

Cover Art

HIGH HOLY DAYS

A MESSAGE FROM THE MILKEN ARCHIVE FOUNDER



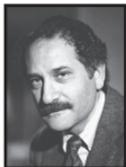
Dispersed over the centuries to all corners of the earth, the Jewish people absorbed elements of its host cultures while, miraculously, maintaining its own. As many Jews reconnected in America, escaping persecution and seeking to take part in a visionary democratic society, their experiences found voice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

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CD 1: THE FIRST S'LIHOT



S'LIHOT FOR THE FIRST DAY

*The Entire Midnight Service According to
Orthodox and Traditional Ritual*

Cantor Benzion Miller

Schola Hebraica

Neil Levin, conductor

1	ASHREI ashrei yoshvei veitekha einei khol va'anahnu	Leib Glantz as sung by Moshe Koussevitzky; arr. R. Goldstein Joshua Lind	11:02
2	HATZI KADDISH	based on settings by Todros Greenberg and Abraham Kalechnik	3:45
3	....ata ritzatzta	cantorial improvisation	3:03
4	L'KHU N'RANN'NA...HANN'SHAMA LAKH	Isaac Kaminsky	10:30
5	....kama yisartanu....ki ata el raḥum.... ta'avor al pesha....adonai, adonai.... s'lah lanu....s'lah na	cantor's recitation	3:20
6	HATTEI	Israel Schorr; arr. I. Heilmann	7:39
7	....shimkha elohim....el melekh yoshev.... adonai, adonai....s'lah na	cantor's recitation	1:54
8	EL MELEKH YOSHEV	Zavel Zilberts	3:59
9-16	B'MOTZA'EI M'NUḤA		
9	b'motza'ei m'nuḥa	arr. A. Miller	2:46
10	et y'min	Isaac Kaminsky; refrain (lishmo'a): Joshua Lind	4:01
11	d'rosh na	cantorial improvisation; refrain: Joshua Lind	1:47
12	zoḥalim <i>duet: Cantor Simon Spiro and Julian Jacobs</i>	Joshua Lind	2:28
13	yotzer ata	cantorial improvisation	0:46
14	marom im atzmu	Herman Zalis (?)	1:55
15	p'ne na <i>Bass solo: Cantor Ira Bigeleisen</i>	Ira Bigeleisen	2:30
16	r'tze atiratam	Meyer Machtenberg	4:13



CD 2: THE FIRST S'LIHOT



(continued)

1	....z'khor raḥamekha...himmatze lanu....	cantor's recitation and improvisation	1:47
2	T'VI'ENU [havi'enu]	Joshua Lind	2:50
3	SH'MA KOLENU	Joseph Rumshinsky and cantorial improvisation	6:23
4	al ta'azvenu....tavo l'fanekha	cantor's recitation	0:38
5	ASHAMNU	traditional, as sung by Moshe Koussevitzky; arr. N. Levin	2:36
6	... hirshanu ... anenu....mi she'ana l'avraham	cantor's recitation	1:09
7	RAHAMANA	Joshua Lind	1:59
8	maḥei umasei....makhnisei raḥamim....	cantor's recitation	1:03
9	MARAN D'VISHMAYYA	Dan [David] Frohman	1:32
10	SHOMER YISRA'EL	Yossele [Joseph] Rosenblatt; arr. R. Goldstein	4:43
11	AVINU MALKENU	traditional	1:13
12	KADDISH SHALEM: "Hassidic Kaddish"	Jacob Gottlieb	2:56



ADDITIONAL CELEBRATED CANTORIAL PIECES



Cantor Benzion Miller
London Synagogue Singers
Neil Levin, conductor

13	MAR'EH KOHEN	Pierre Pinchik [Pinchas Segal]	3:15
14	YIR'U EINEINU	Sholom Secunda	6:39
15	R'TZE	Meyer Machtenberg	5:17
16	UNTANNE TOKEF	as sung by Moshe Koussevitzky	6:48

THE FIRST *S'LIHOT* *Slihot* for the First Day

In the Ashkenazi rite, the formal First *S'lihot* service takes place at midnight on the Saturday prior to Rosh Hashana and is now most often referred to simply as *s'lihot*. But this service actually marks the first of a series—known as the Days of *S'lihot*—of daily predawn recitations of the penitential liturgy, in spiritual preparation for the High Holy Days.

The First *S'lihot* service functions as an inauguration of the penitential season—a prelude to the coming Days of Awe that focus on repentance and renewal, culminating in the Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) observances. This service is now considered to be part of the sequence of High Holy Day services, even though it is not itself a holy day.

Apart from the services on Yom Kippur itself, only this inaugural recitation of the *s'lihot* liturgy has acquired the aesthetic format and visage of elaborate cantorial-choral expression. The service often includes numerous formally composed musical settings, and in some respects it is a virtual “religious concert” in the most profound spiritual sense of that often misused term. Ideally, it offers a synthesis of musical and poetic art in synergy with the dynamics of a genuine prayer experience that encourages both personal and collective self-examination. Since the 19th century, this service also often functions in practice as a musical foretaste of the lengthier worship services to come on Yom Kippur, much of whose liturgy as well as musical repertoire this First *S'lihot* service previews.

The Liturgy

A *s'liha* (lit., forgiveness) denotes a liturgical poem whose central theme concerns supplication for forgiveness from sin and transgression, and invokes the doctrine of Divine mercy and pardon. The plural form, *s'lihot*, also refers to an order of service consisting primarily of these poetic texts, which have been recited historically on fast days and in connection with special emergencies and appeals for Divine intercession. Today, however, the most widespread

association of the *s'lihot* liturgy is with the High Holy Days, and its most common recital is in that connection.

The oldest elements of the formal *s'lihot* service predate the actual *s'lihot* poetry. They include biblical quotations, Psalm recitations, and the *kaddish*—together with a few prayer texts borrowed from other early sources or rituals. But the majority of the texts belong to the special category of *s'liha* poems. The earliest of these poems nonetheless predate the later era of liturgical Hebrew poetry known as the *paytanic* era, and they are at least as old as the Mishnaic period. A few are actually mentioned in the Mishna (Ta'anit 2:1–4), some in the context of special prayers for rain; for example, the *s'liha* that begins *mi she'ana*, with the refrain *hu ya'anenu* (May He who answered ... answer us). In general, most of the liturgical section toward the end of the service is considered part of that early, pre-*paytanic*, *s'lihot* liturgy. *Shomer yisra'el*, too, is thought to be of ancient origin.

Most of the poetic *s'lihot* in the aggregate penitential liturgy, however, are post-Mishnaic period creations, written between the 7th and 16th centuries. They were composed by *g'onim* (7th–10th century talmudic sages in Babylonia); by *rishonim* (early rabbinic codifiers of Jewish law); and by *paytanim* (authors of religious or liturgical poetry—*piyyutim*), including some of the most widely recognized medieval Hebrew poets such as Yehuda Halevi, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, and Moses Ibn Ezra, who was also known as *hasalab* (the supplicant) for his many *s'lihot*. But many of the *s'lihot*, even from that later period, are anonymous; others reveal in acrostics only the first names of their authors.

The first arrangement of the *s'lihot* into a specific order dates to the 9th century and is found in the ordered ritual of Rav Amram Gaon. He referred to this selection as *s'liha v'rahamin* (pleas for forgiveness and mercy), just as the talmudic phrase for the recitation of biblical verses as a course of prayer is called *p'sukei d'rahamei* (verses of mercy: Tosafot Avoda Zara 8a; M'gilla 32a). *S'lihot* also have been called by their authors *bakkasha*, *t'hinna*, and *atira*—all of which denote supplications or petitions.

