Cover Art

SCHOENFIELD

A MESSAGE FROM THE MILKEN ARCHIVE FOUNDER

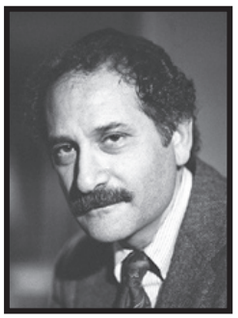
Dispersed over the centuries to all corners of the earth, the Jewish people absorbed elements of its host cultures while, miraculously, maintaining its own. As many Jews reconnected in America, escaping persecution and seeking to take part in a visionary democratic society, their experiences found voice 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 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.

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

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.

About the Composer

PAUL SCHOENFIELD was born in Detroit in 1947. He began piano lessons at the age of six and composed his first piece the next year. Following studies at Converse College, in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh, he earned a D.M.A. degree at the University of Arizona. His principal teachers included Rudolf Serkin, Julius Chajes, Ozan Marsh, and Robert Muczynski. After holding a teaching post in Toledo, Ohio, he lived on a kibbutz in Israel, where he taught mathematics, one of his great loves, to high school students in the evenings. Later he spent a number of years in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area as a freelance composer and pianist, and throughout the 1990s he lived in the Israeli city of Migdal Ha'emek (near Haifa), which he still considers his secondary residence after moving back to the United States.

Schoenfield was formerly an active pianist, touring the United States, Europe, and South America as a soloist and with ensembles including Music from Marlboro. He has recorded the complete violin and piano works of Bartók with Sergiu Luca. Of his own creative output he has declared, "I don't consider myself an art-music [serious music] composer at all. The reason my works sometimes find their way into concert halls is [that] at this juncture, there aren't many folk music performers with enough technique, time or desire to perform my music. They usually write their own anyway." The long list of orchestras that have performed his compositions includes the New York Philharmonic, the Seattle Symphony, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, and the Haifa Symphony Orchestra. He has received numerous commissions and been awarded grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Fund, the Bush Foundation, Meet the Composer, and Chamber Music America.

Schoenfield has been compared with Gershwin, and one writer has asserted that his works "do for Hassidic music what Astor Piazzolla did for the Argentine tango." Although he has stated, "I don't deserve the credit for writing music—only God deserves the credit, and I would say this even if I weren't religious," his inspiration has been ascribed to a wide range of musical experience: popular styles both American and foreign, vernacular and folk traditions, and the "normal" historical traditions of cultivated music making, often treated with sly twists. In a single piece he frequently combines ideas that evolved in entirely different worlds, delighting in the surprises elicited by their interaction. This, as Schoenfield has proclaimed, "is not the kind of music for relaxation, but the kind that makes people sweat; not only the performer, but the audience."

In addition to the compositions recorded here, among Schoenfield's major works to date are *Four Parables* for piano and orchestra (1982–83); *Klezmer Rondos* (1986), a concerto for flute, tenor, and orchestra; the frequently performed *Café Music* for violin, cello, and piano (1986); the Trio for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano composed in 1990 for clarinetist David Shifrin, realizing Schoenfield's long-standing desire "to create entertaining music that could be played at Hassidic gatherings as well as in the concert hall … each of the movements is based partly on an eastern European Hassidic melody"; and *D'vorah*, a gospel oratorio with text by Margaret Stearns, premiered in 1998 in Israel by the Haifa Symphony Orchestra.

Perhaps the best summary of Schoenfield's career to date is the tribute that the distinguished music commentator Klaus George Roy delivered on the occasion of his receiving the Cleveland Arts Prize's 1994 Music Award:

> Paul Schoenfield writes the kind of inclusive and welcoming music that gives eclecticism a good name. In the tradition of Bach, who never left German soil but wrote French suites, English suites and Italian concertos, and in the tradition of Bartók, who absorbed and transformed not only Hungarian music, but that of Romania, Bulgaria and North Africa, Paul draws on many ethnic sources in music, assimilating them into his own distinctive language. As Donald Rosenberg wrote in the [Cleveland] *Plain Dealer*, reviewing Paul's recent and nationally cheered compact disc recording of three concertos, "the composer's grasp of music history joins hands with popular and folk traditions of America and beyond. This is cross-over art achieved with seamless craftsmanship."
>
> If Paul considers himself essentially a folk musician, it is surely a highly sophisticated one. His rich and multi-branched musical tree grows from strong and well-nourished roots. What he communicates to us is marked by exuberant humor and spontaneous freshness, however arduous the process of composition may actually have been. His work rises from and returns to those fundamental wellsprings of song and dance, of lyricism and physical motion, and often of worshipful joy, that have always been the hallmarks of genuine musical creativity.
>
> — Neil W. Levin

Program Notes and Texts

CONCERTO FOR VIOLA AND ORCHESTRA

This concerto is emblematic of Schoenfield's celebrated eclecticism, especially of his ingenious fusion of Western art forms with Israeli and eastern European Jewish popular, folk, and liturgical elements—all within a classical framework. As in much, if not most, of his music, authentic folk motifs are extended and varied, but they are never obscured by his judicious use of such 20th-century idioms as harmonic dissonances, disjunct intervals, and rhythmic complexities. Never superficially superimposed, these techniques are organically employed to give the genuine folk melos freshness and heightened interest.

The concerto was written in 1997–98 expressly for Robert Vernon, principal violist of the Cleveland Orchestra, which commissioned the work and gave it its world premiere with Vernon in 1998. Schoenfield and Vernon were close high school friends in Detroit, and during their student days they frequently played chamber music together. Vernon, particularly moved by the Judaic spiritual character of Ernest Bloch's *Suite Hebraique*, has always had an abiding interest in the Judeo-Christian heritage, and he requested that the concerto be "something lyrical and Hebraic."

Schoenfield composed the concerto mostly in Israel, where he was living at that time. In the basement of the building in which he and his family resided, just beneath his studio, there was a kindergarten called Gan Tzippi (Tzippi's Garden). Schoenfield became fascinated with the

songs he heard the children singing in the schoolroom or in the courtyard just outside, and he determined to base the concerto largely on those tunes. Only later did he learn that some of them were liturgical melodies—a number of them Hassidic in origin—that the children had learned at home or in synagogues; others were apparently common children's play songs, although some of those may also have had liturgical roots. After the work was completed, Schoenfield explained that he had built the entire piece on fragments of the melodies he had heard from the children. "I just put them together," he insisted with his characteristic modesty. (Yet the word *compose* is derived from the Latin *componere*, "to put together.")

