Cover Art

BENZION MILLER

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.

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, I founded the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music in 1990.

The passionate collaboration of many distinguished artists, ensembles and recording producers over the past fourteen years 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 repertoire.

Lowell Milken

A MESSAGE FROM THE 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 more than 600 original pieces by some 200 composers—symphonies, operas, cantorial masterpieces, complete synagogue services, concertos, Yiddish theater, and folk and popular 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 musical and Judaic authorities who have selected works based on or inspired by traditional Jewish melodies or modes, liturgical and life-cycle functions and celebrations, sacred texts, and Jewish history and secular literature—with intrinsic artistic value always of paramount consideration for each genre. These CDs will be supplemented later by rare historic reference recordings.

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, music director of Schola Hebraeica, and author of various articles, books, and monographs on Jewish music.

Introduction

The Hebrew title *hazzan* is translated in the modern era as "cantor"—one whose function is to intone and sing the liturgy in Jewish worship services as *sh'liaḥ tzibbur* (messenger of the congregation), lending the prayer texts the added dimensions of emotional and artistic expression for—and on behalf of—the congregation, and interpreting the words aesthetically. The term itself applies generically to prayer leaders in all Jewish traditions. However, in the Ashkenazi world since the first half of the 19th century, where the position of *hazzan* became professionalized largely at the instigation of Hazzan Salomon Sulzer (1804–90) in Vienna, the term *hazzan* has come to signify a clerical office—in tandem with the congregational rabbi on the western model—with the desiderata of professionally and artistically cultivated vocal skills and musical knowledge.

In this context, *hazzanut* refers to a highly cultivated cantorial art form. The present recording concerns eastern European Ashkenazi stylistic traditions—as they originated and were developed throughout the Czarist and Hapsburg empires—which were brought to America by touring as well as émigré cantors. The selections here represent the liturgical art at its zenith during the so-called Golden Age of *Hazzanut*—generally considered to embrace the period from the late 19th century until the First World War in Europe, and from then through the 1930s and 40s in America (and in other flourishing Ashkenazi communities such as in England and South Africa). The compositions here stem from that American phase. But, especially in these versions, they represent a special subcategory of "concert *hazzanut*"—cantorial pieces or settings either intended originally or expanded expressly for concert performance (or recording), rather than for synagogue prayer rendition.

The performance of a prayer-oriented medium in a nonliturgical environment may at first seem incongruous—especially if we acknowledge the entertainment-oriented parameters of some of those concert contexts. Indeed, some cantors originally opposed the practice on religious grounds. It is difficult for us to imagine today, for example, that as recently as the 1920s the cantorial fraternity in London issued public warnings against attending concerts by the renowned (and undisputedly pious) cantor Yossele Rosenblatt. Some, such as the erudite Odessa cantor Pinchas Minkowski, opposed all recording of *hazzanut*; and some in America shunned cantorial radio broadcasts as near sacrilege. But that opposition quickly faded. Cantorial concerts came to be accepted as a logical extension of the art form, augmenting—but never replacing—the primary liturgical and spiritual function of *hazzanut*. Concerts provided—and still provide—opportunities for a broader public to avail itself of virtuoso cantorial expression; and they have enabled legions of aficionados to hear the acknowledged masters of the day.

The very nature of the concert atmosphere, however, permitted and even encouraged further vocal elaboration and word repetition—as well as lengthier renditions—than would be considered appropriate in the synagogue, even for the same texts. Israel Schorr's ***Sheyyibane beit hammikdash*** is such an example. Eventually, cantors created settings specifically for concert use, which included texts not usually emphasized musically in synagogue services. In addition, traditional cantorial concerts have frequently included nonliturgical selections, such as Yiddish songs, that nonetheless organically incorporate or quote elements of *hazzanut*. Pierre Pinchik's ***Der khazn un der gabe*** is a typical example—a song about a cantor and cantorial issues in which florid *hazzanut* and even improvisation punctuate the Yiddish story line, and which requires a virtuoso *hazzan* for its performance.

Traditional *hazzanut* is obviously an exclusively vocal art form, accompanied throughout its history by a cappella choir. But without the religious-legal (*halakhik*) restrictions against instrumental usage that apply on Sabbaths, other holydays, and a few other liturgical occasions, concert performance has frequently invited instrumental support as a presumed aesthetic enhancement. *Hazzanut* with orchestra became a favored ideal, depending of course on the available resources. In typical cantorial orchestrations without choral participation, the orchestra substitutes for the choir in providing introductory phrases, interludes, cadential responses, "fills," and sustained pedal-point underpinnings.

There is evidence of orchestral use in some cantorial concerts in prewar Europe, but very few notated orchestrations or even sketches from that time are extant. This medium truly blossomed in the United States, not only because resources were more available, but also because many radio stations typically employed resident orchestral ensembles for their live broadcasts. A reasonable body of such orchestrations does therefore exist in archival collections, and others have been done by arrangers and orchestrators in Israel. The orchestrations for this recording, however, were commissioned by the Milken Archive for this project.

Apart from the Zilberts selection, all the pieces heard here were created by virtuoso cantors—primarily for their own renditions. With few exceptions, the renowned cantors of the Golden Age were actually cantor-composers who composed as well as sang their own settings. In that era, the art of *hazzanut* implied recitative creation and improvisation as much as it did vocal performance. Rosenblatt was one of the few who also wrote for the choir and even published some of those pieces. Most cantors of that ilk composed only the solo vocal lines, and they relied on arrangers or choirmasters to furnish the choral-accompanimental dimensions, or orchestrators to fashion accompaniments for concert performances or radio broadcasts. Since each cantor created particular settings for the unique qualities and attributes of his own voice, some knowledge about individual artistic approaches is necessary for our appreciation of this repertoire.

—Neil W. Levin

About the Composers and Their Works

The following discussion about the composers of the cantorial selections on this recording has been conceived as a single essay, addressing the lives and contributions of these individuals within an overall context of *hazzanut* and in some respects as a group. Definitions and explanations of terms, institutions, and concepts are provided only at their initial appearance and therefore require reading of this section in its entirety—even with reference to any one cantor-composer.

DAVID ROITMAN (1884–1943), "the poet of the pulpit," was one of the leading virtuoso cantors of the Golden Age of *Hazzanut* in America, celebrated equally for his vocal artistry along classical lines and his quintessentially eastern European improvisatory approach. He was also noted for his ability to fuse the musically cultivated and vocally schooled art of cantorial performance with the craft of the skilled *ba'al t'filla* (lay precentor or cantor)—a craft that involves the artful manipulation of the nuances of an intricate modal system of patterns, formulas, and prescribed motifs for rendering the liturgy. This canonized system is rooted in centuries of practice and refinement (*nusaḥ hat'filla*, or the "accepted, historically established way or manner of liturgical rendition").

Roitman was born in Derezinke, a village in Russian Podolia (now Ukraine). At the age of twelve he became a *m'shorer* (choral assistant) to the *shtot hazzan* in Lidvinke, where his family had relocated. The *shtot hazzan* (community or city cantor) was either a quasi-official post—or was perceived as such—in many eastern European cities, or it was the position of cantor at a particular synagogue known as the community or city synagogue (*shtot shul*). His parents were soon approached by a well-known cantor from Odessa, Yankel Soroker—who was then the *shtot hazzan* in Uman, the Ukraine—with an invitation for the young Roitman to be apprenticed to him.

The choral apprentice system at that time was a typical path for young Jewish boys in whom serious vocal talent was recognized early on. In some respects it amounted analogously to a "Jewish version" of the Christian church boy choir schools, long established in western and Central Europe and in England. In those eastern European cantorial apprenticeships, the boys provided the needed voices for the synagogue choirs, and in return they received musical and vocal tuition from their cantors and choirmasters.