The central theological foundation of all *s'lihot* resides in the biblical passages known as the Thirteen Attributes of God's Mercy (Exodus 34:6–7). In rabbinic literature, the greatest collective crime of the people of Israel concerns their idolatrous worship of the golden calf, described in Exodus 32–34. All other transgressions and sins can be perceived as emanating from that denial of God and all it can imply in terms of an absence of monotheistic moral and ethical grounding. In that account in the Torah, Moses stands with God not to destroy the people and create a new people in its stead—as was God's initial reaction—but rather to avert the punitive decree and extend pardon. God is then swayed by Moses' supplication. Passing by Moses atop Mount Sinai, where Moses has been instructed to present himself alone, God proclaims the words that became known as the Thirteen Attributes, or *sefer s'liha* (order, or rite of forgiveness). This text—*adonai, adonai, el rahum v'hannun*—centers around the Divine ethical essence of mercy, compassion, graciousness, forbearance, forgiveness, and pardon. These words, which are pronounced four times during the *s'lihot* service, constitute both the core theme and the prevailing refrain of the penitential liturgy.

The Talmud further expanded on these verses—and on the concept of Divine pardon—in a poetic image of God at that moment wrapping Himself in a *tallit* (prayer shawl) as a *hazzan*, to reveal to Moses the order of prayer. In this creative scenario, God proclaims to Moses, “Whenever the people of Israel sin, let them pray according to this order of prayer [the verses containing the Thirteen Attributes] and I will forgive them” (Rosh Hashana 17b). The genesis of the *s'lihot* liturgy has thus been assigned by scholars and commentators not only to those original scriptural verses, but also to their talmudic explication and interpretation.

The initial pronouncement of the Thirteen Attributes in the *s'lihot* service is preceded by the words *el erekh apayim ata* (God, You are slow to anger, You are called Lord of Mercy). Thereafter it is introduced by the *s'liha* text *el melekh yoshev* (God, King, You occupy a throne built on mercy). The latter is thought to be one of the oldest of the poetic *s'lihot*, and it contains a built-in reference to the Thirteen

Attributes: “God, You taught us to recite ‘the Thirteen.’ ” In Ashkenazi synagogues from the late 19th century on, *el melekh yoshev* became one of the major opportunities for cantorial-choral expression, both in the First *S'lihot* service and on Yom Kippur. Numerous composers have created settings of this text in a wide variety of styles.

Each pronouncement of the Thirteen Attributes is followed by a direct plea for forgiveness: *v'salahta la'avonenu ...* (Pardon our iniquity and our sin ...). This juxtaposition is rooted in the Torah, where Moses, following the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes, pleads that God forgive Israel (Exodus 34:8–9).

The earliest post-Mishnaic *s'lihot* were composed with relatively simple poetic structures. Some of those forms have been compared with the Psalms, in that both literary forms have neither perceptible meter nor rhyme, while in both cases the rhythm is formed by phrases or lines of roughly equal length. That comparison led some commentators to consider the early *s'lihot* as, in effect, “extensions of the Psalms.” More complex forms were developed by the late medieval period. Various alphabetical devices were introduced, such as forward and reverse acrostics that used the initial letters of a biblical word or verse, or, in many cases, the letters of the poet's name. The *s'lihot* literature was also further enriched by the development of poetry with two-line stanzas (*sh'niyya*) and, later, three lines per stanza (*sh'lishiyya*). Eventually, poems with four-line stanzas (*shalmonit*—complete, or entire) were added, and rhyme schemes were introduced as well. A still later stage saw inclusion of the *pizmon*—a complete strophic hymn with a refrain, sung or recited responsively between the precentor or cantor and the congregation, or sometimes strophe by strophe by the congregation, each strophe followed by the cantor's repetition.

B'motza'ei m'nuha, which begins with a reference to the end of the Sabbath and thus underscores the Saturday night parameter, is such a *pizmon*. It contains the refrain *lishmo'a el harina* (listen to our voice) as the fourth and concluding line of each stanza. (In some German traditions, up through the 1930s, *b'motza'ei m'nuha* was recited at the Yom

Kippur *n'ila* [concluding] service, which is consistent with the concept of Yom Kippur as the “Sabbath of Sabbaths.”)

As a body, the *s'lihot* literature focuses on such themes as repentance, return to God and His teachings, Israel's collective iniquities, God's mercy and compassion, ramifications of the Day of Judgment, acknowledgment of transgression, Divine forgiveness and pardon, and aspects of the complex relationship between God and the Jewish people. There are many allusions in the texts to biblical incidents and expressions, and in some cases a single biblical phrase or verse is the foundation for an entire *s'liha*.

These supplications can provide two intertwined levels of prayer—personal and communal. On the personal level, they give expression to the individual's desire for atonement, his acknowledgment of responsibility for actions and their consequences, his petition for forgiveness and reconciliation, and his resolve to mend his ways—even though these pleas are recited collectively and, as with nearly all Jewish prayer, are framed in the first person plural. But on the communal plane, the *s'lihot* also represent entreaties on behalf of the entire Jewish people, and they give voice to its yearnings for national spiritual redemption.

The *s'lihot* literature expanded in response to persecutions and communal suffering. Intense persecution and massacres during the 12th century, for example, especially in connection with the Crusades, generated many new poems from Rhineland areas. Poets such as Ephraim ben Yitzhak of Regensburg and Eliezer ben Natan described the carnage attached to the Crusades in 1096 and 1146 in their verse. But *s'lihot* emanating from the Iberian Peninsula during that period were more often born of positive artistic inspirations and of the rich poetic activity that flourished in that cultural environment.

Even the institution of pre-Yom Kippur *s'lihot* recitations began in association with fasting. Originally, these recitations were done only during the Ten Days of Repentance—from Rosh Hashana to Yom Kippur, when, in the past, some pious Jews fasted. Subsequently, those recitations were extended

to begin *before* Rosh Hashana—partially in connection with the old custom of fasting during that period as well. Eventually the rabbis stipulated that there should be at least four days of *s'lihot* prior to Rosh Hashana, which became the general practice among Ashkenazi Jewry and has remained so—even long after such fasting became a rarity if not a relic. Thus, unless Rosh Hashana falls on a Monday or Tuesday, the First *S'lihot* occurs at or just after midnight on the preceding Saturday. But when Rosh Hashana does fall on a Monday or Tuesday, in order to comply with the four-day minimum, the inaugural first service is held on the *previous* Saturday midnight.

On all the Days of *S'lihot* except the first one, the recitations commence before dawn as vigils (*ashmurot*), nowadays usually just prior to the regular daily morning services. Several practical as well as mystical-aesthetic rationales have been offered for this practice: that the stillness of night facilitates intensified introspection and self-examination; that ordinary worldly cares and concerns may appear least urgent during those hours; that nighttime may provide an atmosphere, especially metaphysically, as a time of “special acceptance” before God, the time when He recalls with particular compassion the destruction of the Temple and the “night” of Israel's exile.

It became customary in many communities, however, to hold the First *S'lihot* service at or shortly after midnight following the conclusion of the Sabbath, rather than waiting until the immediate predawn hours. This is now the practice in nearly all Ashkenazi congregations, apart from certain Hassidic groups and some communities in Israel. The origin of this custom is sometimes attributed to Psalm 119:62: “At midnight I rise to praise You.”

The Traditional Aesthetic Characteristics

This recording provides a sample aural illustration of a typical formal First *S'lihot* service as it might be conducted and heard in its entirety in American orthodox synagogues whose orientation derives from eastern European tradition. But this rendition can also apply in most respects to those nonorthodox but tradition-oriented congregations—including Conservative movement affiliates—that follow

the same long-established *s'lihot* liturgy and the same basic unabridged liturgical order of service without interruption. In either case, the nature of the repertoire and the highly stylized manner of its delivery reflect the practice of the *s'lihot* service in synagogues that are not only partial to an aesthetic heavily informed by eastern European roots and immigrant-era sensibilities, but whose resources also permit an accomplished cantor and a well-rehearsed professional or amateur choir. Throughout the United States, this situation was, admittedly, far more prevalent in the past, but it is still far from extinct. There are recent indications of renaissance—especially with regard to High Holy Day-related services such as this one.