The concerto is structured with two lyrical movements followed by a furiously driven final virtuoso movement. This is a bit unorthodox, but not revolutionary (Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto, for example, is similarly ordered). The work does not have a descriptive or programmatic title, but the individual movements do. The first is called *Gan Tzippi*, after the Israeli kindergarten. It opens with a haunting Lubavitcher Hassidic (Ḥabad) melody in the double basses, above which the initial counterpoint in the viola line is derived in part from varied fragments of the same tune. This melody, or *niggun* (known as *niggun l'shabbat v'yom tov*), is thought to have been sung by the disciples of the *tzemakḥ tzedek*—the third *rebbe* (rabbinical-type leader) of the Lubavitcher Hassidic dynasty (1789–1866). Throughout the movement, this melody is shared by the solo viola and the orchestra, and it is juxtaposed against and interwoven with other tunes or parts of tunes. Some of those, too, exhibit a Hassidic flavor. Most prominent among them is a recurring five-note staccato-like motive. The tempo increases along with the growing melodic intensity, then returns to its slower-paced lyrical character.

The second movement, *Soliloquy*, is a continuously unfolding, sustained prayerlike meditation, but some of its melodic elements also refer back to the first movement. The third movement, *King David Dancing Before the Ark*, has a specifically biblical program: the incident in II Samuel: 6, where King David, following one of his military campaigns against the Philistines, has retrieved the Holy Ark from them. David brings the ark back into Jerusalem with enormous joy and public celebration, and he dances without inhibitions "before the Lord with all his might." But when his wife, Michal (daughter of the former King Saul), sees him "leaping and dancing" in front of the common people and even the servants at the expense of his royal dignity, she is put off ("and she despised him in her heart"). She admonishes him for what she deems such inappropriate behavior, asking him how the King of Israel could have earned honor and respect by "uncovering himself [to dance]" shamelessly, especially in the presence of "handmaids of his servants," like an ordinary, vulgar man. David replies defiantly that it was "before the Lord" that he danced and celebrated, and that he will continue to do so—even more so: "I will be yet more vulgar than this."

Schoenfield characterized this third movement as a "programmatic description of a king letting the ecstasy in his character shine through." The ecstatic dancing and fervor are depicted by a constant motoric interplay among several folk-type melodies and among phrases and motives extracted from them. Michal's scolding is represented by a trombone—which one reviewer thought "suggests she is an irksome figure indeed." Free syncopations in the solo viola mirror King David's defiance and dismissal of her criticism. Many of the tune fragments in both the first and second movements again figure prominently in this finale, giving the entire work an overall unity.

"The viola is by nature a reflective instrument," Schoenfield declared during the rehearsals for the premiere. Not exclusively, however, if one judges from this third movement. Schoenfield has lifted the instrument completely out of that mode and treated it here as a highly virtuoso vehicle—appearing to dance as exuberantly as did King David. This movement makes considerable technical demands on the violist and exploits the instrument's higher registers. It is also rich in generic inflections and gestures associated with so-called klezmer music—the styles and sonorities typical of 19th-century eastern European Jewish wedding and street bands. Several recognizable Hassidic and other eastern

European Jewish folk melodies stand out in this finale. The opening one is a familiar incipit motif of many folksongs and dance tunes. Another is a Lubavitcher Hassidic version of a verse from Deuteronomy (16:14), *v'samaḥta*…. (And you shall rejoice.…).

FOUR MOTETS

Four Motets is an a cappella setting of four excerpts from Psalm 86 (seven verses in all), written in 1995 on commission from a consortium consisting of Chanticleer, the Dale Warland Singers, the Phoenix Bach Choir, and La Vie. The verses chosen by the composer all center around a theme of intense personal supplication—for God to listen; for God to answer; for God to guard our souls and thus keep us close to Him; for God to guide and teach us; for God to show us truth; and for God to make us whole. In fact, some of the constituent phrases and sentiments of these verses were paraphrased many centuries later by *paytanim* (authors of liturgical poetry) in their *s'liḥot*—poems of the penitential liturgy. Examples are *hatte adonai ozn'kha* (Incline Your ear, O Lord; v.1); and *ki ata adonai tov v'sallaḥ*, *v'rav ḥesed* … (For You, O Lord, are good and ready to pardon, and full of kindness…; v.5). The deeply spiritual character of these devotions guides the continuously unfolding direction of the music.

These settings span a stylistic gulf of 500 years, connecting two disparate but still fully Western music worlds in a synthesis that suggests, as does this Psalm itself, timelessness and universality. *Four Motets* is transparently cast in the mold of High Renaissance polyphony, with silken textures that drift and weave among various levels of density, well-paced swells that mirror the words, and independent seamless voice leading. These characteristics, together with their soaring spirit, give the motets their quintessentially Renaissance aura, but they are subtly infused with judiciously crafted chromaticism, 20th-century harmonic moments, and even some strident dissonances that somehow do not detract from the overall Renaissance character. To the contrary, they suggest a Renaissance form

Conductor Avner Itai with the BBC Singers, recording session, July 2000.

reclothed in contemporary guise—almost as if the rules of Palestrina or species counterpoint had been revised slightly and pantonally applied.

When the Italian Jewish composer Salomone Rossi (ca. 1570–ca. 1630) published his collection of Hebrew liturgical settings in Venice in 1623 (*Hashirim Asher Lishlomo*), he provided the first and ultimately the only serious and substantial repertoire of synagogue music based on late Renaissance polyphony (even though his secular music from that time frame had already entered the early Baroque era). After Rossi's death, that repertoire—which never really caught on in Italian synagogues during his lifetime—was virtually forgotten until its academic discovery in the 19th century. And it was not until well into the 20th century that it received any appreciable performances. Apart from some subsequent rearrangement of a few of those Rossi pieces, no lasting synagogue music was ever again composed in that 16th-century style. Schoenfield's motets offer one of the first reconsiderations of Renaissance polyphony in connection with sacred Hebrew texts. In the context of their 20th-century harmonic vocabulary, they might be viewed as a kind of logical extension—and contemporary version—of Rossi's work.

— Neil W. Levin

FOUR MOTETS

Sung in Hebrew

PSALM 86

I.

Incline Your ear, O Lord,
answer me,
for I am poor and needy.
Preserve my life, for I am steadfast;
O You, my God,
deliver Your servant who trusts in You.

II.

Bring joy to Your servant's life,
for on You, Lord, I set my hope.
For You, Lord, are good and forgiving
(abounding in steadfast love) to all who call on
You.

III.

In my time of trouble I call You,
for You will answer me.

IV.

Teach me Your way, O Lord;
I will walk in Your truth;
let my heart be undivided in reverence for Your
name.
I will praise You (O Lord, My God,) with all my
heart.

Translation: JPS Tanakh 1999

THE MERCHANT AND THE PAUPER

Shoenfield's two-act opera, *The Merchant and the Pauper*, was commissioned by the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and given its premiere there in 1999. Its libretto is adapted from a tale fashioned and first told in 1809 by one of the most significant personalities in Hassidic history, philosophy, and lore—Reb [Rabbi] Naḥman of Bratslav (1772–1811), the founder of the Bratslaver Hassidic sect.

