

Cover Art

Levy

A MESSAGE FROM THE MILKEN ARCHIVE FOUNDER



Dispersed over the centuries to all corners of the earth, the Jewish people absorbed elements of its host cultures while, miraculously, maintaining its own. As many Jews reconnected in America, escaping persecution and seeking to take part in a visionary democratic society, their experiences found voice in their music. The sacred and secular body of work that has developed over the three centuries since Jews first arrived on these shores provides a powerful means of expressing the multilayered saga of American Jewry.

My personal interest in music and deep abiding commitment to synagogue life and the Jewish people united as I developed an increasing appreciation for the quality and tremendous diversity of music written for or inspired by the American Jewish experience. Through discussions with contemporary Jewish composers and performers during the 1980s, I realized that while much of this music had become a vital force in American and world culture, even more music of specifically Jewish content had been created, perhaps performed, and then lost to current and future generations. Believing that there was a unique opportunity to rediscover, preserve, and transmit the collective memory contained within this music, the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music was founded in 1990. This project would unite the Jewish people's eternal love of music with their commitment to education, a commitment shared by the Milken Family Foundation since our founding in 1982.

The passionate collaboration of many distinguished artists, ensembles, and recording producers has created a vast repository of musical resources to educate, entertain, and inspire people of all faiths and cultures. The Milken Archive of American Jewish Music is a living project, one that we hope will cultivate and nourish musicians and enthusiasts of this richly varied musical genre.

Lowell Milken
Lowell Milken

A MESSAGE FROM THE MILKEN ARCHIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



The quality, quantity, and amazing diversity of sacred as well as secular music written for or inspired by Jewish life in America is one of the least acknowledged achievements of modern Western culture. The time is ripe for a wider awareness and appreciation of these various repertoires—which may be designated appropriately as an aggregate “American Jewish music.” The Milken Archive is a musical voyage of discovery encompassing hundreds of original pieces—symphonies, operas, concertos, cantorial masterpieces, complete synagogue services, and folk, popular, and Yiddish theater music. The music in the Archive—all born of the American Jewish experience or fashioned for uniquely American institutions—has been created by native American or immigrant composers. The repertoire is chosen by a panel of leading musicians, musicologists, cantors, and Judaic scholars who have selected works based on or inspired by traditional Jewish melodies or modes, synagogue or other liturgical functions, language, Jewish historical subject matter, role in Jewish celebrations or commemorations, and content of texts (biblical, literary, etc.), as well as their intrinsic musical integrity.

The initial dissemination to the public of the Archive will consist of fifty CDs devoted to particular composers and musical genres. In this first phase of the project, more than 200 composers in recordings of more than 600 works are represented. Additional components of the Archive, planned for release at a future date, include rare historical reference recordings, expanded analytical background information, contextual essays, and a special collectors edition—according to historical, religious, and sociological themes.

The Milken Archive is music of **AMERICA**—a part of American culture in all its diversity; it is **JEWISH**, as an expression of Jewish tradition and culture enhanced and enriched by the American environment; and perhaps above all, it is **MUSIC**—music that transcends its boundaries of origin and invites sharing, music that has the power to speak to all of us.



Neil W. Levin

Neil W. Levin is an internationally recognized scholar and authority on Jewish music history, a professor of Jewish music at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, director of the International Centre and Archives for Jewish Music in New York, music director of Schola Hebraica, and author of various articles, books, and monographs on Jewish music.

▩ About the Composer

MARVIN DAVID LEVY was born in New Jersey in 1932. He began studying piano as a young child and studied with the legendary piano pedagogue Carl Friedberg at The Juilliard School. After turning his attention to composition, Levy studied with Philip James at New York University, where he received his B.A., and was then a pupil of the pioneering American composer Otto Luening at Columbia University, receiving his master's degree in music there in 1956. While a student, Levy was the archivist of the American Opera Society, and later its assistant director, and he also worked as a freelance music critic. His interest in theatrical music—including but not confined to opera—grew during those years. During summers he was an apprentice stage director at music-theater workshops, where he soon directed full productions ranging from *My Fair Lady* to *Carmen*.



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Also during the 1950s he wrote three one-act operas, whose premieres he also directed: *The Tower* (1956), a comic biblically based fable for the Santa Fe Opera; *Sobota Komachi* (1957), based on a 14th-century Japanese Noh play; and *Escorial* (1958), based on a play by Michel de Ghelderode.

In 1959, Levy's oratorio *For the Time Being*, on a text by W. H. Auden, was performed and commercially recorded at Carnegie Hall, narrated by Claude Rains, with vocal soloists Lucine Amara, Maureen Forrester, Reri Grist, and Ezio Flagello. "I find a new young [Benjamin] Britten lurking in you," wrote Leonard Bernstein to Levy after that performance, "and I think that before you are through you'll make opera history." Indeed, Levy did, only a few years later, when the Ford Foundation commissioned him to write an opera for the opening season of the Metropolitan Opera at its new house at Lincoln Center. *Mourning Becomes Electra*, based on Eugene O'Neill's modern adaptation and interpretation of the Aeschylus play, premiered at the Met in 1967 and received instant critical acclaim and international attention. Unprecedented for the Met, the opera remained in the repertoire for several seasons. "A tremendous achievement, a remarkable work," wrote Bernstein to Levy. Notwithstanding his numerous other works and achievements, *Mourning Becomes Electra* remains Levy's best-known work. It was restaged by the Chicago Lyric Opera in 1998 in a revised version.

Levy has been the recipient of many honors, including two Guggenheim Fellowships and two Prix de Rome awards. Among his other important works apart from those recorded for the Milken Archive are *The Zachary Star*, a children's opera (with both children's and adult roles), with alternate Christmas and Hanukka versions; a symphony; a piano concerto written for Earl Wild, who premiered it with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Solti; *Kyros*, a dance-

poem for chamber orchestra; *Triologus*, also performed by the Chicago Symphony; *Pascua Florida* and *The Arrows of Time*; and a Passover opera commissioned for an ABC network television broadcast by the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Program Notes

CANTO DE LOS MARRANOS (Song of the Crypto Jews)

The so-called golden age of Spanish—or Iberian—Jewry, which flourished for significant periods since the 8th century in Moslem-controlled areas of the Iberian Peninsula, had come to a gradual end by the 14th century, with the ultimate establishment of Christian hegemony in what is Spain today. Although the expansion of Christian rule was punctuated by periods of tolerance and even Jewish prosperity, the overall position of the Jews in Christian Spain deteriorated throughout the era during which Moslem rule simultaneously shrank. By the 14th century, Jewry was subjected to fierce persecution from which it never recovered. The culminating massacres in 1391, in which an estimated 70,000 Jews were murdered and entire communities extinguished (except in Moslem-ruled Granada and in Portugal, owing to royal protection), resulted in significant numbers of Jews surrendering to baptism and conversion. Continued persecution led to a second wave of conversions in the early 15th century. Some, though not all, of these “new Christians,” or *conversos*, continued to practice Jewish customs and ceremonies in secret—as “crypto-Jews,” or *marranos* (“swine,” the derogatory epithet originally attached to them). But as nominal Christians now subject to the authority of the Inquisition—the Congregation of the Holy Office—their recidivism, covert or otherwise, would constitute heresy that

could be punished legally (or “purified”) by death. Over the course of the 15th century, the road led rapidly to the outright expulsion from Spain in 1492 of all who had declined conversion.