Where this rendition bespeaks a more specifically orthodox perspective, however, is in the exclusively male voice choir—and the idiomatic timbre of that particular vocal blend. Women's voices have always been excluded from synagogue choirs in orthodox worship, where Jewish legal prohibitions are held to apply. The choral dimension of *hazzanut* is as old as cantorial art itself, and is historically as well as artistically inseparable from it. But apart from a few Baroque-era experiments that failed to gain sustained acceptance, four-part choral practice with western-influenced harmonization began to take hold in synagogues only in the late 18th century. Throughout eastern Europe by the second half of the 19th century, the established orthodox synagogue format, which was then imported to America as well, was always SATB—soprano/alto/tenor/bass—but with unmatured boys' voices on the soprano and alto parts. (Mixed choirs—i.e., with women's voices—were gradually accepted only in nonorthodox synagogues in Central and western Europe, England, and America, and then sometimes in sister nonorthodox émigré communities on other continents.) That combination of boys' and men's voices produced the quintessential choral sound associated with traditional eastern European *hazzanut* for more than a century. The larger, sophisticated and important synagogues in major cities throughout the Czarist and Hapsburg empires often had apprentice systems that amounted to de facto boy choir schools. And itinerant cantors, who often vied for the services of

especially talented children, traveled with their choirs of boys and men for their guest pulpit appearances. On individual occasions, when the required boys' voices might have been unavailable or insufficient for one reason or another, choirmasters resorted to adjusting the music to accommodate TTBB (first and second tenor, baritone, and bass) performance. But the desiderata in Europe always remained the boys-and-men combination.

The Central European *männerchor* tradition, which enjoyed fashion in non-Jewish secular contexts at various periods during the 19th century, never applied to the synagogue—nor, for that matter, to Jewish secular choral activity. Apart from occasional pieces written in TTBB format simply for aesthetic variety, no significant original TTBB synagogue repertoire was ever developed in Europe.

The same situation prevailed in the American transplantation for several decades in orthodoxy; and nearly all émigré synagogue and cantorial composers wrote according to that SATB format. But various sociological and socioeconomic factors contributed to a decline in Jewish boy choirs, and as the competing lure of secular life and its expanded variety of available competing childhood activities made it increasingly difficult to attract, train, and sustain boy choirs in American synagogues, the TTBB format gradually replaced the SATB one in most orthodox situations. Even before mid-century, the tendency was beginning to shift toward all-adult male choirs in American orthodoxy. The existing repertoire then had to be rearranged and revoiced, either by the original composers or by subsequent choirmasters or arrangers—often in rehearsal, without actually notating TTBB versions. The result of this socially driven adjustment was the birth of a new liturgical aesthetic—a *männerchor* sonority, with all its adjunct conventions and effects, that now came to be associated with orthodox or quasi-orthodox cantorial performance. (Similar scenarios eventually unfolded in orthodox synagogues in other countries to which eastern European Jews emigrated, such as England, South Africa, and Australia.) Whenever possible, however, cantors and choirmasters have still tried to train at least

one or two boy altos or sopranos for characteristic special solo passages and duets, providing some echo of authentic flavor. In addition, on this recording, boys' voices and adult countertenors are also used sparingly on selected choral passages to double the full TTBB voicing, which suggests a patina reminiscent of the earlier timbre.



Cantor Benzion Miller rehearses with choristers for the recording session.

Notwithstanding the intended orthodox orientation of this recording, all of the repertoire presented here could just as easily be performed in its original SATB voicing with mixed choir—as much of it frequently is done—in Conservative synagogues that espouse traditional *hazzanut*. The liturgical content and order of service in the Conservative ritual—and in the *s'lihot* prayerbooks geared to Conservative congregations—does not differ appreciably from orthodox services.

Even though instrumental accompaniment for this First *S'lihot* service would be permissible legally even by most orthodox standards, since the service occurs on a

weekday (and is not during a mourning period), the typical presentation is nonetheless a cappella. Nearly all composed selections for First *S'lihot* services are taken from the repertoire of Yom Kippur, when, as on all holy days, such instrumental use is prohibited by traditional interpretations of *halakha* (Jewish law). These particular settings, and alternative ones in similar styles, were therefore composed according to that prerequisite. The a cappella timbre—including idiomatic choral imitations of instrumental figures and effects—is a fundamental part of the aesthetic identity of this music.



A traditional male-voice synagogue choir.

A traditional service embodies a continuous flow of the liturgy, not punctuated by such contemporary innovations as Hebrew or English responsive congregational readings, spoken prayers, or verbal commentary. This aggregate format consists of three basic conventional forms:

- a) Composed settings for cantor and choir, or for solo cantor. In the latter case, accompanying responses and chordal underpinning are typically improvised by the choir. But even in the formal choral pieces, cantorial tradition often includes improvisatory interpolations and ornamented extensions at certain points.
- b) Cantorial improvisations. These ornate and sometimes virtuoso expressions can be applied to texts that are not sung as choral compositions. Here, too, improvised choral support may be added.

c) Cantorial recitations. These are simple logogenic and rapid chantlike intonations of liturgical passages, or even entire sections, with neither choral participation nor word repetition, and a minimum of ornamentation. This is more in the style and manner of a skilled *baal t'filla* (lay precentor or prayer leader). These recitations are fundamental components of the service—aesthetically as well as liturgically—and a truly artistic cantor must master this style as well as his virtuoso delivery.

In some recitations and improvisations, the *hazzan* renders an entire text. In others, he either begins a text and then allows time for the worshipers to complete it on their own while he does the same quietly, or the congregation recites a text, after which the *hazzan* intones a cadential recitation on its concluding lines. On this recording, the pauses between such cantorial recitatives, either prior to or following a choral piece, represent those congregational recitations. Missing on the recording, however, is the characteristic din as the worshipers pray aloud to themselves, each at his own pace, in an unmeasured murmur.

In Ashkenazi ritual, much of the core liturgy is intoned according to a system of prescribed prayer modes. These prayer modes are assigned to specific services or sections of services on particular liturgical occasions (Sabbath, High Holy Days, Three Festivals, weekdays, etc.) or even assigned to certain individual prayer texts. This complicated modal network is often known colloquially as *nusah hat'filla* (the established way of liturgical rendition). In this ordered labyrinth, the designated modes are identifiable by their own particular battery of motives, motivic formulas and patterns, intervals, and principal tone functions (reciting tone, finalis, etc.)—all in the framework of corresponding specific scales or types of scales. Cantorial recitations of the principal *s'lihot* logically follow the mode for those same texts in the Yom Kippur service. This *s'liha* mode (or *shtayger* in the older, German, and perhaps more apt terminology), which betrays a prominent recurring pattern akin to major tonality—in addition to other quasi-minor

properties—is especially recognizable in the cadences of the cantorial recitations.

The poignant and even conspicuously sentimental tunefulness of some of the music selected for this recording, emblematic of the traditional melos in the eastern European–American format, together with its dramatic dimensions, may seem incongruous with perceptions of sacred music as something inherently more subdued, reverential, or austere. These characteristics may even strike some as inconsistent with the seriousness of the occasion and the sober content of its liturgy. Yet the *s'lihot* are not *kinot* (elegiac lamentations). And though the penitential parameter is paramount in this service, it is neither a lugubrious ceremony nor an exclusively somber experience. In tandem with its mood of awe and penitence, which permeates certain sections of the liturgy and informs its musical expression accordingly, this service can also be infused with an element of optimism—as a prelude to a new year of reconciliation and renewal.