Librettist Maggie Stearns and Paul Schoenfield at work on *The Merchant and the Pauper.*

Reb Naḥman of Bratslav and His Doctrines

R. Naḥman was unique among the Hassidic *rebbes* (rabbinical-type charismatic leaders of individual Hassidic groups or dynasties) and *tzaddikim* (righteous Hassidic masters) in his reliance upon cryptic allegorical and even phantasmagorical folk-type tales as primary vehicles for conveying his theological, moral, and mystical teachings. He was also one of the most controversial and isolated of all the Hassidic masters. Naḥman was born in Medzibezh, a small village in the southwest Ukraine, and his maternal great-grandfather was the Ba'al Shem Tov, the progenitor of the Hassidic movement in the 18th century (Israel ben Eliezer, also known by the acronym BESHT). On his father's side, he was a grandson of a pre-Hassidic leader who was later a disciple of the Ba'al Shem Tov—Naḥman of Horodenka (Gorodenka), after whom he was named.

Naḥman's childhood and youth were suffused with Hassidic atmosphere and spirit. Biographers and historians have pieced together a probable image of a young man increasingly drawn to asceticism and deep prayer, attracted to the mystical aura surrounding earlier *tzaddikim*, and beset with feelings of Divine rejection that were later to emerge as crushing disappointment when his messianic hopes were defeated. He is also said to have been preoccupied with eroticism and the conflicts it generated within him.

In the Kiev district town of Medvedevka, where Reb Naḥman settled for a number of years as a young man, he first began to attract Hassidim—followers, or disciples—and to function as a *tzaddik*. Reports indicate that his self-perceived role and persona differed even then from the quasi-royal, court-centered style of certain other Hassidic *rebbes*. He appears to have been more concerned with immersion in intense spiritual devotion and, ultimately, with mystical doctrines of repair, restoration, and redemption of the cosmic world. Nor did he surround himself continually, as others have, with courtly retinues or clusters of disciples; usually he restricted his meetings with disciples to a handful of annual occasions. In 1798 he traveled to the Holy Land (*eretz yisra'el*—the Land of Israel, or Palestine), where he visited Haifa, Jaffa, Tiberias, and Safed, and where, according to his disciple and first biographer, R. Nathan of Nemirov, he traveled incognito before returning to Europe after only a few months. After coming back to Medvedevka, and then living for a time in Zlatopol and Bratslav, he moved to Uman, in the Ukraine, where he died a year later and where he is buried.

In that last year in Uman, Reb Naḥman is known inexplicably to have associated with prominent nonreligious (certainly non-pious) *haskala* (Jewish Enlightenment) adherents, whose worldview could not have been more distant from the orthodox faith and mystical piety of a typical *tzaddik*. Also enigmatic and atypical of the *rebbes* was his failure to appoint a successor, especially since his only son had died and he was aware of his own failing health. Neither his disciples nor their descendants, therefore, have ever chosen one. Yet they did not disband or permit themselves to disintegrate in the absence of a dynasty. Known colloquially as the *toyte hassidim* (dead Hassidim) because of their "dead leader," they have continued as a distinct group without a living *rebbe*, and those who are able still make a pilgrimage to his tombstone in Uman each year on Rosh Hashana.

Throughout his life, Reb Naḥman was often embroiled in sharp theological controversy and even bitter interpersonal disputes. At one time or another he alienated virtually all of his contemporary significant Hassidic *tzaddikim* and serious Hassidic thinkers, especially those with whom he had contact (with the exception of the legendary kindly and charitable Reb Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev). In some cases, the acrimony arose from attitude and behavior, but on a deeper level the conflicts were propelled by his particular conceptions and views—of himself and his own exclusive role; on the world and God's relationship to it; on the nature, meaning, and means of ultimate redemption; on the nature and essence of faith; and on the kabbalistic concept of *tikkun*—repair, restoration, and redemption. The Bratslaver perception of *tikkun* has been understood to focus in particular on repair of that which is seen to be broken or shattered in existence itself—and of that which is broken in the soul, in the cosmos, in truth, and in the essence of Divine oneness with man and with the universe.

Prominent among the accusations leveled against Reb Naḥman by his most vocal and most polarized opponents was his alleged inclination toward Shabbatean and Frankist messianic ideas (discredited conceptions harking back to 17th-century episodes of "false messiahs"). Scholars disagree on the extent to which he may have been influenced by those ideas—and on whether this can ever be determined. Central to the controversies and even the denouncements Reb Naḥman aroused was the highly paradoxical and complicated character of the particular concept of faith he and his followers embraced. When it came to questions of God's personal versus impersonal relationship to the world and to existence, of the relationship between good and evil, and whether prayer is ideally an unfathomably distant yet personal dialogue with God or a complete submergence of the self in clinging to God, Naḥman's teachings diverged sharply from the prevailing thought of other leading Hassidic theoreticians of the day. By some accounts, he seems almost deliberately to have provoked these disputes, for he is believed to have developed the notion that his place at the center of controversy was both inevitable and a mark of his own significance in the redemptive process. Apparently, he viewed greatness and ultimate legitimacy in a true *tzaddik* as inseparable from—perhaps even in proportion to—rejection and isolation as necessary stages to be overcome.

It is possible to articulate in analytical terms some of the debatable differences in doctrine and approach that account for the rift between Reb Naḥman and other Hassidic thinkers, but much of his modus operandi and many of his positions and actions were, and remain, fogged in mystery. Even his defining trip to the Holy Land and his motivations for the journey have an aura of mystery about them that has fueled speculation. Some biographers, including R. Nathan, have attached mystical objectives to the trip; other analysts and interpreters have discerned pre- or preparatory messianic purposes; and still others have connected the two. Arthur Green's seminal and authoritative 20th-century biography, considered one of the most revealing intellectual examinations of the subject, suggests that the journey was a kabbalistic stage in Naḥman's spiritual growth. Envisioning it as a possible paradigm for a rite of passage, Green compares the journey with undergoing a dangerous ordeal to attain a "next level." In that context, the journey to the Holy Land might have been analogous to a journey to the center of the cosmic spiritual world, and the passage through water to arrive there could be viewed as a metaphor for a first stage of a rebirth process—and therefore the preface to restoration and redemption.

That Reb Naḥman's tales, too, can defy understanding—at least outside the tightly packed epicenter of his initiated disciples—may also be a part of the self-imposed enigma he appears to have cultivated. It has even been suggested that the tales were never intended to be understood or deciphered. A slightly less radical variation on that idea suggests that Reb Naḥman expected only his inner core of disciples, who were oriented in Lurianic mysticism, kabbalistic conceptions, and in particular the Zohar—and were thus schooled in seeking out hidden references and symbolism—to understand the stories. Yet another variation on that assessment might be that their meaning would become revealed to the rest at some future time, perhaps as part of the eventual restoration in the cosmos.