Reflecting on the work, Levy articulated his evocative programmatic and extramusical purpose:

Canto de los Marranos seeks to evoke the tragic memory of the hunted *conversos*, their initially nominal Christianity together with their stubborn devotion to their ancient faith—increasingly forgotten with succeeding generations, but to which some managed to cling as long as even the faintest remembrance lingered. The work makes reference to mixtures of Roman Catholic and Hebrew liturgies—the latter in the original Hebrew at some moments, and at others in Ladino, or Judeo-Espagnol.

The work opens with a quotation from the actual 1492 expulsion decree, in English translation. The succeeding juxtapositions of Roman Catholic liturgy in Latin and original Hebrew liturgical quotations—or Ladino or Spanish translations of them—create the impression of the singer seeking to remind herself of her Jewish identity, professing outwardly what is required for public perception, as well as survival, but almost as if nullifying it with the Judaic interpolations. At the same time, those Judaic quotations might be understood as representing the inner thoughts of the *conversos* while they reluctantly uttered the liturgy of the official faith to which they had been forced to convert.

Ladino is a mixture of 15th-century Castilian Spanish and Hebrew, which developed as a mostly secular vernacular language of those Jews who left the Iberian Peninsula and resettled in eastern Mediterranean

lands. The actual song, *Benedicho su nombre*, also almost certainly postdates the Spanish expulsion as a Ladino song. Levy draws upon these elements liberally here, with a degree of artistic license for powerful dramatic and poetic effect rather than for historical accuracy.

In its original version, *Canto de los Marranos* was a commission from the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the lay arm of the American Reform movement, and it received its premiere in 1977 by soprano Phyllis Bryn-Julson and the San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Phillipe Entremont. Despite glowing reviews and much critical acclaim, Levy subsequently withdrew it. This new version, created for the Milken Archive recording, is essentially a complete rewriting based on the original one.

SHIR SHEL MOSHE (Song of Moses)

Shir Shel Moshe is Levy's setting of *kabbalat shabbat* (welcoming the Sabbath) and Sabbath eve liturgies as a musically complete, unified service. It was commissioned by Cantor David Putterman and the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York in 1964. In 1943, Putterman had initiated a program in which he commissioned new works for the Hebrew liturgy from both firmly established and promising young composers—non-Jews as well as Jews. The fruits of those commissions received their premieres at the synagogue's annual Friday evening Sabbath eve service of new music, which became one of the most important Jewish cultural events nationally, as well as a significant and eagerly anticipated event on New York's annual cultural calendar. The program lasted more than thirty years and attracted contributions by some of the most prominent and soon-to-be prominent American composers.

Originally those annual new music services comprised settings of individual prayers or liturgical texts by several composers. But beginning in 1950, with Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Sacred Service for the Sabbath Eve* (op. 122), Cantor Putterman commissioned full services by single composers on an annual basis. By 1964, when Putterman invited Levy to compose this service, Levy was already beginning to come to public attention because of the commission for his opera *Mourning Becomes Electra*. In fact, he initially declined the Park Avenue commission because his attention was already focused on that work, but typically, Putterman persisted and eventually persuaded him to accept, so that ultimately Levy worked on both at the same time. Perhaps for that reason he later described *Shir Shel Moshe* as "very simple... I didn't have time to go into something more complex." But the composer's own characterization might be a bit deceptive, if not overly humble, since the very simplicity of which he speaks lends the work an engaging quality, free of pretension.

In his review of the work after its premiere, Erwin Jospé, an experienced composer of synagogue music and at that time dean of the School of Fine Arts and professor of Jewish music at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles, noted:

It speaks well for Mr. Levy's honesty that he writes in the style in which he ought to, his own. He is not pretending to be somebody other than himself when he writes for the synagogue. There is nothing assumed, nothing pseudo-Jewish.... He simply approaches his task as a composer ... who uses musical ideas—and he has many—to build musical structures. It is cause for rejoicing that this brilliant young American composer has written an impressive work of lasting value for the contemporary synagogue.

One of the most interesting and inventive movements is the concluding hymn, *adon olam*, where a quickly memorable but original tune is repeated for each strophe in a different key over a samba-type rhythm on the organ, almost giving the piece a Latin American flavor.

MASADA

In the popular imagination of the 20th and 21st centuries, the very name Masada has become a dramatic, unorthodox, or even ironic symbol for Jewish national defiance in the face of overwhelming enemy military superiority and even inevitable defeat. The most commonly accepted narrative account of the national as well as human tragedy believed to have occurred there in 73 C.E.—whether embellished narrative, accumulated myth, faithful chronicle, or a bit of each—has also come to serve as an important political and historical anchor of collective memory for both renewed Jewish national consciousness and, more directly, for the modern State of Israel and its sense of historical continuity and national roots.

Masada is an imposing and isolated plateau, towering above the Dead Sea and the Dead Sea valley at the edge of the Judean desert, upon which, in antiquity, stood a fortress. It was first fortified by the Jewish high priest Jonathan in the 2nd century B.C.E., and it was later the site of King Herod's royal palace, citadel, and fortifications, built at the end of the 1st century B.C.E. as a refuge and defensive post—in response to the perceived dual threat from Jewish political rivals in Jerusalem and from Queen Cleopatra of Egypt. It has been assumed that a Roman garrison was most likely stationed on Masada from 6 until 66 C.E., when the Jewish Wars (66–70/73) began and the initial attack against the Romans was launched from there; and when, according to the contemporaneous Jewish

historian Josephus, a band of Zealots (Jewish rebel forces) under Menahem ben Yehuda of Galilee took it from the Romans. Subsequently, following the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., Masada became the final, doomed fortified outpost of the Sicarii—a radical fringe sect of Jewish rebels or self-styled resistance fighters who previously had killed 700 Jewish women and children at En Gedi during a raid for supplies—and a refuge for those who faced capture, including entire families. Whether the Sicarii (*sikarikim*), with whom the Masada residents were affiliated at the time of its fall, were the same group as those identified as the Zealots (*kana'im*), as is often loosely assumed, or whether the two were distinct, perhaps rival extremist sects, is uncertain according to some opinions. But most contemporary historians espouse the latter view. After Menahem's murder in Jerusalem by his rivals, Elazar ben Yair of Galilee became the leader of the Masada-based rebels and residents, and he remained so until their defeat.

Having conquered the two other holdouts—Herodium and Macherus—the Roman forces laid siege to Masada and prepared to storm its defenses and permanently crush all lingering vestiges of resistance. Prior to the modern usage of the name (*metzada*), it appeared only in Greek transcription. It has been suggested that it might have been an Aramaic form of the word *metzad* (stronghold).

Our only contemporaneous description of Masada's fall was furnished by Josephus in a work titled *The Jewish Wars*. By the time of the Masada siege, Josephus, who was previously a commander of the Jewish army in the Galilee, had already surrendered personally to the Romans following Vespasian's conquest of some principal Galilean positions. Thereafter, secure on the Roman side, he devoted himself to historical writings, which include a detailed account of the Jewish revolt from 66 until its end in 73.

According to his own description, however, Josephus surrendered only after a small group of his comrades had decided upon collective suicide while trapped in a cave in the Galilee hiding from the Romans—and after he had persuaded them to draw lots to determine who would kill whom—foreshadowing the scene he later described with reference to Masada. By his own admission, as one of the last two men alive, he saved himself by convincing the other remaining man that the two of them should surrender. Some have suggested that this was a betrayal of his fellow rebels. What his motives, if any, might have been, whether his self-described role in that episode might have colored his later account of the fall of Masada, or whether in fact that incident at Jotapata actually occurred in the way he related it, are all matters of speculation. However, the very account of the Jotapata suicide has been challenged in terms of plausibility and is generally considered highly suspect.

