voice and musical artistry, **RAPHAEL FRIEDER** is widely recognized both in America and in his native Israel. At home equally with classical (especially oratorio and lieder), Israeli, and other Jewishly-related music, he has sung with all of Israel's major

orchestras as well as with the Israeli New Opera. He has appeared in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall to Tel Aviv's Mann Auditorium, and from Vienna's Volkstheater to Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. And he has collaborated with some of the world's leading conductors, including Zubin Mehta, Roger Norrington, and Leonard Bernstein, who chose him to sing the world premiere of his *Arias and Barcaroles* in Tel Aviv—followed by its British Isles premiere in London.

Among the many works that feature Frieder as baritone soloist on recordings of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music on the NAXOS label are David Tamkin's opera, *The Dybbuk*, Max Helfman's *The Holy Ark*, liturgical settings by Lazare Saminsky, Ernest Bloch's *Avodath Hakodesh*, and a number of Lazar Weiner's Yiddish lieder. He has also made many recordings for Israel National Radio, and he played and sang the role of the cantor in the hit film, *Keeping the Faith*.

Frieder is also an accomplished cantor, who has served the pulpit as hazzan of Temple Israel of Great Neck, New York, for a quarter of a century. He has appeared in cantorial concerts throughout the world, including at New York's Lincoln Center. He received his degree in voice and choral conducting at the Rubin Academy of Music in Tel Aviv, after which he served as cantor of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue in London. He has taught hazzanut at the Academy for the Jewish Religion in New York, and he currently teaches and coaches at the H.L. Miller Cantorial School of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

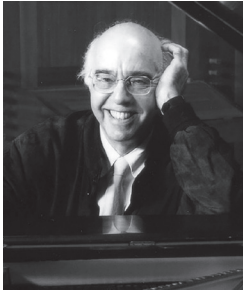


The daughter of a mother with roots in Latvian Jewry and a Baghdad-born father of Babylonian Jewish tradition who emigrated to America in 1947, mezzo-soprano **ELIZABETH SHAMMASH** feels the proud inheritance of two rich Jewish lineages. Her work in opera has taken her to major roles

with companies including New York City Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Berkshire Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Israel Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, and the Beijing Music Festival. Concert appearances have included the China National Symphony, the Israel Philharmonic, the Mostly Mozart Festival, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, the Berlin Radio Symphony, the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, Boston Baroque, and Early Music Vancouver.

Highlights of Shammash's recitals and chamber music performances include those at Tanglewood, Marlboro, the Ravinia Festival, the Gardner Museum in Boston, and Lincoln Center's Great Performer's series. During the 2015-16 season she gave a recital of Yiddish lieder at the University of Oklahoma. She has recorded extensively for the Milken Archive of Jewish Music and appears on many of its CDs on the NAXOS label. These include her renditions of Yiddish lieder by Lazar Weiner and others; a number of Yiddish theatre songs; and lead mezzo-soprano roles in David Stock's *A Little Miracle* with the Berlin radio Symphony Orchestra, and Thomas Beveridge's *Yizkor Requiem* with Sir Neville Marriner and the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields. In 2003 she sang one of the principal roles in a concert version of Kurt Weill's *The Eternal Road* in New York. The Newport Classical recording of Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* features her in the leading role of Dinah, and she is also heard as the alto soloist in Handel's *Messiah* on Telarc with Apollo's Fire, Cleveland's Baroque Orchestra.

In 2006 Shammash made her debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Gerard Schwarz at the Disney Hall, in which she starred in a Yiddish theatrical revue narrated by Theo Bikel. Now also Cantor Shammash, she received ordination as hazzan and a Master of Sacred Music degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2007. Prior to that she earned her masters degree in music and voice performance from Manhattan School of Music, an artist diploma from Boston University's Opera Institute, and a B.A. degree in Italian Studies from Brown University. In April (2017) she celebrated her 10th anniversary as the cantor of Tiferet Bet Israel in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania.



For more than six decades, **YEHUDI WYNER** has been recognized as one of America's most gifted composers. Born in Calgary, Alberta (Canada), he grew up in New York and throughout his youth he was exposed to his parents' Yiddishist milieu. His father, Lazar Weiner, the leading

exponent of high Yiddish music culture and the prime exemplar of Yiddish art song, had the spelling of his sons names—though not his own—changed to preclude a common, annoying mispronunciation. By the age of four or five, Wyner began improvising short pieces that had an eastern European Jewish folk or Hasidic character. He started his musical life as a pianist—and has remained, like his father, a brilliant pianistic artist. But while a piano student at The Juilliard School, he became increasingly attracted to composition, which he then studied at Yale with Paul Hindemith and Richard Donovan—and at Harvard with Randall Thompson and Walter Piston.

After completing his undergraduate work, Wyner spent a summer in residence at the Brandeis Arts Institute in Santa Susana, California, a division of the Brandeis Camp where the music director was Max Helfman, one of the seminal American figures in music of Jewish experience. That summer, Wyner came into contact with some of the most creative and accomplished Israeli composers and other artists of that period, and he was introduced to new artistic possibilities inherent in modern Jewish cultural consciousness. The Brandeis experience had a lasting impact that would later emerge in many of his works. And he was profoundly affected by the founder and director of the institute, Shlomo Bardin, whom he credits with instilling in him and his fellow students there a fresh appreciation for Jewish cultural identity.

In 1953 Wyner won the Rome Prize in composition, and he spent three years at the American Academy in Rome—composing, performing, and traveling. Since then he has garnered numerous other honors—including two Guggenheim Fellowships as well as commissions from the Koussevitsky and Ford Foundations, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and many other performing organizations and universities. In 1998 he received the Elise Stoecker Award from the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center for his lifetime (up to then) contributions to chamber music, and he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters—of which he is now president.

Wyner joined the faculty of Brandeis University

in 1986, and four years later he was appointed to the Naumburg Chair in composition. Previously he taught for fourteen years at Yale, where he was head of the composition faculty, and he was also dean of music at the Purchase campus of the State University of New York. He was on the chamber music faculty of the Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood from 1975 to 1997, and he has been a visiting professor at Cornell and Harvard Universities.

Although his public persona rests primarily on his contributions as a composer, Wyner also enjoys an enviable reputation as a pianist and conductor. He has been both a keyboard artist and a conductor of the Bach Aria Group, and he has also directed two opera companies and many chamber ensembles in a wide range of repertoire. He is the leading pianistic interpreter of his father's vast body of Yiddish lieder.

A number of Wyner's mature vocal works were written expressly for his wife, Susan Davenny Wyner. Among these are *Intermedio* (1976), a lyric ballet for soprano and string orchestra; *Fragments from Antiquity* (1978-1981) for soprano and orchestra; and *Oh the Most Voluptuous Night* (1982) for soprano and chamber ensemble. Orchestral works include *Prologue and Narrative* for Cello and Orchestra (1994), commissioned by the BBC Philharmonic; *Lyric Harmony* (1995), commissioned by Carnegie Hall for the American Composers Orchestra; and *Epilogue* (1996), commissioned by Yale. His chamber music works have been performed throughout Europe and America. His Horn trio (1997) was commissioned for forty ensembles in the United States and abroad.

Prominent among Wyner's many works that have been informed by Jewish experience and heritage are *The Mirror*, a suite from his incidental music for the play by Isaac Bashevis Singer; *Passover Offering*; *Tants un Maysele*; *Dances of Atonement* for violin and piano; and two major liturgical works: a Torah service and a Sabbath Eve service.

In 2006 Wyner was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his piano concerto.



And special guest artist **RONN YEDIDIA**. Find his biography on page 21.

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