Especially perplexing is the complicated matter of Reb Naḥman's personal messianic pretensions. This can be—and has been—considered on various levels, for he never publicly declared that he was "the messiah." Yet, however the question is interpreted, it is generally accepted that he believed not only that he was the one true *tzaddik* of his generation (*tzaddik ha'dor*), but also that in some sense his soul was actually that of the messiah who would usher in the period of redemption. His notion of his soul's messianic status included a twofold, or perhaps two-stage consideration: messiah the son of Joseph and messiah the son of David. Modern interpreters have allowed more for the possibility that he might have seen himself in potential as the messiah son of Joseph, who would prepare the path for the arrival of the messiah son of David. In any case, his formulation also contended that the eventual messiah was destined to be one of his descendants. Moreover, Reb Naḥman's position on faith went beyond obvious traditional

Judaic faith in God and all that it has implied historically, and he required of his disciples faith in *him* as the true *tzaddik*—inextricable from the messianic parameters. In his view, the Jewish exile persists in its prolongation because of lack of faith, so that the meaning of redemption from that exile is tied to the resolution of all doubts.

Reb Naḥman's greatest disappointment, therefore, was the frustration of his messianic expectations and the failure of his bid for acceptance of those aspirations, which occurred in 1806—the same year in which his only son died. That the birth of his tales and the beginning of his institutionalized storytelling coincide with that time frame should probably not be overlooked. He did not necessarily abandon his messianic convictions or his longing for messianic redemption. Rather, he appears to have refocused his energies and regrouped his spiritual forces, refracting his teachings and longings through the new prism of the tales. In one way or another, even if their details and deepest layers of meaning elude our understanding, these tales can all be viewed as dealing with the issue of faith in the yearned-for cosmic redemption.

Foreign as Reb Naḥman's messianic self-perceptions may seem to modern rational orientation, they cannot simply be dismissed as psychotic delusions. For we really do not know the precise nature of these convictions, nor how literal was the plane on which he considered them. This component of his teachings remains a function of both his essential mystery and his pervasive mysteriousness. Little wonder then that his tales, too, are drenched in mystery and secrecy. In that context, their invention has been supposed as his means of encoding the very secrets that those outside his inner circle had rebuffed. Those secrets, according to this thesis, would then be protected and decipherable only by the elite few who had attained an exclusive level of understanding, and only they would be spiritually ready and worthy, by virtue of their faith in Reb Naḥman, to know the means to the world's repair.

The Tales

On their surface, Reb Naḥman's stories resemble fairy tales with universal themes more than they do traditionally Jewish anecdotal folklore or typical religious exegetical literature. They concern such things from the world of enchantment as mythical kings and emperors, love-struck princes and princesses, far-off lands, improbable romances, mysterious riddles, evil spells, beggars who become prosperous, and magical cures. But they are saturated with mystical allegories, metaphors, and symbols. Whether all the tales were entirely original, or whether Reb Naḥman drew upon other folklore as models, cannot be known. It is possible, however, to consider some of their characters and situations as variants on well-known fairy-tale motifs. There is also the possibility, raised by some contemporary observers, that some of the tales might have been based on Reb Naḥman's dreams. This, too, remains conjecture. Either way, the uninitiated audience, even if otherwise educated, might understandably relate to the tales as fanciful variations on universal folklore. But scholars of this Bratslaver chapter of Hassidic history and philosophy generally accept that when Reb Naḥman told these tales to his disciples, it was understood among them that they contained hidden secret messages and truths deliberately buried from all but those who knew not only how to unveil them, but also how to internalize them.

The fierce opposition to Reb Naḥman and the open controversies might have underscored in his mind the need for such secrecy. The deception of simplicity could guard those secret truths—at least until a later stage on the way to redemption—from those who would not understand them anyway and who might, under the influence either of his vilifiers or, simply, of Western ideas, misuse his teachings. The enigma would protect knowledge still too dangerous to be in such hands.

Thus, among Bratslaver Hassidim the tales are treated not as secular or quasi-religious ethical-moral literature, nor even as ancillary religious illustrations, but as basic sacred texts in themselves, where his sacred teachings are embedded in the images, objects, characters, and even in the landscapes.

There are thirteen primary tales and several other brief ones. Reb Naḥman instructed his Hassidim to burn all his writings upon his death, with the exception of these tales—which were recorded by his scribe. In Arthur Green's evaluation, they address through mythological lenses Reb Naḥman's central ideas on the very essence of existence "at the meeting place between the truth of the soul and the truth of the cosmos." But even apart from their specifically mystical world, these tales may also have a historical place in the development of Jewish literature in general. From the vantage point of 20th-century literary criticism, they have been perceived as an inadvertent bridge from a centuries-old tradition of purely sacred and biblically related writings to a modern Jewish secular literature. In all likelihood, though, Reb Naḥman would have rejected that role.

The Opera

When Schoenfield was searching for a Jewish subject for his opera, he was faced with an artistic dilemma. He wanted to address an aspect of serious Jewish literature that would be worthy of probing theatrical treatment, yet neither despairing nor tragic—nor even tragicomic. But the work also had to embody his personal approach to "Jewish music"—which is inseparable from joy and spiritual elevation. Strangely, he perceived one level of solution in the long-standing tradition of the *purimspiel*, which has often accompanied and amplified the Purim festivities celebrating the averting of Jewish genocide in the ancient Persian Empire. *Purimspiel* is a genre of jocular theater dating at least to the Middle Ages in Europe and containing some of the germinal seeds for the much later birth of secular Jewish theater. Even during the period when some rabbinical authority still proscribed instrumental music as a sign of continued mourning for the destruction of the Temple (and also, according to some views, "unnecessary" vocal music—apart from liturgical intonations and biblical cantillations), the *purimspiel* and weddings were the two permitted exceptions. A *purimspiel* typically combines revelry, lampoon, and caricature; yet the event it commemorates—the near success of a conspiracy to annihilate the Jewish people—has both redemptive

The composer demonstrates a passage for producer David Frost at the University of Michigan recording session, 2001.

religious and sober historical ramifications and is itself hardly humorous.

In his quest for a specific topic, Schoenfield turned to the tales of Reb Naḥman of Bratslav, and he found his desired nexus in Naḥman's own words concerning joy: "To find true joy is the hardest thing of all—more difficult than all other spiritual tasks. One must literally force oneself to be happy all the time…. When you bring joy to another person, you literally give new life to a soul…. Often the only way is to do something foolish or childish."