In the more liberalized *khor shuls* (choral synagogues) in cosmopolitan cities, some degree of general education was, in all likelihood, also organized for boys from out of town. Although choirs on one level or another were almost always an inseparable component of cantorial art and rendition in all eastern European (indeed all Ashkenazi) synagogues, the *khor shul* as an institution represented the epitome of an eastern European brand of modernity and westernization—often a reflection of educated middle- and professional-class tastes and expectations. Although the *khor shul* may have been more liberal in overall outlook, it cannot be described as "nonorthodox." That very terminology implies institutionalized divisions and theologically driven "movements" that were not part of the conscious experience of that world. In its aesthetic parameters, the *khor shul* might be considered the nearest counterpart to modern German orthodoxy.

Roitman's parents accepted Soroker's proposition. Thereafter, apparently in growing demand, Roitman was apprenticed in succession to other cantors, and in one instance he was the subject of a bitter dispute between two of them (not an unknown occurrence in that milieu) that had to be adjudicated by a rabbinical court. Eventually he was apprenticed to the legendary cantor, composer, and choirmaster Zeidl Rovner (Jacob Samuel Maragowsky, 1856–1943), who, together with his renowned traveling choirs, was famous in religious circles across eastern Europe—and later in America, following his own immigration.

Beginning at the age of twenty, Roitman held cantorial posts at several synagogues in the Ukraine, the Caucasus, and Vilna, and in 1912 he was appointed to the coveted cantorial post in St. Petersburg, where, for the next five years, he achieved great artistic success and personal fulfillment in the prosperous and highly cultivated Jewish community there. The future cantorial star Pierre Pinchik, who succeeded Roitman in St. Petersburg after the city was renamed Leningrad, said that Roitman was considered Europe's leading cantor of that period. The synagogue was (and is) located near the opera house (the Maryinsky Theater) in St. Petersburg, and Roitman formed collegial associations with such reigning operatic luminaries as Chaliapin, Sobinoff, and Battistini—some of whom visited the synagogue on occasion to hear him.

Roitman also turned seriously to cantorial composition. His recordings from the Vilna and the Petersburg years circulated in Europe, although most of them remained unknown to American audiences even after his immigration to the United States, and they were at most collectors' items until archival rereleases in the 1970s. They demonstrate Roitman's trademark gifts for free, improvisatory virtuoso *hazzanut* and florid recitative delivery, but they also exhibit his mastery of a learned cantorial style, his comfort with the more restrained ambience that generally prevailed in the westernized format of the *khor shul*, and his artistic familiarity with certain composers particularly associated with *khor shul* repertoire, such as Abraham Moshe Bernstein (1866–1932) from the Russian-eastern European orbit, and Louis Lewandowski (1821–94) from the German synagogue orientation. That aspect of Roitman's composite art was less evident on his widely disseminated American recordings.

Following the October Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, in Roitman's own description, his cantorial pulpit "slid from under his feet," and he felt that the community "fell apart." He went to Odessa, where he remained for three years with the hope of returning one day to St. Petersburg. During that period he is said to have written one of his most famous compositions, *Raḫel m'vaka al baneha* (Rachel Weeps for Her Children), a setting of a passage from the Book of Jeremiah. That piece—his most recorded one—became known in America even before its composer was, because the world-renowned cantor Yossele [Joseph] Rosenblatt recorded it prior to Roitman's immigration, inadvertently without attribution. (Rosenblatt subsequently published an apology in the American Jewish press, and the two became close friends.)

As Jewish refugees from the effects of the Revolution and the aftermath of the First World War streamed into Odessa, its communal as well as economic situation worsened, and even Roitman was unable to secure full-time employment. He and his family left for Kishinev, Bessarabia (then part of Romania), where he officiated at its principal synagogue and then decided to emigrate to America.

Roitman arrived in the United States in 1923. "When the striking figure of Cantor David Roitman first appeared in New York," wrote a well-respected American critic and observer of cantorial personalities, "the world of American Jewry discovered a new giant of song." After two years at Congregation Ohev Sholom in Brooklyn with the esteemed choral conductor Leo Low, he became the cantor of New York's Shaarei Zedek synagogue—"home" to a succession of star cantors, including Moshe Ganchoff, Moshe Taubé, and Pinchik. Except for a two-year interruption during the Great Depression when the choir was suspended for economic reasons (no serious cantor could or would function without a choir then), Roitman served Shaarei Zedek for eighteen years, until his death. He also made extensive concert tours of Europe and South America, as well as throughout the United States and Canada.

Among Roitman's important compositions, in addition to his setting of ***Hayyom t'amtzeinu***, recorded here, are *Av haraḥamim, Ashamnu*, and many recitatives—some of which were edited by Lawrence Avery and published posthumously (1961), and others that remain in manuscript. Though *Hayyom t'amtzeinu* represents only one side of Roitman's style, its lighthearted, spirited quasi-Hassidic character illustrates Zeidl Rovner's lasting influence on him. (Rovner's compositions always bore the flavor of the Hassidic melos in which he had been immersed as a youngster.) The orchestral treatment of this rendition removes it entirely from the realm of worship and casts it into the concert format. But solo or with a cappella choir, the basic melody and its well-crafted extensions and development could serve as well in

the natural environment of a traditional synagogue service. *Hayyom t'amtzeinu*, which occurs on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur toward the end of the lengthy *mussaf* service, has historically been sung to vivacious or dance-type tunes such as this throughout Ashkenazi practice in various traditions—including western traditions that retain a more sober character for the bulk of the preceding liturgy, to which livelier melodies offer a counterbalanced conclusion.

ISRAEL [hakohen] SCHORR (1886–1935) was born to a Hassidic family in Khyrov, Galicia (now southern Poland, but then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, or Austro-Galicia). He began his cantorial life as a boy soprano, singing at the Hassidic courts of the *rebbe* (rabbinical-type leader of a Hassidic group or dynasty) of Chortkov (now Ukraine) and the *rebbe* of Rymanów. Later, in Lemberg (L'vov) in 1904, Schorr became the official cantor for the Rymanover *rebbe*, succeeding his distant relative, the esteemed and learned Hazzan Boruch Schorr (1823–1904).

During the First World War, Israel Schorr was in the Imperial army, and then he served cantorial pulpits in Brunn (now Brno, in the Czech Republic); Kraków; Piestany, west Slovakia; and Zürich. In 1924 he emigrated to the United States, where he was the cantor at important synagogues in Chicago and New York. During his American years, Schorr created a number of his own pieces, exploiting florid cantorial idioms and quasi-improvisatory vocal lines. Some of those pieces were extended and expanded by other virtuoso cantors, and in their subsequent forms they became well known in concert versions and through recordings. Accompaniments and interludes were sometimes added by these performers or by other arrangers, and these also came to be associated with the pieces.

Sheyyibane beit hammikdash, a setting of a section of the liturgy that expresses continuous hope for messianic redemption, restoration of the Jewish people's spiritual as well as national sovereignty in its biblical homeland, and rebuilding of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, is unquestionably Schorr's best-known composition. It catapulted to fame with its signature performances and recordings by Moshe Koussevitzky (1899–1966), one of the most celebrated virtuoso cantors of the 20th century.

The version recorded here is based largely on Koussevitzky's popular rendition, especially as sung on his RCA Victor recording—which became the most commonly accepted version. In that rendition, the improvisatory element in the second part of the piece was somewhat truncated, while the melodic repetition in the first part was extended—all as a practical solution to the problems posed by the restrictions of 78-rpm discs. The piece had to be divided into two segments so that each could fit, with a cadential conclusion, onto one of the two sides of a 12-inch record. Owing to the great success of the recording, that version was generally followed by subsequent arrangers and orchestrators.

Ribbon ha'olamim is also among Schorr's well-known pieces for cantorial concert rendition, and it has long been part of the standard virtuoso cantorial repertoire.

PIERRE PINCHIK [Pinchas Segal] (1893?–1971) was one of the cantorial giants of the American Golden Age of *Hazzanut* and also one of the most musically educated among that group. He was born in Zhivotov,

near Podolia, in the Ukraine, a region with a legendary cantorial past through its tragic connection with the infamous Chemelnitzki pogroms of 1638–50. According to a legend recorded by one Nathan Hanover, while the Cossacks and the local mob were slaughtering the Jewish population, the town cantor's chanting of *el male raḥamim* (the memorial prayer) over the murdered bodies in the streets so moved the attackers that they ceased the slaughter and spared the remaining 3,000 Jews. Whether true or not, this locally guarded legend tells something of the esteem for *hazzanut* in the environment in which Pinchik spent his childhood.