Josephus relates that the Roman army under Flavius Silva began its campaign against Masada in 72 C.E. with the Tenth Roman Legion and auxiliary troops—estimated at between 8,000 and 10,000 strong—together with several thousand Jewish slaves or war prisoners. After a protracted siege, they breached the walls of the fortress only to find that the Jews had built a second wall, which the Romans set on fire. In the Josephus narrative, the Romans then halted and prepared for their final attack the next day, by which time any hope of success in further resistance appeared futile, and the specter of either slaughter or slavery hung over the populace. However, citing both archaeological evidence and the logic of military strategy to the contrary, historian Shaye Cohen has questioned the truth about the Roman army's pause, at the same time observing that this purported postponement of their final attack provided Josephus his necessary window of opportunity for the creation

of Elazar's speeches and the deliberations about the communal suicide.

According to the Josephus account, fortified by its ingrained status as national legend, Elazar ben Yair proposed "collective suicide" to the entire community as a more honorable and defiant option, which would deprive the Romans of complete satisfaction in their imminent victory. He suggested that the men first kill their wives and children, and then themselves, rather than be taken prisoners. Josephus claims to quote (or paraphrase)—but probably he invented, for both literary and political purposes—Elazar's now famous speech (the first of two), in which he reminds the people that they had long ago "resolved never to be servants to the Romans, nor to any other than to God," the time now having arrived to "make that resolution real in practice." He exhorts them to "die bravely and [while still] in a state of freedom." The Josephus account unfolds with the men accepting Elazar's solution (after some initial objections followed by further persuasion), slaying their wives and children after embracing them tearfully, and then casting lots to determine the ten men who would kill the rest. The last man then set fire to the palace and other buildings and fell on his sword. Thus, when the Roman army entered the fortress, it found 960 dead bodies. However, two women and five children, who are said to have relayed the story, hid in a cave and survived, later to be found by Roman soldiers.

Even apart from the issue of the veracity of the Josephus account or its modern acceptability as an exemplary national legend, in theory there was, of course, yet another defiant—though still ultimately suicidal—alternative: fighting to the last man (and perhaps even the last woman), accepting the inevitability of total defeat and death, but taking as many enemy lives as possible in the process (a course followed on some occasions by Jewish resistance

fighters against the Germans during the Second World War). In some modern ex post facto interpretations, that might be viewed as the more heroic choice—and therefore the less tragic one—and from a religious or religious-legal perspective, it could have avoided the issue of suicide, forbidden in Jewish law. On the other hand, a pitched battle would almost certainly have resulted in the enslavement of a significant number of Jews and perhaps a worse fate for the women. In that case, the deaths, whether self-inflicted or suicide by acquiescence in homicide, might be considered as dying *al kiddush hashem* (for the sanctification of God's name)—i.e., Jewish martyrdom—the more so if it was assumed that forced commission of the most serious capital transgressions would have followed surrender or capture. Yet the more traditional legal view regarding martyrdom involves allowing oneself to be killed rather than taking one's own life in advance. In any case, whether national pride and dignity (which would not in themselves justify suicide in Jewish law), or religious devotion, or simply fear of the physical consequences of capture was the prime motivating force behind the episode is only one of the issues at the core of modern reexamination of the Masada story. That question concerns not only religious parameters, but also the appropriateness of Masada's adoption as a historical symbol and Jewish national metaphor. This is but one of the several subjects of debate concerning Masada and its significance.

Although the writings of Josephus contain the only account from that time frame and the only discussion for many centuries afterward (Masada is not even mentioned in the Talmud, and Roman sources such as Pliny refer to it only in passing), the anonymous medieval historical work the *Book of Yossipon* (circa 10th c.) apparently drew from Josephus in its reference to Masada. In that version of the narrative,

after killing their wives and children, the men do not directly take their own lives, but rather all die (still in a sense suicidally) fighting Roman soldiers in a final battle. But that version is not generally accepted either—certainly not in its entirety. Most historians, archaeologists, and other scholars, especially in the absence of any other contemporaneous reports, do now accept a portion of the Josephus account as basically, if only partially, historical, in the sense that a communal suicide (though probably not involving the entire population) most likely did occur roughly along the lines he relates. But it is now also obvious that he embellished, exaggerated, and altered the account to suit both literary effect and political agendas. The archaeological excavations have been held to validate that position, notwithstanding the variety of views concerning the historical *interpretation* or political-social uses of the story.

Shaye Cohen has proposed motives for Josephus' invention of "additional" aspects, suggesting that Josephus wanted, through Elazar's speech, to discourage further rebellion against Rome and that he therefore wanted Jewish readers of his chronicle to "realize that the way of the Sicarii is the way of death" and to find Elazar admitting in his speeches that his policies of resistance had been wrong—that the rebels could not prevail. Cohen also concludes, while acknowledging a collective suicide by at least some of the Sicarii, that "the use of lots as described by Josephus must be fictitious too." Based on all available evidence, Cohen has conjectured (admittedly) that some Jews did kill their families as the Roman army was breaking through the wall (since he is convinced that the pause never occurred), some Jews killed themselves after destroying as much as possible, some tried unsuccessfully to hide or escape, some did fight to their end, and the Romans, rather than take prisoners, probably killed any remaining Jews.

Although subsequent medieval incidents of communal suicide as religious martyrdom are well known in European history, the Masada episode—whatever its interpretation—at most remained marginal to collective Jewish consciousness until well into the modern era, which gave birth to the first serious secular scholarly attention to Jewish history. (The works of Josephus were not translated into Hebrew until 1862.) Before then, to the extent that there was any awareness of Masada at all, it related to the incident as a symbol of Jewish suffering rather than one of national struggle. It was not until the maturity of the Zionist movement and the rejuvenation in Jewish Palestine following the First World War, and then the gaining of statehood, that Masada came to constitute an important part of national lore and historical “rediscovery.”

Increased general Jewish awareness of Masada, especially among Zionist-oriented circles and in Palestine, was generated by Yitzhak Lamdan's epic Hebrew poem of the same name (*Metzada*), published in 1927, which quickly became popular and contributed to the story's elevation to national folkloric status. Even as late as the 1970s it was only natural for Marvin David Levy to turn to it as one of his chief sources for the text of his musical work.

The actual site of Masada was identified geographically for the first time in 1838 by two American explorers, followed by investigations, visits, and surveys by others in succeeding decades and into the first half of the 20th century. Their interest, however, lay more in Roman than in Jewish history, and in archaeology per se rather than in historical-political issues of Jewish sovereignty and its roots in antiquity. Israeli archaeologists began work in the 1950s and arrived at some important findings, but these became preliminary stages to the highly publicized watershed excavation

and reconstruction conducted in 1963–65 by Israeli archaeologist Yigal Yadin. That expedition involved, in addition to a team of professional archaeologists, thousands of volunteers from many countries, which lent an ideological and even idealistic air to the project and ultimately helped reinforce Masada's position in Jewish national—hence Israeli—history as a symbol of defiance and patriotic continuity. The expedition and its results, followed by widespread attention, international traveling exhibitions, and extensive new media coverage, firmly established and reconfirmed Masada not only as a significant pilgrimage point—a function it had already begun to serve for dedicated Zionists and youth movements since the waning days of the Ottoman Empire, and for Israelis even before the Yadin excavation—but now as a major international tourist attraction. Thereafter Masada inspired artistic creations, historical and photographic books, novels, films, television programs, documentaries, and musical works. Especially in the euphoric post-1967 days following the Six Day War and during the early 1970s, it was an obvious subject for any composer seeking to address an Israel-related topic. Notwithstanding several other worthy compositions based on this story, Levy's cantata and the opera *Masada* by Israeli composer Joseph Tal probably stand as the two most sophisticated musical treatments to date.