The First *S'lihot* service has thus also been interpreted in song as a celebration of the conviction that God does indeed hear prayer and does respond to genuine resolve. Some of its melodies can appear to acknowledge happily and with gratitude the very possibility of spiritual return and behavioral change, and the assurance of forgiveness. Whereas variant Western (but no less traditional) counterparts in Ashkenazi custom (German, French, Viennese, and Central European repertoires forged within the embrace of the German cultural orbit) display a more restrained and reserved style, this manifestly eastern European *hazzanut* resonates with highly charged and more transparent emotion. That orientation finds its expression here in impassioned cantorial passages that reflect intense pleading, fervent supplication, and heartfelt repentance. Equally prominent are down-to-earth bright melodies that seem to spin from the hope that is sustained by recalling the Divine eternal assurance of pardon.

The Musical Selections

Ashrei customarily serves as a prelude to the *s'lihot* service. The origin of this practice is uncertain, and it may have begun simply as a selection from the Psalms to set an appropriate mood, or perhaps to provide a liturgical link to antiquity. One conjectural rationale stems from its 16th verse, *pote'ah et yadekha ...* (You open Your hand and satisfy all the living with favor), which could be interpreted as God's openness to repentance—the favor of His listening to and granting the petitions for pardon that are about to be offered.

Although *ashrei* (track 1) is also recited or sung during other services, its specific function as a prelude to the *S'lihot* for the First Day has inspired numerous and sometimes extended cantorial and choral settings that exploit the virtuoso aspects of cantorial art. Unlike the simple responsorial chant that usually accompanies this *ashrei*, for example, on the Sabbath, *s'lihot*-related settings are typically clothed in a tone of awe and supplication, in keeping with the occasion. In this rendition, the opening section is excerpted from a complete setting of the *s'lihot* service by the learned cantor-composer Leib Glantz (1898–1964).

Einei khol—the setting of the latter portion of the *ashrei*—is a self-contained composition that was sung by Moshe Koussevitzky (1899–1966), one of the most famous virtuoso star cantors of the 20th century, who immigrated to the United States from Poland following the Second World War. Although the setting is commonly attributed to Koussevitzky, he probably did not compose it in a formal sense, and the choral parts have always been left to subsequent arrangers. It is nonetheless based on his improvisation, which became a relatively fixed rendition and may also have been drawn—as was much of Koussevitzky's *hazzanut* and especially his modal constructions (*nusah hat'filla*)—from the melodic style and characteristic phrases of Elias Zaludkovsky (1889–1943). As a youngster, Koussevitzky sang in Zaludkovsky's choir, both in Rostov and Vilna, later succeeding him as cantor at



Young Ben Zion Miller (left) with Moshe Koussevitzky, 1954.

the Vilna *Khor Shul* (choral synagogue). Still, Koussevitzky fashioned his rendition to exploit his own extraordinarily high tessitura and the legendary brilliance of his upper register. That aspect of his style was often modeled on the vocal approach of Gershon Sirota (1877–1943), who served prior to Koussevitzky as chief cantor of the prestigious Tłomackie Synagogue in Warsaw. Koussevitzky made this rendition a standard part of his *s'lihot* services in Brooklyn during the 1950s and 1960s at Temple Beth El of Boro Park, where Cantor Ben Zion Miller currently officiates.

Va'anahnu—the concluding part of *ashrei*—is from a setting by Joshua Lind (1890–1973), a highly respected émigré cantor and teacher, today best remembered as an extraordinarily prolific composer of traditional settings in the unapologetically earthy and melodically communicative style acquired from his earlier years in eastern European synagogue choirs. In particular, Lind's music transparently reveals the imprint of his mentor, the revered *hazzan*, choirmaster, and composer Zeidl Rovner [Jacob Samuel Maragowsky; 1856–1943], whose own style was profoundly influenced by a general Hassidic melos. Lind's hundreds of choral settings were never published, but they found their way into synagogue repertoires throughout the United

States and Canada through networks of admiring cantors and choirmasters.

Ashrei leads directly into the rendition of the *hatzi kaddish* (half *kaddish*), which, by established convention, always introduces the actual *s'lihot* liturgy. The *hatzi kaddish* (track 2) is a reduced form of the full Aramaic text recited at other points in the liturgy, sometimes identified by liturgical scholars as the doxology. *Kaddish* embodies the supreme acknowledgment of God's unparalleled greatness. It is the ultimate expression of unqualified glorification, praise, and worship of God unto all eternity. Originally, *kaddish* was not related to the liturgy per se, but was recited at the conclusion of rabbinic discourses or lessons, perhaps as a way of dismissing the assembly with an allusion to messianic hope as well as supreme faith. Because those discourses were delivered in Aramaic—the daily language of Jews for approximately fifteen hundred years following the Babylonian captivity—the *kaddish* text, too, was composed in that language. It developed around its central congregational response, *y'he sh'v'e raba m'varakh l'alum ul'almei almaya* (May His great name be worshiped forever, for all time, for all eternity), which derives from Daniel 2:20. Later, the *kaddish* was introduced into the liturgy to signal the conclusion of sections of a service, to divide such sections, or to conclude biblical readings or talmudic quotations. As the liturgical tradition developed, various forms of the *kaddish*—its full recitation as well as versions either omitting certain parts or containing alternate ones—were assigned to different specific roles in the liturgical order.

The original rationale for the *hatzi kaddish* as a preamble to the *s'lihot* is unclear, apart from the theological and poetic appropriateness of the text. However, by established liturgical rule, a *kaddish* recitation must function either as a conclusion of, or a division between, liturgical sections or scriptural readings—i.e., it must follow one or the other. This suggests yet another possible reason for the institution of *ashrei* as a prelude, for *ashrei* then fulfills the requirement of providing such a preceding section.

The *hatzi kaddish* rendition contains the oldest melodic elements in any formal First *S'lihot* service: the individual motives and phrases—including the signature incipit—that combine to form this *misinnai* tune. *Misinnai* tunes are seasonal leitmotifs whose canonization for specific occurrences on the liturgical calendar dates to the initial formulation of the Ashkenazi rite in the Rhineland during the Middle Ages. They remain a fixed practice in all Ashkenazi synagogues. This particular tune is prescribed for the *hatzi kaddish* that precedes the *mussaf* service on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. By established cantorial tradition, the same basic *misinnai kaddish* version for those Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur *mussaf* services is also employed on the First *S'lihot*, providing a musical anticipation of the impending Days of Awe. The easily recognizable motives of this *misinnai* tune figure prominently in any expanded cantorial-choral arrangement, regardless of style or period. But additional, more recent melodic components are usually attached as well to other parts of the text.

This 20th-century arrangement—a hybrid based on two distinct settings by émigré cantors Todros Greenberg (1893–1976) and Abraham Kalechnik (1846–1927)—exhibits these *misinnai* tune properties while also referring to a well-known but musically unrelated melody (beginning with the words *b'hayyeikhon ul'yomeikhon*) commonly attributed to Wolf Shestapol (ca. 1832–72), an important cantor and synagogue composer in the Ukraine. That melody has become nearly inseparable from High Holy Day *hatzi kaddish* renditions in America. Similarly, the sequential and lighter-spirited melody for the last section (*yitbarakh v'yishtabbah*) is also frequently found in these *hatzi kaddish* settings in American synagogues. Clearly eastern European in style, but not found in any notated European sources, it may be either European or American in origin. Its authorship has not been established.

L'khu n'rann'na (track 4) contains verses from Psalms 95, 89, and 55, and Job 12:10, and leads into *hann'shama lakh*. The setting sung here, which became familiar in many American synagogues by the mid-20th century, is by Isaac Kaminsky

(1871–1943), whose emotionally evocative melodies are very much in the popular vein of Lind. Most of Kaminsky's music, however, has been known primarily in eastern states and especially in the greater New York area, probably owing to its advocacy there by the prominent choirmaster Oscar Julius (1903–86), who conducted for many of the leading cantors of his period and who arranged and edited Kaminsky's repertoire. This is one of the few Kaminsky pieces that became popular throughout other parts of the United States, and it remains one of the most frequently sung settings of this text. Like Lind's choral repertoire, most of Kaminsky's music remains in manuscript and has been disseminated among cantors and choirmasters through their collegial networks.