As a youth, Pinchik lived and studied at the Hassidic Skverer yeshiva. The Skverer *rebbe*—the head of the yeshiva and the community—had a particular affinity for music, so when important cantors were in town, they were often invited to stay at the *rebbe*'s home. As a yeshiva student, Pinchik thus became acquainted with them and with their art. While he was still quite young and already a competent pianist, he made a radical transition from the yeshiva to the conservatory in Kiev. Ironically, he began turning his attention to *hazzanut* and Yiddish song only during the early days of the Bolshevik Revolution. He was drafted into an artist's brigade of the new Red Army, where he was asked to write revolutionary communist songs in Yiddish. He later recalled that these songs were based essentially on the traditional synagogue prayer modes and tunes he remembered from his yeshiva days, so that what emerged were antireligious and atheistic songs to fundamentally liturgical motifs. In the early 1920s he became known as a popular folksinger, touring parts of Russia and the new Soviet Union, and he took the name Pinchik. He also began officiating as a cantor in a Kiev synagogue. While in Leningrad on one of his tours, he was offered the post of chief cantor at the Leningrad Choral Synagogue.

As chief cantor, he was asked specifically to include much of the classical repertoire of the 19th-century Berlin composer Lewandowski, and of the German synagogue music tradition. He found such music incompatible with his vocal style and tastes, and he began by reworking many of those pieces with his own interpolations. Eventually he composed new settings altogether, mostly recitatives that would exploit the particular attributes of his voice.

In 1925 Pinchik left Russia, assisted in obtaining the necessary papers by Yiddish poet Itzik Fefer, his friend who was later murdered in Stalin's massacre of Jewish poets. Pinchik appeared in concerts and synagogue services in various European cities, and he arrived in the United States in 1926 on a tour arranged by the illustrious Chicago-based cantorial manager and promoter Joseph Hyman, who was reported to have heard about Pinchik from the famous Russian bass Fyodor Chaliapin. Pinchik remained in America, where his fame and popularity came almost immediately. While many virtuoso cantors included some Yiddish songs in their concert repertoires, Pinchik excelled in that medium, and one of his most popular recordings was titled *The Two Sides of Pinchik*. In 1928 RCA Victor offered him an exclusive recording contract.

Nowhere was Pinchik quite as cherished as in Chicago, where he became the favorite of the orthodox/traditional community. It was there, in that virtual

mecca for *hazzanut*, that he probably had his largest popular following. The synagogue K'nesset Israel Nusah S'fard, on Chicago's old West Side, where Pinchik officiated for many services, kept a sign in front all during the year proclaiming THE WORLD FAMOUS CANTOR PINCHIK PRAYS HERE.

Jewish audiences and congregations were dazzled by what they perceived as a "Hassidic fervor" permeating Pinchik's music. People were also captivated by his rare poetic device of interpolating an indefinitely pitched speaking voice, almost a cantorial type of *Sprechstimme*, at climactic or highly emotional moments in the text—one of the hallmarks of his style. No discussion of Pinchik is possible without reference to his most famous signature recitative composition, *Rozo d'shabbos*, on a mystical Aramaic text from the Sephardi Sabbath liturgy (*nusaḥ s'fard*), which has become a virtual "warhorse," inviting countless cantors to try imitating his rendition almost as a sign of "arrival."

Der khazn un der gabe belongs to a special category of "cantorial folk-art song," which combines secular folksong motifs with elements of *hazzanut* that fit into the plot or story of a song—usually concerning cantors or *hazzanut*.

This song depicts, with characteristic comic exaggeration, a typical syndrome of friction that sometimes existed between cantors and lay leaders, or between a particular cantor and a *gabbai*—the lay warden of a congregation and its supervisor of ritual matters. That friction could derive from jurisdictional disputes, from simple personality conflict, or—from cantors' perspectives, which this song projects—from a degree of envy in those situations where a *gabbai* might have considered himself more knowledgeable than the cantor, or even superior as a *ba'al t'filla*.

The song's background here is uncertain. Perhaps, as a deliberate snub, the *gabbai* pretends not to recognize the cantor of his congregation—either in connection with an ongoing quarrel or in a refusal to nod to his popularity or independence. Another possibility is that the cantor has arrived for an audition, and at first the *gabbai* does not realize who he is. Either way, the *gabbai* projects some animosity toward cantors in general.

In any case, the cantor here proclaims his right to sing whenever and whatever he wishes—making his point by invoking and singing words of a private prayer that normally would never be chanted cantorially or even aloud. (That text, observed by the devout, follows the completion of bodily functions, and therefore obviously lends added humor to the song.) "If I want, I can sing even that …" he seems to be saying. The opening of the song will surely evoke laughter from attuned audiences.

After either mistaking, or pretending to mistake, the cantor for several ordinary townspeople, the *gabbai* finally recognizes him—but as part cantor and part fool. That might be a reference to a common jibe at cantors, in which the three Hebrew characters that spell the word *hazzan* are claimed by cantorial detractors to form an acronym for the Yiddish phrase *khazonim zaynen naronim*: "cantors are fools." Here, of course, the cantor has the last word: the *gabbai* is the fool for not taking the cantor's initial "sung hint."

There is also another little-known underlying basis for this song. According to family members who recognized their identities and names, Pinchik was referring to specific characters he had known in his hometown in the Ukraine.

PINCHAS JASSINOWSKY (1886–1954), an acclaimed artistic cantor as well as lieder recitalist, is best remembered for his learned and refined approach to both cantorial and secular Jewish composition and for his academic contributions to the descriptive and analytical literature. He was also a gifted poet.

Jassinowsky was born to a Hassidic family in Romanovka, a small town near Kiev. As a child, he sang in various cantorial choirs and eventually with the renowned scholarly cantor Pinchas [Pinye] Minkowsky (1859–1924) in the *khor shul* in the city of Kherson, where he was exposed to a highly cultivated brand of synagogue music. At the same time, he developed a serious interest in western classical music, which at first he pursued locally and then, at the age of twenty, went to St. Petersburg for further study. There, he attracted the attention of the Russian composer César Antonovich Cui (1835–1918), one of the so-called Russian Five (along with Borodin, Balakirev, Mussorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov). Cui assisted him in gaining entrance to the St. Petersburg conservatory, where he was a pupil of Alexandre Glazunov and Nikolay Sokolov, and during that period he also held the position of assistant choirmaster at the St. Petersburg choral synagogue. After his graduation, in 1915, he toured the Scandinavian countries, where he gave song recitals and lectures on Jewish music, and in 1917 he emigrated to the United States. His first cantorial position was in St. Louis, where he also received high critical praise in the general press for his Jewish lieder lecture-recitals, which at that time provided an exotic experience for even the most knowledgeable concertgoing public. In those presentations, Jassinowsky introduced American audiences to the rich lore of authentic European Jewish folksong, and he demonstrated the process by which that little-mined melos could be transformed into modern art music through sophisticated harmonization, arrangement, motivic development, and orchestration. During the early 20th century, this had been a mission of the Gesellschaft für Jüdische Volksmusik (the Society for Jewish Folk Music) in St. Petersburg—the organizational midwife of the Jewish national art music movement, established in 1908—of whose work Jassinowsky was an enthusiastic proponent during his years in that city.

In 1920, after a period as cantor of the most prominent synagogue in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Jassinowsky was appointed to the cantorial post at the Jewish Center synagogue in New York, where he served with distinction for thirty-four years, until his death. He was an active leader of the Jewish Ministers Cantors Association (the Hazzanim Farband, chartered in 1897), the oldest American cantorial organization in continuous existence, and at one point he was its vice president.