Perhaps more problematic for our understanding of Masada than the validity of the Josephus account or his motives are the complex questions that fuel varying historical, religious, and political interpretations of this episode vis-à-vis its place in collective memory. Apart from the question of whether the 960 deaths can properly be considered “collective suicide” as opposed to accepted homicide (and whether the men had the moral right to make that decision for the women and children, even if they did not resist), does Masada symbolize national heroism or religious martyrdom?

Was the suicide an act of courage or fear? To what extent does the incident represent communal death as an ultimate defeat, and conversely, to what extent was it a denial of total victory to the enemy—and in that sense some measure of Jewish victory in succeeding to die with dignity as free people? Is Masada an appropriate narrative for either modern Jewry or modern Israel in establishing ancient precedence for national legitimacy and roots? Should it be viewed as a paradigm for Jewish national resistance and tenacity or as a symbol of Jewish suffering? In her book *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition*, Israeli historian Yael Zarubavel sums up a possible answer as follows:

The activist and the tragic commemorative narratives of Masada coexist in contemporary Israeli culture and are called upon in different situations. Masada thus continues to be a historical metaphor of active resistance and renewal in some instances and a historical metaphor of persecution, death, and suicide in others.

These are only a few of the questions triggered by objective consideration of what happened—or what did not—on Masada in the year 73, and of what Masada has come to represent to the world. Zarubavel's observations offer some keen insights, which contribute toward reconciling some of the conflicting prisms through which the episode can be refracted:

The commemorative narrative plays up the defenders' *readiness to die* as an ultimate expression of their patriotic devotion and highlights it as the core of their exemplary behavior. But it plays down or ignores the particular mode of death they chose. In this context the suicide becomes a marginal fact,

a small detail within the larger picture of an "active struggle" for national liberation.

Levy's cantata both commemorates the heroic parameters of Jewish defiance and mourns the tragedy of the communal deaths with its recitation of the "mourners' *kaddish*." Yet his overall conception seems to emphasize the former over the latter, Jewish strength over weakness, especially in the dramatic final pronouncement by the chorus: "Never again!"

Marie Syrkin has explained this apparent contradiction in her article "The Paradox of Masada" (coincidentally published in the same year as Levy completed his work), which is also quoted by Zarubavel:

Though the outcome of the struggle at Masada was the suicide of its last defenders, only the heroic resistance of which it was the scene has registered in the mind of Israel, not the grim "un-Jewish" finale. However illogically, what happened at Masada permeates the imagination of Israel as the ultimate expression of active struggle, the reverse of an acceptance of death.

Levy's *Masada* was originally commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra as a musical-dramatic work expressly for the legendary American tenor Richard Tucker. Like most American Jews at that time, Levy was not yet familiar with the Masada episode or its place in Jewish history, and the 1963–65 dig in Israel had just begun to generate substantial general public awareness and interest. While searching for a subject for the commissioned work, he coincidentally saw the traveling exhibition of Yadin's archaeological excavation and reconstruction, then on tour at the Jewish Museum in New York. Instantly impressed by the dramatic possibilities of the Masada story, Levy determined to base his new piece on it as a full-

length oratorio with a narrative speaking role as well. “Whether completely true or partially fabricated [by Josephus],” he later recalled, “I realized immediately that there was a story there for musical expression.” Levy then did considerable research, and he eventually based his text in large part on the Lamdan poem as well as on the writings of Josephus. In Elazar ben Yair’s purported speech he saw “the big tenor moment—right there!” and later described it as the “lynchpin of the work.”

Levy’s original version of *Masada* received its premiere in 1973 at the Kennedy Center in Washinton, D.C., with Tucker in the tenor role and world-renowned bass George London (then retired from singing) narrating, and the National Symphony Orchestra and the University of Maryland Chorus conducted by Antal Dorati. “But I never really finished the work—it was performed, so it was finished after a fashion,” Levy later said. He subsequently revised it—rewriting some sections and adding the mourners’ *kaddish* at the end as an extension—for a performance in 1987 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Margaret Hillis.

This recording represents yet a third version of the work, which Levy rewrote for the Milken Archive—this time as a shorter cantata without a speaking part. It contains both new texts and fresh musical material.

—Neil W. Levin

Texts and Translations

CANTO DE LOS MARRANOS

Texts adapted, arranged, and translated by the composer from historical sources, from the Christian and Hebrew liturgies, and from Ladino sources.

(Spoken)

“Inquisition has been made in the charge that Jews are persuading new Christians to leave their adopted faith and return to their ancient religion. The inquisitors accuse many of the converted of professing Christianity but practicing Judaism secretly. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of the Spains, believing great injury has been done to the holy Catholic faith, have issued an edict commanding all Jews and those converted who are found guilty of secretly observing the laws of Moses—the *Marranos*—depart all their kingdoms and dominions by the end of the month of July of the present year, 1492, under penalty of death.”

(quotation from the 1492 expulsion decree)

(Sung)

*Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae, visibillum omnium
et invisibillum, et in unum Dominum,
Jesum Christum Filium Dei unigenitum,
et ex Patrem natum ante omnia saecula.*

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Domine Deus. Sabaoth ...*

*Enveluto Adonay escojó en nos y todo lashón
nos hizo apartar y santedad de shabat.
Nos hizo heredar todo semen de Ya'acov.
Lo honaremos en día de shabat.
Quen guarda el shabat el Dio lo guarda
a él para siempre y siempre
el Dio va' star con él.*

*Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.*

*sh'ma yisra'el
adonai eloheinu adonai ehad.*

*Respondenos, Dio de Abraham, respondenos.
Respondenos, El que responde en ora ve-luntad,
respondenos. Respondenos, Pavor de Yis'hak.
Respondenos, El que responde
en ora de angustia, respondenos.
Respondenos, Fuerte de Ya'acov,
O Dio de la merkava, O Padre
piadoso y gracioso, repondenos.*

*Libera me Domine de morte aeterna
in die illa tremenda. Libera me ...
Libera ...*

*Que venga el alto, poderoso e terrible Dios
al justo siervo Suyo, quien vivo fue quemado
por servir a la sancta unidad de Su nombre.
Que lava su sangre con la de sue enemistados
con Su fuerte brazo e compense a Sus enemigos
conforme a sus merecimientos.
Haga nos memoria el Rey en
Su misericordia de Sus meritos,
como scripto está: Regocijaois,
O vosotras naciones, pueblo Suyos,
pues lavara El la sangre de Sus virtuosos
e les pondrá temor a Sus adversarios
e absolvera la tierra e Su pueblo.*

yitgaddal v'yitkaddash sh'me rabba.

*Bendicho Su nombre del Señor del mundo!
Bendicha Tu corona y Tu lugar! Sea Tu veluntad
con Tu pueblo Yisrael para siempre y rezgata*

(Translation)

[I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
the maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible,
and in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
The only-begotten Son of God and born of the Father of all ages.]

[Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts ...]

[Almighty God chose us and made our people,
set aside the holiness of the Sabbath.
He made us inherit the seed of Jacob.
We will honor Him on the day of the Sabbath.
The Lord will watch over whoever keeps
the Sabbath, and be with him forever and ever.]

[Lord have mercy upon us,
Christ have mercy upon us,
Lord have mercy upon us.]

[Hear, O Israel,
the Lord is God, the Lord alone.]

[Answer us, God of Abraham, answer us.
Answer us, He who answers in the hour of need,
answer us. Answer us, Fear of Isaac.
Answer us, He who answers in the hour of anguish, answer us.
Answer us, Power of Jacob, O God of mercy,
O Father, merciful and gracious, answer us.]

[God deliver me from eternal death
on that fearful day. Deliver me ...
Deliver ...]

[May the great, mighty, and fearsome God
avenge His holy servant, who was burned alive
for the sanctified unity of His name.
May his blood be washed away with that
of his enemies by His strong arm
and repay His enemies according to their worth.
May the King, in His mercy, remind us
of His merit, as it is written: Rejoice,
O ye nations, His people,
since He will wash away the blood
of His virtuous people and will
strike fear in His adversaries and
will absolve the land and His people.]

[Magnified and glorified be His great name.]

[Blessed be Your name, O Lord of the world!
Blessed be Your crown and Your abode!

de Tu derecha. Amostra a Tu pueblo en casa
de Tu santidad para suntraer a nos de buendad
de Tu claridad y por recibir nuestras tefilot
con piadades. Sea veluntad delante
de Tu que alargues a nos vidas con bien.
Y para ser yo Tu siervo contado entre los
justos por apidar sobre mi y lo que
a Tu pueblo Yisrael. Tu sos que mantienes
a todos y governas a todos.
Tu sos que podestas sobre
lo todo y el reina de Tuyo es.

Salvame, O Padre, salvame!

In memoria aeterna ...
Requiem aeternum dona eis, Domine.
Requiem aeternum ...

Amen...
Bendicho su nombre ... Amen.

May the favor of Your right hand rest upon
Your people Israel forever. In Your sanctuary
reveal to Your people the gift of Your light
and receive our supplications with mercy.
May it be Your will to prolong our life
in well-being. Let us be numbered among
the righteous, so that You may be merciful
and protect Your people Israel.
You sustain everything and reign over all.
You rule over everything
and all dominion is Yours.]

[Save me, O Father, save me.]

[In eternal remembrance ...
Give us eternal rest, Lord.
Eternal rest.]

[Blessed be Your name ... Amen.]

SHIR SHEL MOSHE (excerpts)

Sung in Hebrew
Unless otherwise noted, translations from
the Hebrew by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

SHIRU LADONAI (PSALM 98)

Sing to the Lord a new song,
for He has worked wonders;
His right hand, His holy arm,
has won Him victory.

The Lord has manifested His victory,
has displayed His triumph in the sight of the
nations.

He was mindful of His steadfast love and
faithfulness toward the house of Israel;
all the ends of the earth beheld the victory of
our God.

Raise a shout to the Lord; all the earth,
break into joyous songs of praise!
Sing praise to the Lord with the *khinor*,
with the *khinor* and melodious song.
With *hatzotzrat* and the blast of the shofar
raise a shout before the Lord, the King.

Let the sea and all within it thunder,
the world and its inhabitants;
let the rivers clap their hands,
the mountains sing joyously together
at the presence of the Lord,
for He is coming to rule the earth;
He will rule the world justly,
and its peoples with equity.

Translation: JPS Tanakh 1999

MI KHAMOKHA

Who, among all the mighty, can be compared with You, O Lord?
Who is like You, glorious in Your holiness,
awesome beyond praise, performing wonders?
When You rescued the Israelites at the Sea of Reeds,
splitting the sea in front of Moses,
Your children beheld Your majestic supreme power,
and exclaimed: "This is our God: The Lord will reign for all time."
And it is further said: "Just as You delivered the people Israel
from a superior earthly military power,
so may You redeem all from oppression."
Praised be You, O Lord (praised be He and praised be His name), who
thus redeemed Israel. Amen.

V'SHAMRU

The children of Israel shall keep and guard the Sabbath and observe
it throughout their generations as an eternal covenant. It is a sign
between Me and the children of Israel forever, that the Lord created
heaven and earth in six days, and that on the seventh day He rested
and was refreshed.

MAY THE WORDS

(Sung in English)

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be
acceptable unto You O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Thou who establishes peace in the heavens, grant peace unto us and to
all of Israel. Amen.

KIDDUSH

Praised be You, Lord (praised be He and praised be His name),
our God, King of the universe, who has created the fruit of the vine.
Amen.

Praised be You, O Lord (praised be He and praised be His name),
our God, King of the universe,
who has sanctified us through His commandments
and has taken delight in us. Out of love and with favor
You have given us the Holy Sabbath as a heritage,
in remembrance of Your creation. For that first of our sacred days
recalls our exodus and liberation from Egypt.
You chose us from among all Your peoples,
and in Your love and favor made us holy
by giving us the Holy Sabbath as a joyous heritage.
Praised are You, O Lord (praised be He and praised be His name), our
God, who hallows the Sabbath. Amen.

ADON OLAM

Lord of the world, who reigned even before form was created,
At the time when His will brought everything into existence,
Then His name was proclaimed King.
And even should existence itself come to an end,
He, the Awesome One, would still reign alone.
He was, He is, He shall always remain in splendor throughout eternity.
He is "One"—there is no second or other to be compared with Him.
He is without beginning and without end;
All power and dominion are His.

He is my God and my ever living Redeemer,
And the Rock upon whom I rely in time of distress and sorrow.
He is my banner and my refuge,
The "portion in my cup"—my cup of life
Whenever I call to Him.
I entrust my spirit unto His hand,
As I go to sleep and as I awake;
And my body will remain with my spirit.
The Lord is with me: I fear not.

MASADA

Sung in English and Hebrew

Text compiled and adapted by the composer from Josephus, *The Jewish Wars*; the poem *Masada (Metzada)* by Yitzhak Lamdan (1927); the
Hebrew liturgy; and various other historical sources.
Translation of the *Mourner's Kaddish* by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

PART I

CHORUS

yitgaddal v'yitkaddash sh'me rabba
b'alma div'ra khirute
v'yamilikh malkhute
b'hayyeikhon uv'yomeikhon
uv'hayyei d'khol beit yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv
v'imru: amen

[May God's great name be even more exalted
and sanctified in the world that He created
according to His own will; and may He fully establish
His kingdom in your lifetime, in your own days,
and in the life of all those of the House of Israel—
soon, indeed without delay. (Those praying here
signal ascent and say "amen.")]

ELAZAR BEN YA'IR

The War of the Jews against the Romans began more than one
hundred thirty years ago. Battles broke out from time to time, but now
Emperor Titus has had enough of our rebellion, and he has put an end
to it. Rome rules the world, and we are its greatest conquest. And so
Jerusalem has fallen.

CHORUS

Jerusalem has fallen. The Temple is destroyed.
y'he sh'me rabba m'varakh l'alum ul'almei almay

[May His great name be praised forever,
for all time, for all eternity.]

ELAZAR

The Temple is destroyed. Enough to quench the flames that engulf it,
the whole city runs with blood.