The setting of *hattei elohai ozn'kha* (track 6) by the noted émigré virtuoso cantor Israel Schorr (1886–1935) was composed originally as a concert piece and was initially recorded by the composer. Later it became part of Yom Kippur repertoires of various cantors and choirs, not only in the United States and Canada but also in Israel. The male chorus arrangement here, for example, was written by Isaac Heilmann for his choir in the Great Synagogue in Haifa. The delicately lyrical melody for the words *ki shimkha nikra*, however, was not part of the original version and was interpolated later for Moshe Koussevitzky's recording and public renditions, including his Carnegie Hall debut in 1938. He retained that interpolated melody, which is neither his own nor Schorr's (suggestions of authorship have included European *hazzan* David Eisenstadt), when he sang the piece during his American *s'l'ihot* services.

Zavel Zilberts (1881–1949) was one of the few significant choral composers in America to have served previously as a choral director at one of eastern Europe's westernized and sophisticated (but still "orthodox," or at least not nonorthodox) synagogues, known as *khors shuls*. Prior to his immigration, Zilberts was the music director at the Great Central Synagogue in Moscow, where the repertoire was largely borrowed from the German Synagogue canon.

In America, where he wrote for both traditional and Reform services, Zilberts's style remained more classical and restrained than the simpler folk-oriented and sometimes even theatrically embossed melos embraced by the other eastern European émigré synagogue composers represented here. This *el melekh yoshev* setting (track 8), illustrative of Zilberts's *khors shul* influence without sacrificing melodic appeal to austerity, is one of his best-known synagogue works.

The entire rendition of the poem *b'motza'ei m'nuha* (tracks 9–16) is a typical composite of various compositions for individual strophes, interspersed with cantorial improvisations for others and even with alternative refrain melodies. This *pizmon* has traditionally provided a musical centerpiece for the midnight First *S'l'ihot* service. A few composers have set the entire *pizmon* as a purportedly cohesive composition, but most have set only one or perhaps a few of the strophes. The general practice that evolved in American synagogues has therefore been to plan a selection of strophes from various sources—ideally, of course, with an overall balance of contrasting styles. Even in the very few European sources that contain choral music for this text, such as the collection published in 1874 in Odessa by Joshua [Osiyas] Abrass (1820–84), only a few of the stanzas are included; and these are free compositions that do not allow rhythmically for the substitution of other strophes.

The aggregate rendition of *b'motza'ei m'nuha* recorded here is a microcosm of many of the clichés and idioms typical of orthodox and traditional choral style in synagogues where the eastern European brand of cantorial art prevails. Among these are intensely melodic solo passages for boy altos and sopranos; duets with the cantor; sustained bass solos; cantorial improvisations with choral responses and pedal point underpinnings; and fully composed sections that feature cantorial solo lines in harmony with choral expositions.

The setting of the poem's initial strophe is a pastiche of traditional motives that was pieced together and arranged

by Arnold Miller (1922–97) for the many choral services he conducted at synagogues in the greater Chicago area. Miller was a leading personality for many decades in the Jewish musical life of Chicago—as a composer, conductor, arranger, bandmaster, and pianist. The melody for the second line of the strophe, *hat ozn'kha*, was adapted from a tune he attributed to the esteemed cantor-composer and teacher of *hazzanut*, Joshua Samuel Weisser [Pilderwasser; 1888–1952].

The authorship of this setting of the sixth strophe, *marom im atzum* (track 14), is uncertain. Cantor Joseph Malovany transcribed it from a live recording of a *s'lihot* service sung by Cantor David Kusevitsky (1911–85) with a choir conducted by Morris Barash. An educated guess is that it was composed by Herman Zalis (1885–1969), who conducted, composed, and arranged for Kusevitsky for many years.

The penultimate strophe, *p'ne na* (track 15), was composed expressly for the Milken Archive by Cantor Ira Bigeleisen. His bass solo part reflects an idiomatic stylistic fixture of eastern European-oriented repertoire.

Meyer Machtenberg's (1884–1979) famous setting of the final strophe, *r'tze atiratam* (track 16), gained wide currency in American synagogues from its early recording by the world-renowned and preeminent cantor Yossele [Joseph] Rosenblatt (to whom it has sometimes been erroneously attributed, since his initial recording failed to credit Machtenberg). This piece has acquired numerous subsequent expansions and extended arrangements, with multiple recurrences of the signature melody for the refrain, *lishmo'a*. The one here, however, retains the simplicity of the original.

T'vi'enu [*havi'enu* in some variant readings] incorporates a verse from Isaiah 56:7 and contains a messianic message that is interpreted dramatically and vividly in this setting by Lind (track 2, CD 2). This is an unabashedly theatrical treatment of the type that found great acceptance in traditional eastern European-oriented American synagogues. One is tempted to ascribe its kitsch to American Jewish popular

influence, but its flavor is not so far afield from other traditional approaches to this text. Some of its most familiar settings by other composers—e.g., Kalechnik and even Eliezer Gerovisch (1844–1914), whose stylistic orientation is probably the most classically westernized and dignified among all eastern European synagogue composers—also betray a marchlike, almost triumphal military character. It has even been suggested that such lively dramatizations provide an aesthetic moment of emotional relief just prior to the following sober supplication, *sh'ma kolenu*, which is a fervent, heartrending plea.

The first part of *sh'ma kolenu* (track 3, CD 2) is taken from the daily service (from the section known as the *sh'mone esrei*, or the Eighteen Benedictions). The remainder of the text as it appears in the *s'lihot* liturgy (generally considered part of the same *s'liha* prayer) is derived from Lamentations (5:21) and Psalms. Its cantorial rendition generally constitutes one of the emotional peaks of the First *S'lihot* service. Joseph Rumshinsky (1881–1956), whose setting is sung here for most of the text, was primarily a Second Avenue Yiddish theater composer, songwriter, and conductor, and he is remembered as one of the giants of that popular genre. But like many of his most successful fellow Second Avenue songwriters, such as Sholom Secunda, Abraham Ellstein, and Alexander Olshanetsky, he also wrote (and sometimes conducted) for the synagogue. This is one of his best-known liturgical pieces. In this rendition, free cantorial improvisation has been substituted for the last section, a typical option in such traditional services.

Ashamnu (track 5, CD 2) is the short form of the communal confession. It consists of twenty-four alphabetically arranged expressions and manifestations of sin and transgression. The rendition here follows what has become the basic melodic pattern in American synagogues, based on some European traditions. But the solo vocal line in this arrangement mirrors the refined variant sung by Moshe Koussevitzky. In the synagogue, the choral responses would be joined by the congregation each time, and the recurring

wordless tune that interrupts the recitation of collective transgressions is a ubiquitous congregational melody reserved for this occasion in nearly all traditional American services. At one time, there were many extant alternative melodies, but this particular tune has emerged as virtually exclusive.

The curious habit of attaching a lighthearted, homey tune to one of the most awe-inspiring and solemn moments in the liturgy has Hassidic origins in Europe, and even some humorous justifications in Hassidic folklore. S. Y. Agnon, in his *Sippurei habesht* (Stories of the Baal Shem Tov), relates a story in which the juxtaposition of joyful tunes against the text of the confessional is likened to the gladness felt by a devoted servant upon clearing rubbish from his king's court. Yet the classical European published synagogue music collections contain no such tuneful adjuncts to the confessional. This custom, now standard in most traditional Ashkenazi services, may be but one further example of the lasting Hassidic imprint on the development of eastern European *hazzanut* during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Lind's version of *rahamana* (track 7, CD 2), an Aramaic text written in Babylonia, is another case of humble supplication accompanied by mirthful song—in this case even akin to a quasi-Hassidic dance tune. Although other, more classically oriented settings of *rahamana*—such as an extended composition by Zilberts—treat the opening lines with deep reverence and humility, most composers (including Zilberts) have nonetheless also set the final phrase with spirited optimism: “Now, soon, in our own time!”