In his liturgical compositions, Jassinowsky frequently treated traditional cantorial material and modalities with modern western techniques, albeit with astute restraint. His secular choral pieces and his Hebrew and Yiddish art songs—to poems by such leading Jewish literary figures as Morris Winchevsky, Joseph Rolnik, Abraham Liesin, H. Leivick, Mani Lieb, and Sholom Aleichem, in addition to his own poetry—also retain a delicate genuine folk character fused with subtle musical erudition, wit, and imagination. In addition, he wrote a considerable number of classically oriented arrangements of Jewish folksongs. His most unusual work, however, is his curious *Symphonische Gesängen*

(1936), which contains his own Yiddish poetic description of Beethoven symphonies.

The Prophecy of Isaiah: V'haya b'aḥarit hayyamim was written to celebrate the opening of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1925 and was dedicated to that event. It is constructed on variant motifs of a traditional cantillation for the Haftara—the biblical prophetic readings as rendered in synagogue services—which then expand into a free emotional and expressive statement. There is also an instrumental version for violin and piano.

DAVID KUSEVITSKY (1911–85) was the youngest of four world-renowned cantorial brothers; the other three were Moshe, Jacob, and Simcha. Each of the brothers was a unique and original artist, and each made significant contributions to the art of *hazzanut*. David's own vocal style, in addition to its seemingly effortless virtuosity, was especially marked by refined elegance, graceful dignity, and warmth. In many ways he exemplified the 19th-century Viennese ideal, as established there by the architect of modern cantorial art, Salomon Sulzer, whose delivery possessed a profoundly emotional character fused with classical taste and musical intelligence. This synthesis also informed David Kusevitsky's compositions.

Kusevitsky was born in Smorgon, now in Belarus, near the Lithuanian border. His father was an amateur violinist, and David's own introduction to music making was on that instrument. After the First World War, the family moved to Vilna (Vilnius), where his brother Moshe became a boy chorister at the Vilna Khor Shul and eventually brought David there to sing as an alto. Later, when Moshe assumed a major cantorial post in Vilna, both Simcha and David sang in his choir. By the age of fourteen David had mastered the rudiments of music, apparently largely on his own, and he notated cantorial chants for Simcha when his older brother began officiating as a cantor.

David's original interest lay primarily in conducting. Intending to become a choirmaster, he studied at the gymnasium in Vilna and at the local conservatory. When his brother Jacob was appointed to a cantorial pulpit in Lemberg (L'vov), Galicia, he brought David to direct the choir. And subsequently, when Simcha accepted a cantorial position in Rovno (Russian Poland, now Ukraine), David went there as well to become choirmaster. Following David's service in the Polish army during the interwar years, where he also conducted a large chorus, Moshe, then a successful cantor in Warsaw, persuaded him to refocus on *hazzanut* rather than conducting. "You have a treasure in your voice," Moshe was later quoted as advising, "so why work with your hands?" David studied voice in Warsaw and began officiating as a cantor at individual Sabbath services, but his formal debut as a solo cantor was in 1933–34 at the Philharmonic Hall in Łódź, where he was accompanied by a forty-voice choir.

At a concert performance in Hebrew of Haydn's oratorio *The Creation* at the Tłomackie Synagogue in Warsaw, as part of an anniversary celebration for Hazzan Pinchas Sherman, Moshe sang the tenor role, and David performed the part of Gabriel, which was originally written for soprano. Although that synagogue was one of Europe's leading liberalized *khor shuls*, female voices were considered religiously inappropriate and therefore unacceptable even for a nonliturgical concert. A review of the concert predicted a brilliant cantorial career for David, humorously observing that he "suffers from the 'Koussevitzky disease': he will one day be a major *hazzan*." When his brother Simcha vacated the Rovno pulpit, David took his place as the chief cantor for three years, after which he went to London to serve

as the cantor of the Hendon Synagogue. He remained in London throughout the Second World War, and he also lectured at Jews College there.

In 1948 Kusevitsky emigrated to America and became the cantor of Temple Emanu-El in the Boro Park section of Brooklyn, one of New York's major Conservative movement synagogues at that time, where he served until his death, in 1985. From 1952 until his own death in 1966, his brother Moshe (who retained the earlier spelling of his name as Koussevitzky) was the cantor of the prestigious orthodox synagogue Temple Beth El of Boro Park, just around the corner. For a number of years, the annual Saturday midnight or postmidnight event that inaugurates the daily recitation of the penitential liturgy (*s'liḥot*) prior to Rosh Hashana (and between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur) with a formal, often musically elaborate choral service—known as "The First S'liḥot"—was timed by the two congregations in order to enable aficionados to hear both cantors in succession. Fans sometimes affectionately dubbed that marathon as "the annual *s'liḥot* doubleheader."

In America, David Kusevitsky was presented with a world of concert opportunities not available to him in London, where the orthodox leadership (cantorial as well as rabbinic) at that time considered concert appearances inappropriate and religiously undignified for cantors as clergymen. A famous Carnegie Hall concert in New York featured all four brothers, in ensembles as well as solo renditions. One of David's fourteen tours of Israel occurred just after the Six-Day War, in 1967, when he sang for Israeli soldiers on the banks of the Reed Sea (Red Sea) at Suez, performing a setting of the words from the liturgy—*hamma'avir banav bein gizrei yam suf*— that refer to the biblical account in Exodus of God's splitting that sea for the ancient Israelites' escape from Egypt.

Kusevitsky was also a dedicated teacher of *hazzanut* in New York—first at the Herzliah Institute and then for many years at the Cantors Institute (now the H. L. Miller Cantorial School) of the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he was able to influence many of today's most accomplished cantors. His cantorial and choral compositions were written primarily for his own rendition, and many appear on his numerous recordings. Most of them remain in manuscript.

Ezrat *(ezrat avoteinu ata hu me'olam)*—a setting of a passage from the morning liturgy (*t'fillat shaḥarit*)—juxtaposes two moods and elements: a majestic musical statement in exultation of Divine attributes and deeds, and an original animated melody of eastern European flavor to recall the biblical reference to the jubilant song of praise sung by Moses and the Israelites upon their escape from Egyptian bondage.

"We have 300 cantors in the United States," wrote Cantor David Roitman in a letter to his fellow cantor **LEIB GLANTZ** (1898–1964), "but, if the truth be told, there is only one Leib Glantz! And only Glantz has such great sensitivity in the art of *hazzanut*." Indeed, Glantz can justifiably be considered the most profound as well as the most musically original and inventive of the great cantors and cantor-composers of the 20th century. Both during his lifetime and afterward, he was critically acclaimed for his intellectual and artistic approach to probing the inner meanings of the texts and even individual words, to which he sometimes applied—for appropriate emotional, poetic, or dramatic emphasis—his trademark declamatory effect of a type of *Sprechstimme*. In his compositions he mined the musical potential inherent in the intricate

modal system known as *nusaḥ hat'filla*—the cantor's stock-in-trade and basic foundation material in Ashkenazi tradition. And he lent those compositions an extraordinary degree of variety and imagination, yet always within the overall boundaries of tradition.

Glantz, whose father and both grandfathers were cantors, was born in Kiev, where he first sang on the pulpit at the age of eight. At fourteen he directed a choir for the High Holy Days at the small informal synagogue (*shtibl*, or *kloyzl*) of the Talna Hassidim—the followers of the Talna *rebbe*—where his father was the cantor. He courageously introduced those uninitiated worshipers to the classical, western-influenced choral style of 19th-century synagogue composers such as Salomon Sulzer, Louis Lewandowski, Eliezar Gerovitch (1844–1914), and others of that sophisticated milieu whose musical approach was basically foreign to Hassidic environments. Glantz appears to have acquired knowledge of those synagogue repertoires on his own, but he did have formal general music education as a young student in Kiev, studying piano, music theory, harmony, counterpoint, and, later, composition with the famous Russian composer Reinhold Glière.

As a youth, Glantz was attracted to the Zionist movement—an orientation that would permanently color his artistic legacy. His first cantorial position was at a small Zionist synagogue in Galaz, Bessarabia (now part of Romania), where he made the acquaintance of the editor of a Zionist periodical. He became an official delegate to the 14th World Zionist Congress and later represented the United States at seven subsequent conferences. His first compositions were settings of Zionist-oriented secular poetry, including *Aḥarei moti* (When I die ...) by Ḥaim Nachman Bialik (1873–1934), who later became Israel's poet laureate.