"And so it was in the spirit of the *purimspiel* that I decided to write *The Merchant and the Pauper*," Schoenfield explained. "People who wonder whether I am being serious or sarcastic when I use 18th- and 19th-century harmonies must remember that in a Purim play the division between fact and farce can and should be very blurry." But he has gone beyond harmonic language in fashioning the contradictions of this multilayered work, clothing mystical and melancholic Bratslaver yearnings in the vestments of uplifting and even cheerful music. He has created a work that ties his perception of "an opera on a Jewish subject"—viz., something ultimately and inherently joyful—to Reb Naḥman's cosmic messianic concerns. "I've come along to

write some entertainment to 'make the sad happy and bring peace among enemies,' as the Talmud expresses," Schoenfield wrote in the program booklet for the premiere. "I haven't had to concern myself with profundity or musicological importance—because such an attitude would be antithetical both to the *purimspiel* and to the views of Reb Naḥman."

But this opera is no mere diversionary entertainment. Perhaps, as subtexts wrapped in the garb of an entertaining musical theater piece, its composer has in turn hidden some of the profundity he denies. The basic substance of *The Merchant and the Pauper* derives from the interrelated twin mystical doctrines of the exile of the *sh'khina* (the Divine Presence) as part of the Jewish Exile, and the persisting delay of the messianic era of restoration and redemption by the continued exclusion of the messiah (also a form of exile). The libretto, a synopsis of which follows here, is not a literal transcription of the Naḥman tale in all its details. Rather, it was adapted from the original story, and as a theatrical vehicle, it naturally omits certain important elements that bear upon a full deliberation of the symbolism and metaphors of the tale. First published in *Sippurei ma'asiyyot* in Warsaw in 1881, the full tale can be found in modern English translation in Arnold J. Band's *Naḥman of Bratslav: The Tale*s, and in *Beggars and Prayers: Adin Steinsaltz Retells the Tales of Rabbi Naḥman of Bratslav*.

Conveying the basic plot and the principal allegorical elements presented a theatrical staging challenge to the librettist and the director. The solution was to have many of the major plot details as well as allegorical commentary declaimed by a narrator. In the St. Louis production, that narrator was portrayed as Reb Naḥman himself, recounting the story and commenting on it to his disciples. The emotional expressions of the characters' reactions are in turn the base for the musical numbers—the arias, ensembles, and choruses.

The Synopsis

Act I

The Pauper's beautiful wife is kidnapped by a "wicked" general, but she is rescued and returned home by the honorable Merchant. The Merchant and the Pauper are both rewarded with the birth of children—a son to the Merchant and a daughter to the Pauper. The Pauper's daughter is uncommonly beautiful—considered "the most beautiful child on earth."

The two children are promised to each other for future marriage by their parents. Over the years, the Pauper's daughter, Beauty, becomes the means to his increasing wealth and power, since he prospers when people bestow gifts upon her, and his social as well as economic rank expands as noblemen vie for her as a bride for their sons. The Pauper, whose greed increases accordingly, eventually becomes emperor of the entire land, and now he is determined that his daughter must make a noble marriage rather than marrying the Merchant's son, as promised. The Pauper's wife, however, refuses to acquiesce in breaking their promise, and by that time the children also feel committed to each other as predestined partners.

The Pauper therefore conspires to bring ruin upon the Merchant by spreading false rumors of fraud, which then reduce him to poverty. Even then the Pauper's wife and daughter remain committed to the promise, so he orders his men to abduct the Merchant's son, put him in a sack, and throw him into the sea. But the Merchant's wife clandestinely manages to have a convicted criminal put in the sack instead, and the Merchant's son escapes through a fierce storm at sea.

Act II

The Merchant's son is shipwrecked on the shore of a wild land that is uninhabited by humans. He and Beauty have pledged to each other that wherever each one happens to be, they will both observe the evening star each night as it rises out of the sea. Thus, no matter where they are, they will be able to see into each other's hearts.

Marcus DeLoach as the Merchant's son and Madeline Bender as Beauty in the original Opera Theatre of Saint Louis production, 1999.

The Pauper assumes that the Merchant's son is dead, in which case his daughter is no longer betrothed. She can now receive other suitors, but she is veiled in order to prevent them from fainting at the sheer sight of her unequaled loveliness. Beauty is abducted and carried off by an evil pirate who plans to sell her for ransom. He has lured her onto his ship, tempting her with mechanical golden birds that sing and dance. Once again a fierce storm arises at sea, and they are shipwrecked on the same shore where the Merchant's son is living. The wild animals there have ignored him, but they seize upon the pirate and tear him to pieces.

Meanwhile, chaos reigns in the emperor's palace. The nobles now realize that without his daughter, the Pauper turned emperor is no longer of any use to them. The places of the Merchant and the Pauper are once again reversed. The Merchant is restored to his former prosperity and high social standing, and the emperor returns to poverty. But the Pauper's wife becomes the empress in his place.

Since so much time has passed since their separation, Beauty and the Merchant's son do not immediately recognize each other on the wilderness shore. But when he tells her his story, they become reunited, returning home to rule over the kingdom—"to everlasting joy."

An Interpretation

Howard Schwarz, in a 1982 article in *Judaism* on the Bratslaver tales, considered their role as a forerunner of modern Jewish literature, and he has published several studies of Jewish folklore and rabbinical storytelling. In his annotations contained in the program booklet for the St. Louis production, Schwarz attempted to imagine a conventional Bratslav interpretation of the story on the basic allegorical plane. In what he views as a dual allegory—one biblical and the other mystical and kabbalistic in its focus on the *sh'khina* and the messiah—the Merchant represents Moses ("the man whose wealth is both worldly and spiritual") and the Pauper's wife symbolizes the people of Israel. On this level, then, the tale would refer to the redemption of the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage and their wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus in search of completion of that redemption through possession of their land and fulfillment of the Divine promise. But the story's deeper concern is with the Merchant's son, who represents the messiah, and the Pauper's daughter, who symbolizes the *sh'khina*.

Schwarz goes further to suggest that the search for the *sh'khina* here may also be an individual personal quest to seek out and free the *sh'khina* within each human being. In this he echoes the words of Reb Naḥman's scribe, to the effect that "everyone in [the people] Israel is preoccupied with the search for the lost princess"—viz., the *sh'khina*. Schwarz also invokes comparisons that have been drawn between this kabbalistic concept and the Jungian idea of the *anima*—the theory of a symbolic feminine in every male and the symbolic male aspect, or *animus*, in each female. According to that psychological theory, those two sides must be integrated and reconciled to produce wholeness. From the Jungian perspective, it is the *anima* that must be sought out and with which each man must come to terms, just as all Israel must seek out the *sh'khina*.