Maran d'vishmaya (track 9, CD 2) is also in Aramaic. The composer of this setting, Dan (David) Frohman (1903–77), was the music director of a major Conservative synagogue in the Detroit area for many years. He frequently adapted folklike phrases in his pieces.

Celebrated as a legend both during his lifetime and after his death more than any other cantor in the pantheon of the great virtuosi, Yossele [Joseph] Rosenblatt (1882–1933) was one of the supreme cantorial artists of all time. And especially to the lay public, non-Jewish as well as Jewish, he remains probably the most famous cantor of any generation. His *shomer yisra'el* (track 10, CD 2) is one of his most classically constructed and best-known compositions. It is sung here in a contemporary arrangement by the gifted South African–Israeli composer and arranger Raymond Goldstein (b. 1953), who has retained the full spirit and flavor of Rosenblatt's style.

Avinu malkenu (track 11, CD 2) was improvised, according to the pertinent talmudic reference (b. Taanit 25b), by Rabbi Akiva in the 1st or 2nd century and was originally a nucleus of only five lines, with the preceding refrain on those two initial words of address (Our Father, Our King). It was subsequently increased to 29 lines in the Sephardi rite, 38 in the German Ashkenazi rite, and 44 in the Polish, or eastern European Ashkenazi rite. Only the last line, however, is customarily sung toward the conclusion of the *s'lihot* service. This melody is universal among American synagogues, but its origin is undetermined. It is not found in any notated European sources.

The full *kaddish* (*kaddish shalem*) (track 12, CD 2) concludes the *s'lihot* service, just as it was begun with the half *kaddish*. Although there is no prescribed traditional version for this concluding *kaddish*, which can be simply and syllabically chanted, the engaging rendition here—which has become increasingly popular in recent decades—is based on a setting composed in Europe by Jacob Gottlieb (1852–1900), better known as Yankl der Heizeriker (Yankl the hoarse one, or husky-voiced one). It is now commonly labeled “Hassidic *kaddish*,” since Gottlieb apparently claimed that he had heard Hassidim singing the concluding *kaddish* of the Rosh Hashana *mussaf* service “cheerfully” (though not necessarily to this specific tune). Neither its principal melody nor its secondary motives are found in

the repertoire of any authentic Hassidic traditions; and Gottlieb referred to his creation simply as “*yitgaddal*”—the initial word of the text incipit. According to Gottlieb’s son Berl, he even substituted the Yiddish words a *heyim* for the last pronouncement of *v’al* (and all [Israel]), which he said gave it the meaning, “and all can now go home [since your prayers have been accepted].” This basic composite tune was sung and recorded by both Yossele Rosenblatt and Moshe Koussevitzky, in modified arrangements. It has therefore often been attributed erroneously to one or the other—including in supposedly reliable published sources. The original manuscript, however, formerly in the possession of Gottlieb’s grandson until his own death, together with the family oral history as passed down by Gottlieb’s son—also a cantor in various European cities and then in Newcastle upon Tyne, in England—leaves no doubt concerning authorship.

The basic version that has emerged through oral transmission to establish its present identity, however, departs in some significant respects from that original manuscript. This includes even differences in tonality, especially in the opening section. Moreover, numerous arrangers have tinkered with the piece, leaving a stream of variant renderings, adaptations, and altered choral elements—though none appear to have consulted the Gottlieb manuscript. The arrangement created for this recording also follows the melodic contours of the more commonly recognizable variants. Even though the Rosenblatt and Koussevitzky recordings introduced this *kaddish* many decades ago, its popularity increased remarkably over the course of the last quarter of the 20th century. So widespread had its use become by the end of the century that it is now frequently sung on Sabbaths and Festivals, even though Gottlieb intended it more narrowly for the High Holy Days.

—Neil W. Levin

Translations

S’LIHOT SERVICE (The First S’lihot) CD 1

Translation by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

1 ASHREI (Psalms 42:5; 144:15)

Those who dwell in Your house find happiness,
and continue forever to praise You.
Happy is the people whose life is so blessed,
happy is the nation whose God is the Lord.

Psalm 145
(CONGREGATION, SILENTLY)

A song of praise, by David

[I will exalt You, my God, my King,
and worship Your name always—forever.
I will greet You every day
and praise Your name forever, indeed forever.
God, so powerful, so praiseworthy,
Your greatness is beyond examination.
One generation will praise You deeds to the next,
and describe Your mighty acts.
I will speak of the beauty and honor of Your majesty,
as well as of Your miraculous deeds.
People will tell of the might of Your awesome Being,
and I will speak of Your greatness.
They shall retell memories of Your great goodness,
and joyfully sing of Your righteousness.
The Lord is gracious and compassionate, patient,
and possessed of a full measure of loving-kindness.
The Lord is good to all,
His mercies extend to all His creatures.
All those You have created will offer You thanks,
and the righteous will worship You.
They will tell of the glory of Your kingdom,
and speak of Your power.
They will inform the children of men of Your might,
and of the glorious honor of Your kingdom.]

Your kingdom is a kingdom eternal,
and Your dominion extends through all generations
of man.

The Lord supports those who stumble,
and straightens the bodies of all who are bent.]

EINEI KHOL

(CANTOR AND CHOIR)

The eyes of all look toward You,
and You provide all with food at the appropriate
time and season.

You open Your hand and satisfy all the living
with great and good will.

The Lord is righteous in all His paths,
loving in all His deeds.

Near to all who call is the Lord,
to all who call in truth.

He will fulfill the desires of those who fear Him—
will hear their cry, will save them!

The Lord protects all who love Him,
but all the wicked will He destroy.

My mouth will speak the Lord's praise,
and all flesh will worship His holy name forever,
forever.

VA'ANAḤNU (Psalm 115:18)

And we will praise the Lord,
from now unto eternity, Halleluyah!

2 HATZI KADDISH

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

May His great name be worshiped forever, for all time,
for all eternity.

Worshiped, praised, glorified, exalted, elevated,

adored, uplifted, and acclaimed be the name of the
Holy One, praised be He—over and beyond all the
words of worship and song, praise and consolation
ever before uttered in this world. Those praying here
signal assent and say amen.

3 ATA RITZATZTA (L'KHA ADONAI)

You crushed the heads of the Leviathan and bestowed
it as food to the people in the desert.

You split open the sources of springs of water, and
of riverbeds.

You drained dry mighty rivers.

You divided the sea with Your strength.

You broke the heads of sea monsters in the waters.

You rule over the fury of the seas.

When the waves climb too high, You subdue them.

The Lord is sublime and much praised in the city of our
God, on His holy mountain.

O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, You who dwell in the
midst of the cherubim, You alone are God.

God, praised in the counsels of the holy, great and
awesome in the midst of all that surrounds Him, the
heavens tell of Your wonders, O Lord, Your faithfulness
in the community of the holy.

4 L'KHU N'RANN'NA ... HANN'SHAMA LAKH

Come then, let us sing to God! Let us joyfully shout to
that Rock, our protector.

We will greet Him first with thanksgiving, then chant
sweet melodies to Him.

Righteousness and judgment are the foundations of
Your throne; loving-kindness and truth precede Your
presence.

We will share secrets together and with deep feeling
visit the House of the Lord.

The oceans are His; He made them; and it was His
hands that created the continents.

In His hands are the souls of all that live and the spirit

that permeates the flesh of all mankind.

The soul is Yours, and the body—Yours. Have compassion, then, on the fruit of Your labor.

The soul is Yours, and the body—Yours.

Lord, act for the sake of Your name.

We have come depending on Your name, Lord;

Act for the sake of Your name, for the honor of Your name.

For we know that name to be “God, gracious and merciful.”

For Your name’s sake, O Lord, forgive us then the multitude of our transgressions.

S’LAḤ LANU AVINU KI B’ROV IVALTENU

Forgive us, our Father; we have been led astray by our own overwhelming foolishness. Pardon us, our King; our sins continue to multiply.