CHORUS

The whole city runs with blood.

*yitbarakh v'yishtabbah v'yitpa'ar v'yitromam
v'yitnasse v'yithaddar v'yitalle v'yithallal
sh'me d'kud'sha*

[Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, elevated, adored,
uplifted, and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One.]

ELAZAR

The Romans fall over the dead they have slaughtered in the streets.

CHORUS

*b'rikk hu
l'ella min kol birkhata v'shirata
tushb'hata v'nehemata da'amiran b'alma
v'imru: amen.*

[Blessed be He—

over and beyond all the words of blessing and song,
praise and consolation ever before uttered in this world.
(Those praying here signal assent and say "amen.")]

ELAZAR

Caesar ordered some of the captured to be put in bonds and sent to the Egyptian mines, others sent to the provinces where they might be run through by swords or torn apart by wild beasts. The rest have been sold as slaves. Still, my band of Zealots, near a thousand strong, survives.

CHORUS

Elazar ben Ya'ir, those of us not murdered or imprisoned are still your devout followers. We, your loyal Zealots, led this last revolt against the Romans. Now you see a fallen, conquered people before you. We await the footsteps of the end. See our hands, the first to raise the flags of every gospel and the last to receive comfort. Our hands are stretched out before you. Take them and lead us to a place of refuge.

ELAZAR

God give me the strength of my father. Help me to find a way.

CHORUS

Elazar ben Ya'ir, we can still escape with our wives and children.

ELAZAR

*y'he sh'lama rabba min sh'mayya
v'hayyim aleinu v'al kol yisra'el
v'imru: amen.*

[May there be abundant peace for us and for all Israel.
(Those praying here signal assent
and say "amen.")]

CHORUS

Help us find a way.

ELAZAR & CHORUS

*ose shalom bimromam
hu ya'ase shalom aleinu v'al kol yisra'el
v'imru: amen.*

[May He who establishes peace in His high place
establish peace for us and for all Israel.
(Those praying here signal assent
and say "amen.")]

ELAZAR

To the south of Jerusalem, south of Jericho, south of En-gedi in the Dead Sea valley, there in the Wilderness of Judea, alone, in isolation, suddenly rises the mountain plateau of Masada.

CHORUS

Masada!

ELAZAR

Masada, the palace stronghold built by Herod the Great. He thought himself "King of the Jews" and crucified pretenders. Fearing continued rebellion from his people, he fortified the royal citadel of Masada; he built huge cisterns to store rainwater, and amassed provisions. He encircled the summit with a stone wall. His court could then retreat there, defend and sustain themselves for years if necessary.

CHORUS

The Romans remember the fortress atop Masada. They were garrisoned there after Herod's death, until four years ago, when other patriots drove them out. The Romans remember the access to the mountaintop is only by a single steep and narrow path.

No armed legions can ascend together. They can only reach it by climbing one at a time. So it can be defended by even our small numbers, and used as a base for raiding operations.

ELAZAR

There we can join our fellow fighters against oppression. It may be the last point of Zealot resistance.

CHORUS

Our last stand!

ELAZAR

Then follow me, children of Masada. Let us ascend the wall. Let us dance with joy for one more chance to fight for freedom!

CHORUS

The chain is still not broken, from father to child, from fire to fire, the chain continues. Thus danced our fathers, one hand on a neighbor's shoulder, the other holding a scroll of the law. A people's burden is raised with love. So let us dance, one hand gripping the circle, the other clutching our heavy book of sorrow, so let us dance. When our fathers danced, they closed their eyes and wells of joy were opened. They knew they were dancing on the abyss, that if they opened their eyes, the wells of joy would turn dry. So let us dance too, with our eyes closed. Thus shall we continue the chain, lest it crumble into the deep, so let us dance too.

ELAZAR

To the south of Jerusalem.
(CHORUS: Onward!)

South of Jericho!

(CHORUS: Onward!)

South of En Geddi!

(CHORUS: Onward!)

To the shores of the Dead Sea!

CHORUS

Let us continue the chain! Surely we have grown big and tall! Smiting our heads against the heavens, the dance of Masada thunders in the ears of the world! Make the suns drums! Make the stars cymbals! This is the victory of Masada foretold beneath the heavens! O world, bend your head to our redeeming dance. God with us in the circle will sing: Israel!

ELAZAR

Who is kneeling? Who has fallen? A tired brother? Why do you cry, child of Masada? Arise! Weep not for broken yesterdays. We have tomorrow!

CHORUS

We have tomorrow!

ELAZAR

And if Fate says to us, "In vain!"

CHORUS

We shall pluck out its tongue!

ELAZAR

And in spite of itself, in spite of its laughter, defeated, Fate shall nod its head.

ELAZAR & CHORUS

Indeed. Amen! Amen!

PART 2

CHORUS

Three years have passed. We have defended ourselves. There are some fifteen thousand Roman legionnaires, led by Roman General Flavius Silva, stationed down at the foot of Masada, but they have not been able to breach our defense. They have surrounded the base of the mountain with a high wall, leaving us no escape. They have built an assault ramp to the top. And now they have moved the battering ram up directly against our wall. Though every day we raid the camps below, we know theirs will be the final victory.

ELAZAR

Great is their pain, and who can tell if it will not become greater, grow—become more righteous than this distant charity for which they iron? As tender, upright trees, they have set themselves here, but under the sin of Masada's heavens, on the brass of her earth, they wilt day after day. As autumn leaves, they drop from their twigs, and no one knows where the winds carry them, if they may bring another branch to flower, no one knows.

CHORUS

Look out there, in the darkness, someone is coming from outside the camp. Look, suddenly shining, the dying campfires move, and an unseen hand again binds crowns of flame to them. And by their light above the mountain of Masada a figure appears. He has an afflicted smile, a comforting look, and the majesty of might. Who watches us so? Who smiles? Who is this wondrous person? Elazar ben Ya'ir.

ELAZAR

O God, my God, God of Masada, I have waited, trembling, for a miracle. Now our enemies rage at our gates. You have sent us the final trial. You have also sent me the understanding of what You ask from us. Then one great mercy: give us the courage to do what must be done to redeem ourselves, so that if we are here today before You, tomorrow Your eyes will shine upon us when we are not.

CHORUS

Lord, be near us when You bring us out of this world. Bring us in peace to the life of the world to come. By those who hallow You, be sanctified; by those who exalt You, be glorified; by those who love You, be blessed.

ELAZAR

My loyal followers, daybreak will end our resistance. But we are free to choose a noble death with our loved ones—an honorable death by our own hands. It will be easier to bear. And our enemies cannot prevent this, however they may pray to take us alive. Let our wives die unabused, our children without the knowledge of slavery, by doing each other the final ungrudging kindness, preserving our freedom as a glorious beacon of light. First let the whole fortress and all our possessions go up in flames. It will be a bitter blow to the Romans to find that we are beyond their reach. Only one thing let us spare—our store of food. It will bear witness that we perished not through want, but because, as we resolved from the beginning, we choose death rather than slavery, a death for which we shall live forever.

CHORUS

We choose death to keep that dream alive!

ELAZAR

As of now, a new Book of Genesis is opened on the wall. And like our fathers, upon finishing the Torah before starting it again, let us roar with a new and last roar of the beginning! Be strong, be strong, and we shall be strengthened!

CHORUS

*shenit m'tzada, lo tipol!
am yisra'el hai.*

[Masada will never fall again!]