In *The Merchant and the Pauper*, forces of greed and pure evil separate two who are destined—*bashert*—to be

together as one. In Reb Naḥman's mystical view of the world and of existence, so long as evil and doubt persist, they preclude the messianic era. But if this story is, at least on one plane, a metaphor for messianic redemption, then Naḥman has not relinquished his own faith in an eventual resolution and permanent harmony in the cosmos and among humanity. That ultimate resolution is implied by the tale's optimistic conclusion—almost an echo of the typical fairy-tale cliché "and they lived happily ever after."

Still, none of this relatively transparent interpretation necessarily negates the basic Bratslav tenet that the tales contain secrets unknowable by any outsider—including even the most perceptive modern literary critics and contemporary theologians. Even if the messianic metaphor is essentially the basis for this tale—if in fact it is no ruse intended to deceive—there may yet remain undecipherable secrets embedded in even deeper planes and perhaps encoded in minute details that escape us. More precisely how and when the exile can and will be concluded, for example, and, in reality, who will be the one ultimately to usher in that redemption, may be only some of those secrets.

— Neil W. Levin

THE MERCHANT AND THE PAUPER

An Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by Margaret B. Stearns

Narrator	Isaiah Sheffer
Pauper	Christopher Meerdink, tenor
Merchant	Mark Kent, bass
Pauper's Wife	Pei Ye Wang, mezzo-soprano
Merchant's Son	Gary Moss, baritone
Beauty	Jennifer Larson, soprano
Rabbi	Tyler Oliphant, baritone
Nobles	
Villagers	
Courtiers	
Animals	

Act II

Scene 1

NARRATOR

When the terrible storm abated, the young man found himself shipwrecked in a deserted place, miles from the sea, where there was water in abundance, and trees with apples and pears, and deer and rabbits and fish. There were wild animals in the forest, animals which can be beautiful but also fierce and dangerous, for they are the minions of evil….

CHORUS (ANIMALS)

Shining earth transcendent,
miraculous grass and water;
rich earth, and wide sky.
Let us rejoice, let us rejoice in abundance
and sing of the bounty of heaven!

NARRATOR

… but the flesh of the animals nourished the young man, and he used their bones and skin to make musical instruments—and thus the messiah uses the forces of destruction to create harmony …

SON
Deliver me in this wild place
with arrows that will pierce the hearts
of the creatures of the night.
The lyre and the bow,
the lion and the antelope,
preserve me and keep me.
Bring harmony from danger,
music of longing and pain,
music for Beauty, who is lost to me,
music from my heart—
for here in exile I remain, far from my love forever.

NARRATOR
And since he could not return to her, he decided to live in this wilderness for the rest of his life, and thus the messiah waits for his beloved in the Garden of Eden.

SON, ANIMALS
A bird sings deep in the silent forest,
a dove with wings of silver and feathers of gold.
Oh, messenger! Go to my love and sing—
and sing again when you return with joy!
Oh, shining earth transcendent,
oh, miraculous grass and water;
rich earth, and wide sky.
Here beneath the shining stars,
I remain alone,
to sing of my love forever.

CHORUS (ANIMALS)
Shining earth transcendent,
miraculous grass and water;
rich earth, and wide sky.
Let us rejoice, let us rejoice in abundance
and sing of the bounty of heaven!

NARRATOR
And every evening he waited impatiently for the evening star, and every night when it appeared, he gazed at it longingly, knowing that Beauty, too, was gazing at it far away—and thus they kept their promise to each other.

SON, BEAUTY
Now in the sunset glowing,
as the land breeze blows softly and the stars appear,
and the great star, brilliant in the west,
rises in love from the sea,
I know I see beyond the sky into your heart,
oh, beloved of the sun and moon.
And the universe will hear our singing,
and the heavens tremble with our song,
For we are the blazing flame at the heart of the world,
We are the splendor of the rose....

And then the glory faded from the sky.
The moon rose, and the quiet waves
lay white along the shore,
and it was softly dark.

Scene 4

WIFE *[alone]*
Still, there was terrible sorrow,
for they were childless once again,
just as they were before.…
All of the rivers run to the sea,
then they return again.
And only the will of God prevails,
and never the will of men.
Despair and joy are only dreaming,
for only God sees the purpose of men.
Truth, hope, beauty, and love,
nothing is left in the end.

The sun in the ocean, and waves on the shore;
All of it fades with the day,
and all of our wisdom, all that we know;
All of it passes away,
all of it passes away….

Scene 5

NARRATOR
After wandering a long time, Beauty reached the place where the Merchant's son was living. She had reached the depths of her degradation; she was unkempt and dirty and dressed in sailor's clothes, so he did not recognize her—for all he saw before him was a young man, a wanderer like himself … and so much time had passed, and the Merchant's son was so transformed that she for her part saw only a young man, a wanderer like herself.

SON
Welcome, stranger
in the wilderness.
Let me give you shelter
and share the riches of the earth,
for I am glad of the company.

BEAUTY [*as a sailor*]
Lost in storm and fear, terror and exile,
I am glad of shelter here.
I will rejoice in the riches of the earth,
and we will live as wanderers together.
But can you live in a wild place like this alone—
even wilderness as beautiful as this?
Such loneliness is only born of fear.

SON
Doomed by pride and greed and wickedness,
death awaits if I return.
I only dream of the emperor's child
and must remain in loneliness forever.

NARRATOR
And then she knew he was her bridegroom, and said to him:

BEAUTY
Behold, it is I.
I will know my beloved by the words of his heart.

BEAUTY, THE SON
A miracle in the wilderness
has saved us from despair.
Chaos and darkness are gone,
and the wind reveals the sky.
For the universe has heard our singing
and the heavens hear our song,
And the glory shall never fade from the sky.
For you are my beloved,
before the throne of God.
Behold the splendor of the rose,
the world is filled with light.

BEAUTY, THE SON
Rise up, my fair one, and come away,
for the time of singing of birds is come.
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field.
Rise up, my fair one, and come away.

NARRATOR
When the two young people at last found their way home after wandering for a long time, they found that things had changed very much for the better. For Beauty's father was deposed, and his wife ruled in his place. So Beauty went before her mother, told her the whole story, and at the end said, "Behold, we have come home." And so, my children, goodness shall prevail, and we shall all come home. For home is anywhere we gather together; home is the truth we carry with us, and it will be with you always.

BEAUTY, WIFE, SON, PAUPER, MERCHANT
So they were reconciled; the Pauper was forgiven.
So they were married, and the joy was complete.
And the lovers ruled upon the earth
and reigned supreme upon the earth.
And the supreme joy was complete upon the earth.
So they were reconciled, the Pauper was forgiven,
and the triumph was complete.
There was hope and celebration, love and joy.

CHORUS
They shall rule the kingdom.
Majesty and power,

grief shall turn to joy.
Wisdom and truth shall rule on the earth,
for light will pierce the darkness
and the flame of our love shall rise
until we all rejoice together.