5 *KAMA YISARTANU (EIKH NIFTAḤ PE)*

You have chastised us over and again with the words of prophets and messengers. We have paid no heed to the words of preachers. [From early on until now, we have been lost, killed, slaughtered, butchered.

We have become a tiny remnant among broken thorns. Our eyes—completely spent—find no more pleasures or joys.

The misled among the people, those who bow in worship to lifeless idols, why do they prosper from daybreak to the setting of the sun? They rise to accept debased, contemptible ways. You, the broken, the shattered—in what do you put your trust?]

Holy One, who abides forever, see the humiliation of those who sigh, who languish. They rely on You as one would on a brother. With Your awesome right arm, rescue us, preserve us, forever and ever. For our trust resides only in the greatness of Your mercy.

KI ATA EL RAḤUM (KI AL RAḤAMEKA)

For You are a compassionate and gracious God, with infinite patience and abundant loving-kindness. You are generous with Your gifts of goodness, and You rule the world with Your own measure of mercy. As it is written in Scripture: “And He said: I will reveal all of my goodness before you, and I will pronounce the name of the Lord in your presence; I will be gracious to whomsoever I please, and will be merciful to those to whom I choose to be merciful.”

TA’AVOR AL PESHA (EL EREKH APAYIM)

Disregard our iniquities; erase our guilt as You did when You came down in a cloud and Moses placed himself beside You there.

Hear our cry and listen to what is written in the verse: “And he called upon the name of the Lord”—and it is also written: “And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed: The Lord, the Lord ...”

ADONAI ADONAI

The Lord, the Lord, God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, trusting in loving-kindness and truth; preserving His grace for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and cleansing from sin. Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Your own.

S’LAḤ LANU AVINU KI ḤATANU

Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned. Pardon us, our King, for we have transgressed. For You, Lord, are good, forgiving, and filled with loving-kindness for all who call to You.

S’LAḤ NA

Use Your infinite loving-kindness, if You will, to pardon the transgression of this people, just as You have done from Israel’s days in Egypt until here and now, as it is written [in the Book of Exodus]: “And the Lord said: I have forgiven them according to your request.”

6 HATTEI

My God, turn Your ear toward us and hear; focus Your eyes on us and see our desolation and that of the city to which You have bonded Your name. For we dare not cast our supplications before You with a false feeling of our own righteousness. We do so because of our faith in Your great mercy. Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, give ear and act! Do not tarry, for Your own sake, my God; for Your name is bonded to that of Your people.

7 SHIMKHA ELOHIM (EIN MI YIKRA V'TZEDEK)

Your very name, O God, glorifies life. We await the pronouncement from You—"A good life!" The mysteries of the beginnings of life are all explained in You. Look at us, answer us, enlighten our eyes.

EL MELEKH YOSHEV.... ADONAI ADONAI

[see track 8]

8 EL MELEKH YOSHEV

God, King, You occupy a throne built on mercy. Your deeds reflect Your loving-kindness. You forgive Your people's iniquities—putting each aside, one by one. You expand forgiveness for the sinner and pardon for the transgressor. Your righteousness extends to all creatures of flesh and spirit; You do not assign a full measure of punishment to those who err. God, You taught us that when in need of atonement, we are to recite Your thirteen attributes of mercy. Thus, today we ask You to remember us for our well-being. Remember: take note of Your covenant with us, which enumerates those thirteen attributes. You revealed all this to Your humble servant Moses centuries ago, as is recorded in Scripture: "And the Lord had descended in a cloud; He stood with Moses there and proclaimed the Lord's name. The Lord passed before Moses and said" ...

ADONAI ADONAI [see track 5]

9-16 B'MOTZA'EI M'NUHA**9 B'MOTZA'EI M'NUHA**

At the end of Sabbath rest we hasten to come, in anticipation of You.
You, whose habitation is praise, from the heavens turn Your ear toward us.

LISHMO'A EL HARINA [Refrain]:

Listen to the song! Listen to the prayer!

10 ET Y'MIN

Awaken Your mighty right arm and perform Your deeds of valor.
Isaac our ancestor was justly bound to an altar; In his stead, though, You provided a ram—a ram to be tied, a ram to be sacrificed.
When Isaac's descendants cry out in the night, shield them too, if You will.
[Refrain]

11 D'ROSH NA

Examine well, if it please You, those who search for You, seeking Your presence.
Search for them from Your heavenly abode,
And deafen not Your ear to their pleas.
[Refrain]

12 ZOHALIM

Fearful and trembling before the Day of Judgment, Your anger and dunning demands make them ache like women with childbirth pains.
Let it please You to clear away their uncleanness and let them testify to Your many wonders.
[Refrain]

13 YOTZER ATA

You are the Creator of every creature created.
At the beginning of time You prepared remedies to aid them in the narrowest of their straits,

To gift them, though undeserved, from the hidden treasure house of Your grace.

[Refrain]

14 MAROM IM ATZMU

Highest One, if the transgressions of Your community have multiplied,
Strengthen Your folk, if it please You, from the treasures prepared in Your heavenly sanctuary.
Your people come to You begging for undeserved grace.

[Refrain]

15 P'NE NA

Look, please, to our adversities, and not to our sins.
You, who perform marvelous wonders, justify those who cry out to You.
Give heed to their supplications, God, Lord of hosts.

[Refrain]

16 R'TZE ATIRATAM

Accept their requests when they stand before You in the night.
Willingly give those requests attention, as You would with sacrifices, with burnt offerings [in Temple days].
Show them Your wonders, Your greatness.

[Refrain]



S'LIHOT SERVICE (The First S'lihot) CD 2

1 Z'KHOR RAHAMEKHA

Remember Your Mercy, O Lord, for it extends from time's beginning to eternity....

Remember for (the sake of) Your servants; remember for Abraham, for Isaac, and for Jacob. Do not focus on the perverseness of this people, on its wickedness, on its sinfulness. Remember for our sake the covenant with our ancestors, as You yourself have said: "And I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and yet also my covenant with Abraham ... I'll remember ... and the land—I'll remember the land as well." Keep before You the covenant with our first forefathers as You had promised!

HIMMATZE LANU

Be available to us when we call, as it is written in Scripture: "And when you search there for the Lord your God, you will find Him—if you seek with all your heart and all your soul."

2 T'VI'ENU

Bring us to Your sacred mountain and let us rejoice in Your House of Prayer, as it was promised us in Scripture, which tells us: "And I will bring them to my sacred mountain and let them rejoice in my House of Prayer. All their offerings will be acceptable on my altar: for my house will be called a House of Prayer for all nations."

3 SH'MA KOLENU

Hear our voice, O Lord, our God, have compassion and mercy on us. Accept our prayers with tenderness, with goodwill.

Turn us, O Lord, toward You, that we may return to You in repentance.

Don't cast us away from Your presence and Your holy spirit—don't remove it from our midst.

Don't cast us away at the time of old age; don't abandon us as our strength ebbs away from us.

[Give ear to our words, understand our thoughts. Let the words of our mouths and our hearts' meditations find favor with You, Lord, our rock, our liberator.]

4 AL TA'AZVENU

Don't forsake us, Lord, our God; do not distance yourself from us. [Give us a sign of good things to come. Let our enemies observe it, and be embarrassed. You are our help, our comfort; we wait on You, O Lord; Lord, our God, we wait for Your response.]

TAVO L'FANEKHA

Our God, God of our fathers, let our prayer come before You. Do not hide Yourself from our supplications. We are not so brazen or so without self-knowledge as to plead before You, Lord, our God and God of our fathers, that we are guiltless or without sin. For in reality both our ancestors and we were and are culpable—sinful.

5 ASHAMNU

We have trespassed the boundaries of the Law. We have betrayed; we have robbed; we have slandered and defamed; we have sinned beyond sin; we have become wicked; we have become violent; we have imputed mendacity to others; we have given improper counsel; we have spoken falsehoods; we have mocked our fellows; we have been rebellious; we have rejected good counsel; we have been disloyal; we have been base and vile; we have behaved like criminals; we have become aggressive; we have been stiff-necked; we have become corrupt; we have erred; we have caused others to err.