In 1926 Glantz emigrated to America, and he divided his time and energies between cantorial and Zionist activities, devoting considerable effort on behalf of the Keren Kayemet—the Jewish National Fund. He went to Los Angeles in 1941, where he became cantor of Sinai Temple and then of Congregation Shaarei Tefillah, and he was also president of the Histadrut (United Federation of Labor Unions in Israel) campaign in California. He taught cantorial students as a visiting professor at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles, and he made concert tours of North America, South Africa, and Palestine.

In 1954 Glantz "made *aliya*"—resettled permanently in Israel. He became chief cantor of the Tiferet Tzvi synagogue in Tel Aviv, where he is known to have attracted visitors from among Israel's secularist and nonreligious intelligentsia, who seldom if ever attended synagogue services but who, on occasion, came for the unique spiritual-artistic experience of Glantz's cantorial expression. In Israel he extended his musical versatility and catholicity well beyond *hazzanut*, appearing in premiere classical performances such as the concert-opera *Saul at Ein Dor* (1957) by Israeli composer Joseph Tal. Glantz collaborated in the establishment of a Jewish sacred music school and cantorial academy; he became active in the Israel Composers League; and he published important articles and delivered penetrating lectures on Hebrew liturgy and *hazzanut*.

Glantz's catalogue comprises more than 200 works, including settings for Sabbath, Festival, and High Holy Day liturgies. His monumental *S'liḥot Service*—a cohesive treatment of texts from the penitential liturgy as sung formally with choir (and in this case organ) for the first of the series of daily recitations each year prior to Rosh Hashana—is considered a masterpiece and was broadcast annually in Israel for many years. In the secular realm, he wrote Hebrew and Yiddish art songs to poetry by some of the major Jewish poets of the modern era, as well as a collection of para-liturgical Hassidic-influenced songs. At the time of his death,

Glantz was working on a comprehensive guide to the Ashkenazi liturgical modes.

Max Wohlberg, one of the leading cantorial pedagogues and scholars of the 20th century, observed that part of Glantz's uniqueness resided in his remarkable artistic integrity: "He does not stoop to impress with vocal effects. For him *Word* and *Subject* are primary.… He endeavors to find hidden significance and subtle interpretation in every liturgical text."

And Glantz's artistic credo is contained in his own summation:

> *Hazzanim* must remember that they are not only musical craftsmen, certainly not just singers. They must themselves create and plan; they must serve as their own architects of contemporary Jewish prayer. They must be the true *sh'liḥei tzibbur* (messengers of the congregation), the authentic mediators between the congregation and the Almighty. They must be creditable spokesmen on behalf of the Jewish people in God's own spiritual tongue, the language of Israel's *Song of Songs*.

Kol m'kaddesh is a concert setting of one of the *z'mirot shel shabbat*—the para-liturgical hymns that traditionally are sung collectively at the table before, during, and after the Sabbath meals. This text is usually the first hymn sung following the Sabbath eve dinner, introducing several others that lead into the recitation of the *birkat hamazon*—the postprandial benedictions and praise for God's provision, commonly called grace after meals in English-speaking societies. As with all of the *z'mirot*, this one has dozens of extant musical expressions that have accumulated over time. But unlike most of the other *z'mirot*, nearly all versions for *kol m'kaddesh* are chantlike and nonmetrical, whether from eastern or western branches of Ashkenazi tradition.

Glantz's composition is built upon a traditional Ashkenazi chant archetype for the *kol m'kaddesh* text, and it also appears to combine elements from different skeletal versions—all embellished cantorially. He has provided contrast with fresh metrical treatment as well.

From left: Moshe Ganchoff, with David Kusevitsky and Moshe Koussevitzky

MOSHE GANCHOFF (1904–97) was known with deep respect throughout his life as "the cantor's cantor." He was beloved by cantorial aficionados, and for more than sixty-five years he inspired legions of lay worshipers with his insightful interpretations of the liturgy. At the same time, the complexity of his art—which went far beyond self-serving virtuosity and vocal pyrotechnics—his fresh nuances that explored the shades of meaning of words and phrases, his mastery of structure and balance, and his innate musical intelligence all lent his cantorial style a sophistication that could be even more profoundly appreciated by serious colleagues. Ganchoff's many recitative compositions seamlessly combine eastern European improvisatory tradition with subtle innovations, reflecting the theological and literary as well as the emotional implications of the prayer texts. He was known for his spontaneity on the pulpit, but in fact his apparent improvisations were not entirely driven by flights of fancy. Rather,

they often represented a carefully worked out set of possibilities and options, as well as a previously studied array of alternative settings of the same text—from which he would draw as he improvised, producing a unique interpretation.

Ganchoff was born in Odessa, a city rich at that time with long-standing cantorial traditions. His mother came from a religiously observant family, but his father was a secular Bundist—part of the Jewish socialist milieu. Although Ganchoff's childhood exposure to some of Europe's greatest cantorial masters made an indelible impression on him in Odessa, it was in America that his serious introduction to *hazzanut* truly informed his path. Among all the world-renowned émigré cantors in America, he was the only one to acquire all his cantorial knowledge and skill in the United States. His family settled initially in Toledo, Ohio, where, by coincidence, a number of great cantors served and where a general appreciation for *hazzanut* prevailed. His vocal gifts were discovered when he sang in a school choir; and although he was taught privately in the rudiments of music, especially solfeggio, by Irving Kobrin, a local cantor in Toledo who had a classical and worldly background, his considerable general musicianship was largely self-acquired.

In Toledo, as a youth, Ganchoff sang in the choir of Cantor Simon [Sholom Zvi] Zemachson, who also conducted and wrote for the choir. Through that experience he became acquainted with the choral as well as recitative repertoire of the classical eastern European synagogues. Also in his Toledo days, he was inspired by such celebrated guest cantors as Mendel Shapiro and Arye Leib Rutman (1866–1935), who thus shaped his artistic horizons. Later, as a young man, he went to New York to pursue what by then he had determined was his cantorial calling. There he benefited from tutorial work with Hazzan Joshua Lind (1890–1973), and he sang in synagogue choirs directed by such respected choirmasters as Leo Low (1878–1960) and Meyer Machtenberg (1884–1979), and with such star cantors as Yossele [Joseph] Rosenblatt (1882–1933) and Mordechai Hershman (1888–1941). He later cited that experience as a major part of his cantorial education.

Though various accomplished cantors have been credited with exerting stylistic influences on him and in some cases serving as de facto mentors, none was actually his formal teacher. Notwithstanding his work with Lind (which consisted in large measure of Lind's notation for him of various sections of the service), Ganchoff remained mostly self-taught. That intensive independent study of *hazzanut* involved a disciplined and committed process of listening to the great masters and analyzing their artistic approaches and individual treatments of the texts. In particular, he studied, on his own, Rutman's technique and style—especially his manner of improvisation—and Hershman's vocal mastery. But he absorbed the artistry of others as well, and he became conversant with the variety of their interpretations. He fashioned his own synthesis, which included highly original musical ideas, and thus arrived ultimately at his own unique style.

By the 1940s Ganchoff had emerged as a star cantor. Through the 1970s he served a number of the New York area's most prestigious traditional synagogues; recorded some of his own settings as well as pieces from the classical European synagogue repertoire; and made concert tours of Europe, Central and South America, and Israel. For years he was part of a Jewish musical, literary, and theatrical intelligentsia in New York that congregated frequently at the legendary Café Royal, and he attended more formal academic meetings of Jewish music societies such as MAILAMM and the Jewish Music Forum. He also became widely known for his weekly WEVD radio broadcasts over a period of more than twenty-five years, and his listeners

came to expect a new liturgical selection each week, accompanied by an instrumental ensemble. Ganchoff is said to have written a new cantorial composition for nearly every program, and he also included Hebrew and Yiddish folk and classical art songs of the highest caliber.