RABBI
[sings a Yiddish song to an authentic Bratslaver tune]

kum arayn un varem zikh on
kum arayn un ru zikh op
vayl der flam vet
eybik laykhtn un brenen
kum arayn un varem zikh on
kum arayn un ru zikh op
kum arayn un varem zikh on
in dem heylikn fayer

(Come in and warm yourself up;
Come in and rest yourself,
for the flame will
shine and burn forever.
Come in and warm yourself up …
in the holy fire.)

[As the palace fades away, there is the impression that the gloom of the beginning is still outside and the story has disappeared like a puff of golden smoke.]

About the Performers

ROBERT VERNON, a native of Toronto, studied at The Juilliard School in New York and received the prestigious Martha Dwight Douglas Foundation scholarship; his teachers included Ara Zerounian, Jack Boesen, Sally Thomas, and Ivan Galamian. Since 1976 he has been principal violist of the Cleveland Orchestra, with whom he has appeared as soloist in more than 100 concerts at home in Severance Hall as well as in New York's Carnegie and Avery Fisher halls, Boston's Symphony Hall, Washington, D.C.'s Kennedy Center, and on tour throughout North America and Europe. With the orchestra he has recorded Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* (conducted by Lorin Maazel); Mozart's *Sinfonia concertante* (with concertmaster Daniel Majeske, conducted by Christoph von Dohnanyi); and Strauss's *Don Quixote* (with cellist Lynn Harrell, conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy). A noted recitalist and chamber music player, he is a founding member of the Cleveland Piano Quartet and a member of the Cleveland Orchestra String Quartet, and he has appeared at the Aspen, Blossom, La Jolla, Marlboro, Ravinia, Roundtop, Sarasota, Tanglewood, and Yellow Barn festivals. Head of the viola department at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Vernon is also among the foremost teachers of the instrument. His students hold positions as chamber musicians and teachers and as players with virtually every major orchestra in North America. At the invitation of Sir Georg Solti, he participated in the Solti Orchestral Project at Carnegie Hall, a gathering of talented young musicians and principal players from

leading American orchestras. He was also invited by Solti to head the viola section of the World Orchestra for Peace, in Geneva, an ensemble that brought together professional musicians from around the world to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

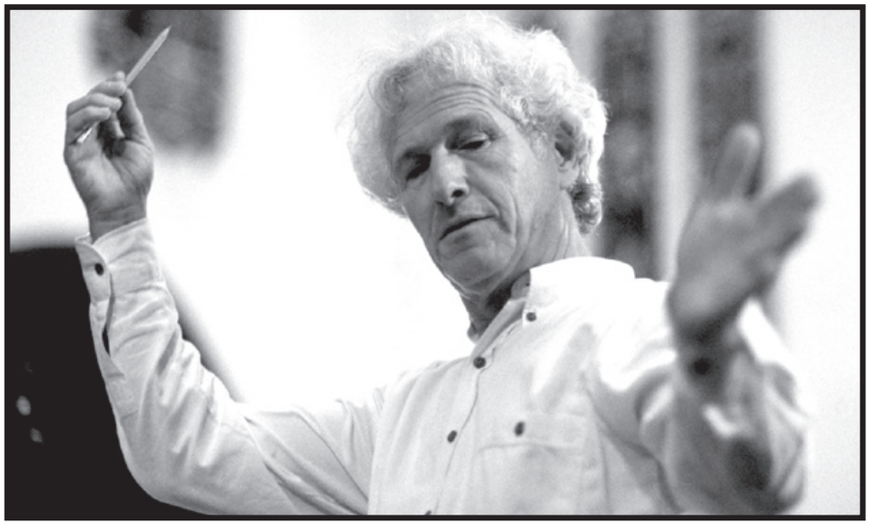
The **RUNDFUNK-SINFONIEORCHESTER BERLIN** (Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra) was founded in 1923 as the first radio orchestra in Germany. Its repertoire spans more than three centuries, but since its founding, the ensemble has been especially dedicated to contemporary works. Many of the greatest composers 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. Since 1956 the orchestra 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 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; a highly successful performance of Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony in New York's Avery Fisher Hall; a featured role at the opening ceremony of the Atlanta Olympics in July 1996; as well as a large number of acclaimed recordings. In 2001, Levi, now the Atlanta Orchestra's music director emeritus, became artistic advisor 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 orchestras in London, Paris, Berlin, Prague, Budapest, Rome, Frankfurt, Munich, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Japan. In North America he has also conducted the orchestras of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Chicago, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Washington, Minnesota, Toronto, and Montreal. 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.

For more than seventy-five years the **BBC SINGERS**, Great Britain's only full-time professional chamber choir, 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. World renowned for technical virtuosity, versatility, and tonal beauty, the BBC Singers 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.

AVNER ITAI has been Israel's foremost choral conductor for more than four decades, a status paralleled in his long tenure at the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel Aviv University, where he heads the department of choral activities. Born on the kibbutz Kfar Giladi in Upper Galilee, he was deeply influenced as a child by its rich musical activity, which retained a continuity with the choral traditions brought by earlier settlers

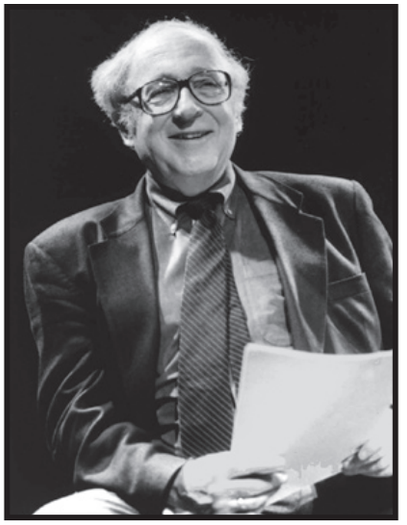


from Europe and further developed on the ideological and cultural soil of Jewish Palestine and Israel. Itai began his professional life playing the oboe, but the American conductor Robert Shaw inspired him to focus his activities on choral music and conducting. Returning to his kibbutz at twenty-five, Itai became conductor of the United Kibbutz Choir (Kibbutz Ham'yuchad). He founded the Camaran Singers (the first semiprofessional Israeli choir) and was conductor of the Ihud Choir for more than thirty years, touring to great acclaim throughout the world. His Collegium Tel-Aviv, established more recently, made its debut at the Musica Sacra festival in Nazareth. He is particularly dedicated to his "Songs for Peace" concerts, which tour Europe and feature sacred works of three religions as well as an Arabic choir from Israel.

The **UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC**, one of the leading performing arts educational institutions in the United States, was founded in 1880. The university's orchestra, symphony band, and chamber choir have toured the United States and abroad. The University Symphony Orchestra, conducted by its director, Kenneth Kiesler, has been a guest at the Salzburg Festival in Austria and the Lyon Festival in France. The **UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN OPERA THEATER** has produced a vast array of operas.