ELAZAR & CHORUS

Never again shall Masada fall!
Am yisra'el hai!

[May Israel live!]

CHORUS

O Lord our God, and God of our fathers, we sanctify Your name on earth as it is sanctified in heaven. Bless us, all of us together, with the light of Your presence, for by that light You have given us the Torah of life, Your sacred law. Holy are You and holy is Your name.

ELAZAR

*kaddosh kaddosh, kaddosh adonai tz'va'ot,
m'lo khol ha'aretz k'vodo.*

[Holy holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts,
the whole earth is full of His glory.]

CHORUS

You have drawn us near and called us by Your great and holy name. We entrust our lives into Your loving hand. Our souls are ever in Your charge. O Lord our God and God of our fathers, who call the dead to life everlasting, remember us unto life.

ELAZAR

y'varekh'kha adonai v'yishm'rekha.

[May the Lord bless you and keep you.]

CHORUS

ken y'hi ratzon.

[So may it be His will.]

ELAZAR

ya'er adonai panav elekha vihuneke.

[May the Lord make His countenance to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.]

CHORUS

ken y'hi ratzon

[So may it be His will.]

ELAZAR

yissa adonai panav elekha v'yasem l'kha shalom.

[May the Lord turn His countenance unto you and give you peace.]

CHORUS

ken y'hi ratzon

[So may it be His will.]

ELAZAR

v'imru: amen.

[Now respond: Amen.]

CHORUS

Amen

ELAZAR & CHORUS

Amen

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CHORUS

May the Lord make His countenance to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

ELAZAR

May the Lord turn His countenance to you.

CHORUS

And give you peace. So may it be His will.

ELAZAR

So may it be His will.

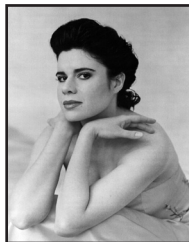
CHORUS

Never again!

ELAZAR & CHORUS

Amen. Amen. Amen.

▣ About the Performers



Soprano **ANA MARÍA MARTÍNEZ** was born in Puerto Rico, daughter of the opera singer Evangelina Colón, from whom she had her earliest lessons. She studied at The Juilliard School in New York, graduating in 1993. Her breakthrough came two years later as a prizewinner at Plácido Domingo's Operalia competition, and in 1996 she joined the Spanish tenor for concert appearances in Madrid, Palm Beach, and Buenos Aires. Her critically acclaimed debut with the Washington Opera came in 1997 as Soleá in Penella's *El Gato Montés*. It was followed by a series of triumphant debuts at leading European houses—the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, as Verdi's Luisa Miller; the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*; and as Debussy's Mélisande under Sinopoli at the Teatro Comunale, Florence. Martínez has appeared at the Vienna State Opera as Violetta in *La Traviata*, as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, and in a new production of Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, and she has sung the role of Liù in

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Turandot at the Washington Opera, Mimi in *La Bohème* at the Deutsche Oper, and Adina in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Houston Grand Opera. She was featured in the world premiere tour and recording of Philip Glass's opera *La Belle et la Bête*, and she created the role of the Mother in the world premiere of Menotti's *The Singing Child* at the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. Her orchestral engagements have included concerts with Andrea Bocelli in the United States and with Domingo in the United States, Canada, Germany, Poland, Spain, and Lebanon. On recordings, she can also be heard in Bacalov's *Misa Tango* under Myung Whun-Chung; Philip Glass's *Symphony No.5* under Dennis Russell Davies; the Houston Grand Opera production of Bright Sheng's *The Song of Majnun*; and opposite Domingo in Albéniz's opera *Merlin*.

The **BARCELONA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA/NATIONAL ORCHESTRA OF CATALUNYA** (Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya) was founded in 1944 as the Municipal Orchestra of Barcelona, and under the leadership of the Catalan composer-conductor Eduard Toldrà it became an integral part of the city's cultural life. Since that time, the orchestra, which aspires to promote classical music—and the works of Spanish and Catalan composers in particular—has presented an annual cycle of concerts and performed with many internationally renowned soloists. After Toldrà's death, in 1962, Rafael Ferrer took over the ensemble's leadership until 1976, when he was succeeded by Antonio Ros Marbá. At that time the orchestra was known as the Barcelona City Orchestra, but this was officially changed to the present name in 1994. In addition to Ros Marbá, conductor from 1976 to 1978 and from 1981 to 1986, the orchestra has been led by Salvador Mas (1978–81), Franz-Paul Decker (1986–91), and García Navarro (1991–93). In 1994 Decker was named guest conductor, and in 1995 Lawrence Foster was appointed music director.

The orchestra has given numerous premieres over the years and made many recordings, featuring the works of Monsalvatge, Roberto Gerhard, d'Albert, Falla, and Bartók, among others. It has toured Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Korea, and Japan; has performed in Romania at the George Enescu Festival; and was recently invited to appear at the Pablo Casals Festival in Puerto Rico. Since April 1999 its home has been the modern concert hall l'Auditori.



The American conductor **JORGE MESTER** was born in Mexico City in 1935 to parents who had emigrated from Hungary. He studied conducting with Jean Morel at the Juilliard School in New York, also working with Leonard Bernstein at the Berkshire Music Center, and with Albert Wolff. In 1955 he made his debut conducting the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico. His opera debut

was with *Salome* in 1960 at the Spoleto Festival in Italy. Since then he has conducted many of the world's leading ensembles, including the Boston Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, and the Royal Philharmonic orchestras. In 1967 he became music director of the Louisville Orchestra, noted for its advocacy of new and neglected music. With this orchestra Mester made more than seventy first recordings of works by such composers as Bruch, Cowell, Crumb, Dallapiccola, Ginastera, Granados, Koehlin, Penderecki, Petrassi, Schuller, and Shostakovich. From 1969 to 1990 he was music director of the Aspen Festival and later became its conductor laureate. Mester was appointed music director of the Pasadena Symphony Orchestra in 1983, and in 1998 he added to that post the music directorship of the Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra. A noted teacher, he was on the faculty of The Juilliard School for most of the period between 1958 and 1988.



Tenor **VALE RIDEOUT** was born in Lawrence, Kansas, and grew up in Fort Collins, Colorado. He began his training at Chapman University in Orange, California, and received his degree in opera from the University of Northern Colorado. He continued his training with apprenticeships at the Chautauqua Opera and the Central City Opera, where he sang in a recording of *The Ballad of Baby Doe*. He

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has performed with numerous American regional opera companies, in roles including Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Albert in *Albert Herring*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, and Frederick in *The Pirates of Penzance*. In concert he has appeared in the *Encores!* series in New York, and with the Indianapolis Symphony, the Naples Philharmonic, and the Orchestra of St Luke's. Rideout also played an extended run as Raoul in the Hamburg production of *The Phantom of the Opera*. In the United States he was featured as Tony in Terrence McNally's *Master Class*, as Tony in *West Side Story*, as Man 1 in *Closer Than Ever*, and he played the cello and sang in the 2000–01 national tour of *Cabaret*.