Ganchoff taught cantorial students for many years at the School of Sacred Music of Hebrew Union College, influencing entire generations of young cantors. During his last decades he was well aware that he was upholding an endangered tradition, but when he was asked if it could be maintained in future generations, he affirmed his faith in his best students and protégés to do so. "*Hazzanut* will survive because it is beautiful," he said only two years before his death, "and true beauty lives." Still, as an artistic product of an environment informed by sensibilities now largely foreign, Ganchoff is properly considered the last of the great masters of the Golden Age of *Hazzanut*.

Hashir shehalviyyim is one of Ganchoff's most prized compositions, and it is part of the repertoire of his most successful students. The piece exemplifies his classical cantorial approach as it builds, with graduating intensity ornamented by subtle inflections, to a logical climax. The tasteful, elegant melody at the end extends the nobility of the overall musical statement. Rather than sounding as if it were grafted onto the preceding recitative or expropriated from some popular source (as with many inferior cantorial constructions), it is perfectly in character with the prevailing mood and appears to grow naturally out of the recitative material.

ZAVEL ZILBERTS (1881–1949) was the only major and substantially published American composer of liturgical music known to have been a music director at an eastern European *khor shul*. For him, the

khor shul experience seems to have served as a mediating bridge between tradition and modernity in the American synagogue as well. Zilberts was born in Karlin, a suburb of Pinsk, Belarus. He began violin studies in childhood and soon played in a local orchestra. His father was a noted cantor, known as the Karliner *hazzan*, in whose choir Zilberts sang as a child, and he was sufficiently accomplished by the age of twelve to be invited to officiate as guest cantor at the Kupetchesky Synagogue in Kiev. He was only sixteen when his father died, but he was able to take over his father's position at the *shtot shul*. Zilberts wrote his first compositions while still in Karlin, and in 1899 he entered the Warsaw Conservatory, where he studied voice, composition, conducting, and music pedagogy, earning his diploma in 1903.

In 1907, after conducting the secular Hazomir choral society in Łódź for four years, Zilberts became music director of the Great Central Synagogue in Moscow, just reopened after having been closed for a number of years by a Czarist government official. Its congregants were mostly people of developed and sophisticated musical tastes, since the 1891 expulsion from Moscow of Jewish working classes had left a Jewish population mostly comprising the intelligentsia and professional class. During his seven years there, Zilberts developed the basis for his own learned style of composition, finding ways to preserve and exploit the attributes of traditional *hazzanut* within contained and refined boundaries, and in tandem with classical choral writing.

Zilberts also organized an amateur secular Jewish chorus in Moscow. He was aided in this effort by critic and composer Joel Engel (1868–1927), who headed the Moscow branch of the Gesellschaft für Jüdische Volksmusik. However, in 1914 Zilberts had to leave Moscow, since he fell outside the categories of permitted occupations for Jews there. His destination was America, but he was detained en route in Łódź for the remainder of the First World War.

He arrived in the United States in 1920 and was soon engaged as the choral director of the New York Hazzanim Farband Chor. Under Zilberts, the chorus grew to more than 100 members, with its annual concerts eventually held in such major New York venues as Carnegie Hall. At that time there was little in the way of serious substantive repertoire—and no real tradition—for synagogue or liturgical concert music for men's chorus. Zilberts developed an acute sensitivity to the special sonorities and timbral requirements of the men's chorus medium, and he perfected a technique of composing for it. He had a natural affinity for grandeur, and his larger works evince a sense of compass and overall arch. Those qualities are present as well in his shorter pieces, proportionately compressed.

In 1924 Zilberts organized the Zilberts Choral Society in New York, building on a core of his own students and expanding it into a recognized fixture of New York's cultural life. Eventually its concerts featured soloists of such stature as Jan Peerce, Richard Tucker, and Robert Merrill. Even after his death, the Zilberts Choral Society continued on, disbanding in 1960.

As a composer, Zilberts devoted himself to three principal genres: Hebrew liturgical music—cantorial and choral—for both worship and concert performances; folk-art and quasi-liturgical choral settings; and some Yiddish lieder. He never addressed non-Jewish secular media, even though he possessed the talent and the background to do so, yet all his music is on the level of art music. The erudite cantor Pinchas Minkowsky (1859–1924), the last cantor of the famous Broder Synagogue in Odessa, once referred to Zilberts as "the greatest star in the [Jewish] musical world."

Perhaps most unusual was Zilberts's versatility in being able to appeal with equal force and artistic success to orthodox/traditional and Reform tastes and sensibilities. That a composer so identified with eastern European hazzanut would be appreciated, let alone commissioned, by Reform synagogues was an achievement in itself. To some extent, both circles claimed him as their own.

This setting of the ***havdala*** text is one of Zilberts's most beloved compositions. It was conceived primarily as a choral concert work, but it later became a concert standard in various orchestrated versions, with and without the choral element. The words—which form part of the ceremony (home or synagogue) that marks the conclusion of the Sabbath on Saturday night—refer to the distinction (*havdala*) between the holy and the ordinary, between the Sabbath and the weekday that is about to commence.

Legend has it that the original version (later recomposed in the United States for publication) was composed in 1914 on a train en route from Moscow to Łódź, where it was first performed by the Hazomir chorus in 1916. In it, Zilberts utilized the traditional prayer modes for the section of the liturgy containing *havdala*, as well as bits of biblical cantillation motifs. The principal melody has a decidedly Hassidic folk tune character, but it is not known to be part of the sacred folk repertoire of any specific Hassidic dynasty or tradition, and it may be Zilberts's own. Overall, the piece abounds in a spirit of joy and of hope for the

coming week, consistent with the liturgical purpose of the words. The present orchestration follows the basic harmonic structure of the choral version.

AARON TISHKOWSKY (1899–1972), himself a cantor, was a relative of the renowned Cantor David Roitman. Tishkowsky served various pulpits in the New York area before relocating to Los Angeles—presumably in the early 1940s—where he officiated on a freelance basis, mostly for High Holy Day services. His tune for the ***hammavdil*** text, a hymn in the liturgy for the conclusion of the Sabbath, was arranged into the present expanded choral setting for concert use by Maurice Goldman, who also eventually settled in Los Angeles and was an important figure in the Jewish musical life of that city. This arrangement was found in the repertory archive of the Halevi Choral Society in Chicago, which sang a number of Tishkowsky's pieces. The text is attributed to Rabbi Isaac ibn Ghayyat, who lived in Spain during the 11th century and is remembered as the teacher of Rabbi Isaac Alfasi, author of a famous talmudic compendium. The poem, believed to have been written originally for the *n'ila* (concluding) service of Yom Kippur, contains biblical references at the end of each stanza.

WILLIAM BOGZESTER (1904–70) was born in Vienna, where he had his first exposure to cantorial art, and he immigrated to the United States when he was in his twenties. In New York, in addition to freelance cantorial officiating, he was active in the Jewish Ministers Cantors Association (Hazzanim Farband), whose membership consisted mostly of traditional cantors—lay as well as professional. Throughout his life he was a highly visible personality among New York's cantorial fraternity, known affectionately by colleagues as "Willie Best." Prior to the existence of any formal cantorial schools in America, he also established a reputation as a private teacher, and several among the succeeding generation of accomplished cantors were his students. Bogzester wrote a number of cantorial compositions, some of which were programmed frequently in cantorial concerts—especially those presented by the Hazzanim Farband, often with a chorus of more than 100 voices.

This concert setting of **Psalm 3, adonai ma-rabu tzaray**, exudes a fitting sense of majesty and grandeur. Those characteristics are also typically present in other large-scale pieces created by Bogzester for performances by large choruses.

—Neil W. Levin

Translations

HAYYOM T'AMTZEINU **David Roitman**
Sung in Hebrew
Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

Strengthen us today.
Exalt us today.
Seek our well-being today.
Hear our supplications today.
Accept our prayers with mercy and goodwill today.
Support us with Your mighty arm of righteousness today.