The featured soloists for *The Merchant and the Pauper* were recorded when they were students at the School of Performing Arts: **JENNIFER LARSON**, soprano; **PEI YI WANG**, mezzo-soprano; **CHRISTOPHER MEERDINK**, tenor; **GARY MOSS**, baritone; **TYLER OLIPHANT**, baritone; and **MARK KENT**, bass.

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; he won the silver medal at the 1986 Stokowski Competition at Avery Fisher Hall; he received the Helen M. Thompson Award (in 1988); and in 1990 he 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. 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.



ISAIAH SHEFFER is a founder and artistic director of Symphony Space in New York City, where his duties include directing the hit literary series *Selected Shorts: A Celebration of the Short Story*, now in its twentieth season, and hosting the public radio series of the same name, heard on NPR stations across the country. Each year he stages a season of *Selected Shorts* at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. He is the creator of Symphony Space's *Wall to Wall* marathon concerts, most recently *Wall to Wall Richard Rodgers*, and the March 20, 2004, *Wall to Wall George Balanchine*. Each June 16th he also directs Symphony Space's annual James Joyce extravaganza, *Bloomsday on Broadway*. His writing efforts for screen and stage include *Clair de Lune by the Pale Moonlight*, a tapestry of his new translations of French romantic poets and songs of Gabriel Fauré; a PBS documentary on music in the 12th century; the book and lyrics to the off-Broadway musical *The Rise of David Levinsky* (which had its first production at the 92nd Street Y); the screenplay of the short feature film *Pair of Jokers*, starring Jerry Stiller; and the book and lyrics of the off-Broadway musical *Yiddle with a Fiddle*, adapted from the classic 1936 film. His newest play is *Dreamers and Demons*, about Isaac Bashevis Singer's life and work. Two other plays by Isaiah Sheffer were premiered at the 92nd Street Y—*A Broadcast Baby*, and his new English version of Sholom Aleichem's *Hard to Be a Jew*. He is currently writing the libretto for *A More Perfect Union*, an opera-ballet about the 1787 Constitutional Convention that gave us the Electoral College and so many other wonders.

Credits

PAUL SCHOENFIELD (b. 1947)

Concerto for Viola and Orchestra
Publisher: Migdal Publishing
Recording: Jesus Christus Kirche, Berlin, Germany, November 2000
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

Four Motets
Publisher: Migdal Publishing
Recording: St. Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, London, UK, July 2000
Recording Producer: Simon Weir
Recording Engineer: Campbell Hughes, Morgan Roberts, Betram Kornacher
Recording Project Manager: Paul Schwendener
Coproduction with the BBC

The Merchant and the Pauper (excerpts from Act II)
Publisher: Migdal Publishing
Recording: Hill Auditorium/University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, January 2001
Recording Producer: David Frost
Recording Engineer: Tom Lazarus
Assistant Recording Engineer: Michelle Nunes
Editing Engineer: Marc Stedman
Recording Project Manager: Richard Lee

University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra
Violin: Grace Oh, *concertmaster;** Juliana Athayde, *principal;** Benjamin Peled;* Jeremy Black;* Joanna Bello; Madeline Cavalieri; Timothy Christie; Michelle Davis; Joel Fuller; Spring Gao; Mary Golden; Lara Hall; Sherry Hong; Adrienne Jacobs; Catherine Jang; Elizabeth Lamb; David Lamse; Lydia Lui; Kate Massagli; Bethany Mennemeyer; Emilia Mettenbrink; Stephen Miahky; Martha Walvoord; Cece Weinkauff; Sarah Whitney. **Viola:** I-Chun Chiang, *principal;** Joseph Kam;* Emily Watkins;* Youming Chen; Kyung-Hwan Lee; Devorah Matthews; Ty McDonald; Tam Tran. **Cello:** Avi Friedlander, *principal;** Barney Culver;* Andrew Barnhart; Ann Brandon; Eileen Brownell; Jill Collier; Andrew Deogracias; Leah Hagel; Tara Hanish; Alisa Horn; Heather Truesdall; Elizabeth Weamer. **Double Bass:** Andrew Anderson, *principal;** Li Xu;* Daniel Dault; Molly Doernberg; Rital Laurance; Maren Reck; Kevin Sylves. **Flute:** Dawn Kulak; Koren McCaffrey; Adrienne Miller; Lori Newman; Jee Hye Shim. **Oboe:** Aaron Hill; Charles Huang; Adrienne Malley. **Clarinet:** Andre Dyachenko; Reis McCullough; A. J. Stancil; Serguei Vassiliev; Michael Wayne. Bassoon: Jason Artz; P.J. Woolston; Nathaniel Zeisler. **Horn:** Eric Kuper; Rachel Parker; Joel Wealer; Yuri Zuvanov. **Trumpet:** Dara Chapman; Saphra Mikal; Sarah Schneider; Jesse Tubb. **Trombone:** Drew Leslie; Alexandra Zacharella. **Bass Trombone:** Garrett Mendez. **Tuba:** Kevin Wass. **Timpani:** Ako Toma-Bennett. **Percussion:** David Endahl; Larry Ferguson; Jason Markzon. **Harp:** Alison Perkins; Katryna Tan. **Keyboard:** Joseph Cullen; Matthew Mazzoni

**Concertmasters and principal string players rotate positions during the season. Wind players rotated principal positions during these recording sessions.*

University of Michigan School of Music Opera Chorus
Soprano: Donna Bareket; Marla Beider; Melissa Clairmont; Rachael Crim; Kathryn Drake; Katherine Fitzgibbon; Kara Haan; Katherine Kilburn; Caitlin Lynch; Alissa Mercurio; Elizabeth Mihalo; Juliet Petrus; Annie Radcliffe; Patricia Rhiew; Deborah Selig; Virginia Thorne. **Alto:** Julie Berra; Jean Broekhuizen; Leah Dexter; Carla Dirlikov; Jennifer Johnson; Dorothea Mead; Suzanne Pekow; Lindsay Pettitt; Kindra Scharich; Lindsay Shipps; Sara Taetle; Amanda Thomas; Kimberly Walton; Betsey Williams. **Tenor:** Ryan Banar; Brandon Brack; Joshua Breitzer; Hugh Floyd; David Fryling; Michael Gallant; Brent Hegwood; Jeremy Nabors; Eugene Rogers Jr.; Eric Stinson. **Bass:** Jesse Blumberg; Ian Eisendrath; Scott Hanoian; Dana Haynes; Aaron Kandel; Mark Kent; Phillip Kitchell; Adrian Leskiw; David Neely; Jon Ophoff; Marco Santos; Andrew Steck; Aaron Theno; James Turner II; Stephen Warner

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