As Great Britain's only full-time professional chamber choir, the **BBC SINGERS** occupies a unique position in British musical life. For more than seventy-five years the group has commissioned, premiered, and recorded new works by many of the 20th century's leading composers and worked with some of its most distinguished conductors. Soon after the company's organization in 1924, the BBC recognized the need for a permanent choir. The ensemble's pioneering daily live broadcasts of religious services, with much of the music delivered only minutes before broadcast time, helped develop its acclaimed musicianship and sight-reading skill. Now world renowned for technical virtuosity, versatility, and tonal beauty, the BBC Singers is equally comfortable with Byrd, Bach, and Birtwistle. It broadcasts regularly on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Television and has a busy schedule of concert performances in the British Isles and abroad. Though the chorus's repertoire includes many liturgical and religiously inspired masterpieces and it has participated in a festival of Jewish music in London, the Milken Archive/World of American Jewish Music project has introduced the BBC Singers to an entirely new repertoire of Judaic works, both liturgical and secular.

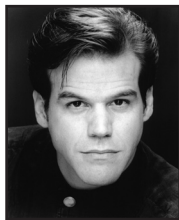


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A native of New York, **KENNETH KIESLER** studied at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, the Aspen Music School in Colorado, and the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy. At twenty-three he was the youngest conductor of a full production in the history of the prestigious Indiana University Opera Theater. He was accepted into the Leonard

Bernstein American Conductors Program; won the silver medal at the 1986 Stokowski Competition at Avery Fisher Hall; received the Helen M. Thompson Award (in 1988); and in 1990 was one of four American conductors selected to conduct the Ensemble Intercontemporain in sessions with Pierre Boulez during the Carnegie Hall Centenary. Kiesler was music director of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra for twenty years, becoming conductor laureate at the end of the 1999–2000 season, and is now music director of the New Hampshire Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared as guest conductor with the National Symphony Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony, and he has conducted the Jerusalem and Haifa symphony orchestras in Israel; the Osaka Philharmonic in Japan; the New Symphony in Sofia, Bulgaria; and the Pusan Symphony in Korea. He has conducted many operas, and has collaborated with such prominent instrumentalists and singers as Peter Serkin, Lorin Hollander, Joshua Bell, Sylvia McNair, William Warfield, Byron Janis, Sharon Isbin, and David Shifrin. Since 1995 he has held the positions of professor of conducting and director of university orchestras at the University of Michigan School of Music. Kiesler is also the founder and director of the Conductors Retreat at Medomak, Maine.

Tenor **RICHARD TROXELL**, a native of Thurmont, Maryland, received his operatic training at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia (1988–92). He came to prominence in 1995 in the role of Pinkerton in Frédéric Mitterand's film of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. In 1997 he made his Alice Tully Hall debut in the United States premiere of Gounod's opera *La Colombe* with L'Opéra Français de New York. That year, he also made his Washington Opera debut as Tybalt in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, returning the next



season as Prunier in Puccini's *La Rondine*, which was later televised by PBS. The 2000–01 season included his New York City Opera debut in Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges* and his debut at the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. in *Manon Lescaut*. In 2001–02 he sang in Jonathan Miller's production of *The Mikado* at New York City Opera and in Offenbach's *La Périochole* in Philadelphia.

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The **ERNST SENFF CHOIR** has become an institution in Berlin's cultural life. At the beginning of the 1960s Professor Ernst Senff directed a choir at Berlin's music conservatory (Hochschule) in addition to his duties as chorusmaster of the Municipal Opera (now Deutsche Oper). At this time, the Ernst Senff Chamber Choir, which specialized in unaccompanied works, made a number of radio recordings at SFB (Sender Freies Berlin). The choir's accomplishments soon led to concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Berlin Radio Symphony (now Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester), and other orchestras, and provided the opportunity to work with internationally prominent conductors. All choir members are trained musicians. The ensemble's repertoire ranges across the entire choral-symphonic literature of the 18th to 20th centuries, with a special emphasis on contemporary works. The choir, with up to 120 singers, depending on the work being performed, appears not only in Berlin but also in other German cities, and it has traveled to Israel and Austria. On Senff's retirement, in 1990, Sigurd Brauns was appointed by the choir as his successor.



The **RUNDUNK-SINFONIEORCHESTER BERLIN** (Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra) was founded in 1923 as the first radio orchestra in Germany (not to be confused with the RIAS-Symphonie Orchester Berlin, established in West Berlin in 1946, which later became known as the Radio-Sinfonie Orchester and, recently, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester). Its chief conductors have included Bruno Seidler-Winkler, Eugen Jochum, Sergiu Celibidache, and Hermann Abendroth. Among its guests have been such illustrious names as Otto Klemperer, Bruno Walter, Erich Kleiber, Herbert von Karajan, and George Szell. Its repertoire spans more than three centuries, but since its founding, the ensemble has been especially dedicated to contemporary works. Many of the greatest composers of the 20th century have performed their own music with this orchestra, either as conductors or soloists, among them Hindemith, Honegger, Milhaud, Prokofiev, Strauss, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Weill, and Zemlinsky—and more recently Krzysztof Penderecki, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Berthold Goldschmidt, and Udo Zimmermann. International tours have played a major role in the orchestra's activities. Since 1956 it has performed in twenty countries, including China and Japan. It also records extensively for DeutschlandRadio,

founded in 1994, and many of its recordings have been awarded the German Record Critics' Prize. In 2002 Marek Janowski succeeded Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos as the orchestra's principal music director.

YOEL LEVI was born in Romania in 1950 but grew up in Israel. He studied at the Tel Aviv Academy of Music, where he received a master of arts degree, and at the Jerusalem



Academy of Music under Mendi Rodan. He also studied with Franco Ferrara in Siena and Rome, with Kirill Kondrashin in Holland, and at the Guildhall School of Music in London. After winning first prize at the 1978 Conductors' International Competition in Besançon, Levi became assistant to Lorin Maazel at the Cleveland Orchestra for six years, serving as resident conductor from

1980 to 1984. From 1988 to 2000 he succeeded Robert Shaw as music director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Milestones from this period include an extensive European tour in 1991; the nomination of the Atlanta Symphony as Best Orchestra of the Year for 1991–92 by the committee of the first annual International Classical Music Awards; and a highly successful performance of Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony in New York's Avery Fisher Hall; as well as a large number of acclaimed recordings. In 2001, Levi, now the Atlanta Orchestra's music director emeritus, became artistic adviser for the Flemish Radio Orchestra (Vlaams Radio Orkest) in Belgium and principal guest conductor of the Israel Philharmonic. His other conducting engagements have included appearances with major orchestras throughout the world. And in 1991 he was invited to conduct the Stockholm Philharmonic at the Nobel Prize ceremony. Levi made his opera conducting debut in 1997 at the Teatro Comunale in Florence with Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* and his North American opera debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2000 with Bizet's *Carmen*. In June 2001 he was named Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government.

Credits

Canto de los Marranos

Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes
Recording: July 1999 Sala Sinfonica del Auditori, Barcelona
Recording Producer: Simon Weir
Recording Engineer: Bertram Kornacher
Recording Project Manager: Paul Schwendener

Shir Shel Moshe (excerpts)

Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes
Recording: June 2001 St. Paul's Knightsbridge, London
Recording Producer: Simon Weir
Recording Engineer: Campbell Hughes
Assistant Recording Engineer: Morgan Roberts
Recording Project Manager: Paul Schwendener

Masada

Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes
Recording: November 2000 Jesus Christus Kirche, Berlin
Recording Producer: Wolfram Nehls
Recording Engineer: Henri Thaon
Assistant Recording Engineer: Annerose Unger
Recording Project Manager: Paul Schwendener
Coproduction with DeutschlandRadio and the ROC Berlin-GmbH

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Credits

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