SHEYYIBANE BEIT HAMMIKDASH **Israel Schorr**
Sung in Hebrew

May it be Your will, Lord our God and God of our fathers, that the Temple be rebuilt speedily in our days; and give us our share of Your Torah wisdom—the wisdom that You have embedded in Your teaching. There we will serve You with reverence, as in the days of old and as in former years.

DER KHAZN UN DER GABE **Pierre Pinchik**
(The Hazzan and the Gabbai)
Sung in Yiddish
Translation by Eliyahu Mishulovin

"If I want, I say, 'He Who in His wisdom created man …' "
And "if I want, I say, 'He Who in His wisdom created man …' "

"Mr. (Uncle) who are you?"

"I am, I am …
Now you know who I am?"

"Aha!
You are, it seems,
Khayim-Ber, the bathhouse attendant's son-in-law,
Who deals in leather."

"Oy, oy, oy …
My grandfather didn't deal in leather,
And my father certainly didn't deal in leather.
What business would I have with leather?
I am, I am …
So now you know who I am?"

"Aha!
You are, it seems,
Moshe-Yone, the ritual slaughterer's son-in-law,
Who deals in feathers."

"Oy, oy, oy …
My grandfather didn't deal in feathers,
And my grandmother didn't even sleep on a feather mattress.
What business would I have with feathers?
I am, I am…
Do you know now who I am?"

"Aha!
Now I finally know who you are,
You are, it seems,
A little bit of a *hazzan*,
And a little bit of a fool."

"Oy, oy, oy …
You got some of it right,
And some of it wrong:
That is, I am indeed a *hazzan*
But *you*, *gabbai*, are the fool!"

THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH: **Pinchas Jassinowsky**
V'HAYA B'AḤARIT HAYYAMIM
(In the End of the Days)
Sung in Hebrew
Isaiah 2: 2–4
Translation: JPS Tanakh 1999

In the days to come,
The Mount of the Lord's House
Shall stand firm above the mountains
And tower above the hills;
And all the nations
Shall gaze on it with joy.
And the many peoples shall go and say:
"Come,
Let us go up to the Mount of the Lord,
To the House of the God of Jacob;
That He may instruct us in His ways,
And that we may walk in His paths."
For instruction shall come forth from Zion,
The word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
Thus He will judge among the nations
And arbitrate for the many peoples,
And they shall beat their swords into
plowshares
And their spears into pruning hooks:
Nation shall not take up
Sword against nation;
They shall never again know war.

EZRAT **David Kusevitsky**
Sung in Hebrew
Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

For all this (Your many favors) Your beloved ones praised and extolled You, God. They offered songs, hymns and praises, greetings and thanksgiving to the King—the God, living and enduring, lofty and exalted, transcendent and awe-inspiring. He who humbles the arrogant, nurtures the depressed, sets the captives free, redeems the passive— responds to His people when they cry out to Him.

Glory to the God supreme! Praise to Him! Forever praise!

Moses and the people Israel with great joy sang their song to You, all together singing:
"Who is comparable among the mighty to You, oh Lord…."

RIBBON HA'OLAMIM **Israel Schorr**
Sung in Hebrew
Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

Lord eternal, You commanded us to offer the daily sacrifice at its prescribed time, with members of the priestly clan officiating, with Levites chanting from their assigned platforms, and with representatives of the people Israel in attendance. Now, though, because of our sins, the holy temple (in Jerusalem) is destroyed, the daily sacrifice abolished. We no longer have a priest to officiate, a Levite to chant from his platform, nor a representative of the people to present himself before You. But You indeed have taught us that the prayers of our lips can supplant the sacrifice of animals. Therefore, may it be Your will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, that the prayers from our lips be as significant,

desirable, and acceptable to You as if we had sacrificed a daily offering at its prescribed time and had appeared before Your presence as the properly appointed representatives of Your people.

KOL M'KADDESH **Leib Glantz**
Sung in Hebrew
Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

All those who observe the holiness of the seventh day as
is its due,
All those who keep the Sabbath and guard it from desecration,
Shall be greatly rewarded for this deed—
"Each in his own camp and each under his banner."
(Numbers 1: 52)

You who love the Lord, who yearn for the rebuilding of
the Temple,
Rejoice in the Sabbath as God's gift of inheritance.
Raise up your hands with holiness and say to God:
"Praised be the Lord who gave [Sabbath] tranquillity to His
people Israel." (I Kings 8:56)

Help forever those who refrain from work on the seventh day,
Who walk leisurely with small steps on the Sabbath,
Who feast three times to praise You.
May their righteousness shine forth sevenfold—as the
"light of the [first] seven days."

Lord, God of Israel, perfect His love.
Lord, God of Israel, who grants eternal salvation.

HASHIR SHEHALVIYYIM **Moshe Ganchoff**
Sung in Hebrew
Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

These are the Psalms that the Levites recited in the (Jerusalem) temple:
On the first day of the week they would say: "The earth is the Lord's and all that is within it; all the world and those who inhabit it."

On the second day of the week: "Great is the Lord. He is to be lavishly praised in the city of our God, on His holy mountain."
On the third day of the week: "God stands in the community of the mighty; in the assembly of judges, He pronounces judgment."

On the fourth day of the week: "The Lord is a God of retribution. God of retributions, appear!"

On the fifth day of the week: "Sing aloud to God, our strength, shout with joy to the God of Jacob."

On the sixth day of the week: "The Lord reigns, robed in splendor; the Lord is robed, girded in strength. He set the earth on firm foundations; the earth cannot be shaken."

On the Sabbath day: "A song for the Sabbath day. It is a song for the future yet to come; for a day that is completely Sabbath and restfulness in the life eternal."

HAVDALA **Zavel Zilberts**
Sung in Hebrew
Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

Here, indeed, is God—my deliverer; I will trust in Him; I will not be afraid. For God is my strength, and my Divine music. He has become my salvation. And you shall with joy draw water from the wells of salvation. Deliverance is from the Lord. Grant Your blessings to Your people, *Selah*.
The Lord of Hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is a stronghold for us, *Selah*.
[Happy is the man who trusts in You. Oh Lord, stand by us. The King will answer us on the day we call to Him.]
The Jews experience light and joy and happiness and honor. [May it be so too, for us.]

HAMMAVDIL **Aaron Tishkowsky**
Sung in Hebrew **arr. M. Goldman**
Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

May He who distinguishes between the holy and the ordinary forgive our sins. May He multiply our future generations as well as our fortunes as abundantly as the sand and the stars.

The day has passed like the shadow of the palm tree. I will call unto God, who takes care of me, as the watchman declares, "Morning comes and also night."

Your righteousness is as lofty and great as Mount Tabor. May You forgive my transgressions; may they be as yesterday that is past, and as a watch in the night.

PSALM OF DAVID: **William Bogzester**
ADONAI MA-RABU TZARAY
Psalm 3:2–9
Sung in Hebrew
Translation: JPS Tanakh 1999

O Lord, my foes are so many!
Many are those who attack me;
many say of me,

"There is no deliverance for him through God." *Selah*.
But You, O Lord, are a shield about me,
my glory, He who holds my head high.
I cry aloud to the Lord,
and He answers me from His holy mountain. *Selah*.
I lie down and sleep and wake again,
for the Lord sustains me.
I have no fear of the myriad forces
arrayed against me on every side.

Rise, O Lord!
Deliver me, O my God!
For You slap all my enemies in the face;
You break the teeth of the wicked.
Deliverance is the Lord's;
Your blessing be upon Your people! *Selah*.

About the Performers

CANTOR BENZION MILLER is one of a few orthodox cantors dedicated to perpetuating the great virtuoso cantorial styles and tradition of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Through his father he is a direct descendant of Bobover Hassidim, the followers of Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam of the town of Bobov, Galicia (near present-day Nowy Sącz, Poland, southeast of Kraków), who was the founder of the Bobover "dynasty" in the mid-19th century. Cantor Miller's father—who was born in prewar Poland in the town of Oświęcim (Auschwitz)—his grandfather, and his great-grandfather were all cantors at the courts of the Bobover *rebbes* (Hassidic rabbinical leaders). Benzion Miller was born in Germany shortly after the end of the Second World War, in a displaced persons camp near Munich. It was there that his father, Cantor Aaron Miller, who had lost his entire family in the Holocaust (his wife and children were murdered in German concentration camps), met and married Benzion's mother—a survivor from the Belzer Hassidic sect (another Galician "dynasty")—while both were awaiting patriation. They eventually went to Brooklyn to join a group of fellow Bobover Hassidim who had been living there since before the war.

Cantor Miller studied at Bobover *yeshivot* (talmudic academies), first in Brooklyn and then in Israel, where he began to display his cantorial gifts and came under the tutelage of the well-known cantor Shmuel Taube. He also benefited from the influence of other accomplished *hazzanim* who had come from Europe to Palestine—later Israel—as refugees; and it was there that his cantorial art began to blossom. His first full position was as cantor of the Hillside Jewish Center in Hillside, New Jersey, where his co-officiating rabbi was the twin brother of Shlomo Carlebach (later famous as the Singing Rabbi). He subsequently held positions in the Bronx, Montreal, and Toronto, and since 1981 he has been cantor of Temple Beth El of Boro Park in Brooklyn (now known as the Young Israel Beth-El of Boro Park), a pulpit previously served by such illustrious cantors as Mordechai Hershman, Berele Chagy, and Moshe Koussevitzky.

Cantor Miller's exceptionally busy concert schedule includes a number of performances each year at Israel's major venues, and at concerts, festivals, and conferences throughout Europe as well as in Great Britain, Australia, and North America. He has been a cantorial soloist at concerts in such disparate places as Johannesburg and Cape Town, Mombasa, Alaska, and Brazil; and he officiates as a guest cantor at synagogues throughout the world. He has sung with the Israel Philharmonic, the Jerusalem Symphony, the Haifa Symphony, the Barcelona Symphony, and the Budapest State Opera orchestras as well as with the English Players, and he was part of the first group of cantors to perform in the Soviet-bloc countries before the fall of the iron curtain. He made his Royal Festival Hall (London) debut in 1990 in the premiere of Neil Levin's production *Voice of Jewish Russia*, and he sang with the City of Oxford Symphony at the Barbican Centre in 1998.

Cantor Miller has made more than a dozen recordings of Hassidic and other Hebrew liturgical/cantorial and Yiddish music, in some of these preserving much of the authentic Bobover musical tradition. He also is continually expanding the Bobover repertoire with new tunes of his own in the same vein and through his recordings of songs created in America by the third Bobover *rebbe*.

ELLI JAFFE was born in Jerusalem and graduated with distinction from the Rubin Academy there, later studying conducting and winning prizes at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He has conducted all of Israel's major orchestras as well as the Royal Philharmonic, the Liège Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony, and the Prague Symphony Orchestra, of which he holds the title honorary guest conductor. He is artistic director of the music department of Dvir Yeshiva High School for Art and of the Jerusalem School for Cantorial Art. He is also music director of the Jerusalem Great Synagogue Choir, as well as of the Europe-Israel Foundation for the Advancement of Jewish Liturgical Music. Jaffe has published an encyclopedic instructional set for the entire annual cycle of Hebrew liturgy, and he is preparing an analytical book on Jewish prayer modes. He is also an accomplished composer, and his liturgical settings, arrangements, and orchestrations are widely used by cantors.

In 1498, when his court was transferred from Innsbruck to Vienna, the Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian requested twelve boy singers to join his court musicians. This event marked the official founding of the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle and the **VIENNA CHOIR BOYS** (Wiener Sängerknaben). In 1918, after the dissolution of the Hapsburg Empire, the Austrian government took over the Court Opera but not the choirboys. The Wiener Sängerknaben owes its survival to the initiative of Josef Schnitt, who established the choir as a private institution, in which the former court choirboys became the Wiener Sängerknaben and the imperial uniform was replaced by the sailor suit, the height of boys' fashion at that time. Today the organization comprises some hundred choristers between the ages of ten and fourteen, divided into four touring choirs. The four choirs give more than 300 performances annually. **GERALD WIRTH**, the artistic director, received his early musical training as a member of the Wiener Sängerknaben and at the Bruckner Conservatory in Linz, Austria. He is also active as a composer and arranger. The **CHORUS VIENNENSIS**, a male choir consisting of former members of the Wiener Sängerknaben, was created in 1952 by its director, Josef Schnitt.

The internationally renowned conductor **JORGE MESTER** is music director of the Pasadena Symphony Orchestra and the Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra.

The distinguished conductor and pianist **MARIOS PAPADOPOULOS** is the founder and music director of the Oxford Philomusica, the orchestra-in-residence at Oxford University.

Credits

1. David Roitman: Hayyom t'amtzeinu
Orchestration and arrangement: Larry Spivack

2. Israel Schorr: Sheyyibane beit hammikdash

3. Pierre Pinchik: Der khazn un der gabe
Orchestration: Robert Elhai

4. Pinchas Jassinowsky: The Prophecy of Isaiah: V'haya b'aḥarit hayyamim
Publisher: Transcontinental
Orchestration: Robert Elhai

5. David Kusevitsky: Ezrat
Publisher: Kusevitsky (Mrs. Valerie Liebler)
Orchestration: Stanley Silverman

6. Israel Schorr: Ribbon ha'olamim
Orchestration and arrangement: Elli Jaffe

7. Leib Glantz: Kol m'kaddesh
Orchestration and arrangement: Larry Spivack

8. Moshe Ganchoff: Hashir shehalviyyim
Orchestration and arrangement: Steve Barnett

9. Zavel Zilberts: Havdala
Orchestration and arrangement: Warner Bass

10. Aaron Tishkowsky: Hammavdil
Arrangement: Maurice Goldman
Orchestration and adaptation: Larry Spivack

11. William Bogzester: Psalm of David
Orchestration: Steve Barnett

Recording: Centre Cultural de Sant Cugat, Barcelona, May 2000 (Tracks 1, 3, 5 – 9 and 11)
Recording: The Warehouse, London, UK, November 1998 (Track 2)
Recording: Sala Sinfonica del Auditori, Barcelona, Spain, June 2001 (Track 4)
Recording: Baumgartner Casino, Vienna, Austria, May 2001 (Track 10)
Recording Producer: Simon Weir
Recording Engineer: Bertram Kornacher (Tracks 1, 3– 9, and 11)
Recording Engineer: Campbell Hughes (Tracks 2, 10)
Assistant Recording Engineer: Andreas Hamza (Track 10)
Recording Project Manager: Paul Schwendener (Track 1, 3–11)
Recording Project Manager: Neil Levin (Track 2)

Photo credits: Pages 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16: courtesy of the International Centre and Archives for Jewish Music

Credits

The Milken Family Foundation was established by brothers Lowell and Michael Milken in 1982 with the mission to discover and advance inventive, effective ways of helping people help themselves and those around them lead productive and satisfying lives. The Foundation advances this mission primarily through its work in education and medical research. For more information, visit www.milkenarchive.org.

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The Milken Archive of American Jewish Music would not be possible without the contributions of hundreds of gifted and talented individuals. With a project of this scope and size it is difficult to adequately recognize the valued contribution of each individual and organization. Omissions in the following list are inadvertent. Particular gratitude is expressed to: Gayl Abbey, Donald Barnum, Anja Beusterien, Paul Bliese, Johnny Cho, Cammie Cohen, Jacob Garchik, Stephanie Germeraad, Ben Gerstein, Jeff Gust, Scott Horton, Jeffrey Ignarro, Brenda Koplin, Joshua Lesser, Adam J. Levitin, Tom Magallanes, Sabrina Meier-Kiperman, Eliyahu Mishulovin, Gary Panas, Nikki Parker, Jill Riseborough, Jonathan Romeo, Judith Sievers, Manuel Sosa, Carol Starr, Matthew Stork, Brad Sytten, Boaz Tarsi, Jessica Yingling, and Julie Zorn.

Special recognition is due composer Michael Isaacson who served as a catalyst to the Archive's creation, and collaborated with the Milken Family Foundation in its work during the Archive's early years.

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