[We have turned our backs on Your commandments and on Your sure judgments, to no avail. Though

You have been just in all that has transpired in our lives—Your deeds are framed in truthfulness—we nevertheless have embraced wickedness.]

6 HIRSHANU

We have been wicked and sinful, and therefore we have not been saved. Prepare our hearts to abandon the paths of wickedness and hasten to bring us our liberation; as Your prophet wrote, "Let the wicked man leave his path, and the sinner his schemes, and return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and let him return to our God, for God is generous in His compassion."

In the Psalms, David, Your righteous anointed one, said before Your presence, "Who can understand unintended error? Cleanse me from secret faults." ...

For mercy and forgiveness are with the Lord our God.

Your name: Merciful God.

Your name: Gracious God.

Our name is bonded with Your name.

O Lord, act for the sake of Your name.

Act for Your sake, if not for ours!

Act for Your sake, and help us!

ANENU ...

Answer us, O Lord, answer us!

Answer us, our God, answer us....

MI SHE'ANA L'AVRAHAM—HU YA'ANENU

May He who answered our father Abraham on Mount Moriah, answer us!

7 RAHAMANA

Merciful One, who answers the prayers of the poor, answer us! Merciful One, who answers the prayers of the brokenhearted, answer us! Merciful One, who answers the prayers of those of wounded spirit, answer us! Merciful One, answer us! Merciful One, have pity on us! Merciful One, save us! Merciful One,

release us! Merciful One, have mercy on us—now, soon, in our own time!

8 MAHEI UMASEI

You wound, and You heal.

You bring death, and You rescue from the grave toward eternal life....

[Heal the pains that have assaulted us] so that we do not utterly perish in the prison that is our exile.

MAKHNISEI RAHAMIM

You angels; you who present pleas for mercy to the master of mercy, present our pleas before him.

Lord of our salvation, answer us quickly. Redeem us from evil decrees; save us with Your generous mercy—us, Your people, as well as Your truly anointed one.

9 MARAN D'VISHMAYYA

Master of the heavens, we beseech You as a prisoner would his captor....

Master of the heavens, we beseech You as a slave would his master. We are so much oppressed that we exist in bleak darkness. Our souls have become embittered, and we are in great distress. We no longer have the physical power even to implore You properly, our Master.

Help us for the sake of the eternal covenant that You established with our ancestors.

10 SHOMER YISRA'EL

Guardian of Israel, safeguard the remnants of Israel and let them not be abandoned and lost, those that declare: "Listen, O Israel ..."

Guardian of Israel, safeguard the remnant of that singular people and let them not be abandoned and lost, those who declare the unity of Your name—The Lord is our God, the Lord is One!

Guardian of a holy nation, safeguard the remnant of that holy people, and let them not be abandoned

and lost, those who three times daily declare Your threefold holiness.

[You who are placated by prayers for mercy and moved by supplications, be accepting of the prayers and supplications of an impoverished generation; for there is none but You to help.]

11 AVINU MALKENU

Our Father, our King, be gracious to us and answer us, for we have no good deeds to speak for us. Relate to us with righteousness and loving-kindness and be of a help to us.

12 KADDISH SHALEM ("Hassidic kaddish")

Magnified and sanctified be His great name throughout the world which He hath created according to His will. And great is His glorious Creation! And may His kingdom come during our lives and days, and during the life of all the House of Israel. May His Kingdom come, His will be done on earth as in heaven. Speedily, soon, and let us say amen.

May His great name be worshiped. O worshiped be His holy name, forever and to all eternity.

Worshiped and praised, and glorified and exalted and extolled, and honored and magnified and lauded be the name of the Holy One, praised be He. Though He be beyond all worship and songs and praises and consolations that can be uttered in this world, and let us say amen.

May the supplications and petitions of all Israel be accepted before our Father in heaven. Will all present here assent by saying amen.

May there be abundant peace for us and for all Israel; and those praying here signal assent and say amen.

May He who establishes peace in His high place establish peace for us and for all Israel; and those praying here signal assent and say amen.



Additional Celebrated Cantorial Pieces from Throughout the Year

13 MAR'EH KOHEN

Regarding the Text

Before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 C.E., on Yom Kippur, and only then, the High Priest would enter the most sacred space of the sanctuary, the section of the Temple called “the Holy of the Holies,” and beg forgiveness—first for sins that he and/or members of his house had committed, then for expiation for the trespasses of the priestly clan, and finally, he would beg for pardon for the iniquities of the entire people of Israel. As part of each of these three invocations, he would pronounce the most hallowed of the names of God, the tetragrammaton, a privilege restricted only to the High Priest, and to him only on Yom Kippur, and only for these specific petitions for forgiveness.

This annual religious pageant created an almost magical atmosphere with a combination of fear, reverence, and exhilarant joy—fear for the safety of the High Priest during his encounter with an ultimate holiness, reverence for the Creator of the universe, joy and hope at the potential for the remission of sin.

In later generations, when all that remained of the ceremony was perhaps an inflated memory of its glory, the synagogue service for Yom Kippur incorporated a section describing in words and music the magnificent drama of past Yom Kippurs. The magic was to some degree re-created, as is borne witness to by the epilogue to the drama—a description of the appearance of the High Priest after he left the Holy of the Holies.

— Rabbi Morton M. Leifman

[How magnificent the High Priest looked when he completed his task and emerged from the Holy of the Holies—complete, whole, at peace; unharmed by his encounter with the sacred.]

This is how he appeared to those who saw him:

...like the beauty reflected in the tents of celestial beings;

...like glorious lightening emanating from animated angels.

...as sparkling as the bright blue fringes on the four-cornered garments of pious men.

...like the image of a rainbow in the middle of a cloud.

...like the glory with which God the Creator had clothed His newly created creatures.

...like a rose planted in a most favored pleasant garden.

...like a wreath placed on the forehead of a king.

...like the grace glowing on the face of a bridegroom.

...like the purity enveloping the headband of a priest.

...like Moses secreted from all, pleading for his people before God the King.

...like the morning star greeting the rising sun at its entry from the east.

14 YIR'U EINEINU (weekday liturgy)

May our eyes see, our hearts be glad, and our souls rejoice at your true redemption—when Zion will hear: “Your God reigns!” The Lord is King; the Lord was King; the Lord will reign for all eternity. For the Kingdom is Yours, and You will reign in glory forever eternally! For we have no other King other than You. You are worshiped, O Lord (He is worshiped and His name is worshiped), the King who in His glory will reign over us and over all of creation forever, indeed forever. Amen.

15 R'TZE (Sabbath and weekday liturgy)

Be accepting, O Lord our God, of Your people Israel and of their prayers. Restore the worship and holy

offerings to Your sanctuary, and hear our prayers with love, with goodwill. May the worship of Your people Israel always be acceptable to You.

May our eyes see Your merciful return to Zion. You are worshiped, O Lord (He is worshiped and His name is worshiped), who restores His presence to Zion. Amen. We gratefully thank You.

16 UNTANNE TOKEF

(Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur mussaf liturgy)

In truth You both judge and admonish—You are both witness and omniscient expert. You write and seal, count and retell—remembering all that seems forgotten. You open the Book of Records, of memorials, and the deeds of mankind speak for themselves, and the stamp of each one's hand is included therein. And the Great Shofar of judgment is sounded. And but a gentle whisper is heard—a still, small voice; and the angels, seized with fear and trembling, announce: "Behold, today is Judgment Day!" Even the hosts of heaven are remembered for judgment; even they are not immune from the processes of this day. And all humanity passes before You like a flock of sheep.

Translations by Rabbi Morton M. Leifman



The following thoughts on the meaning of *s'lihot* for our time have been contributed by Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis of congregation Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, California.

DOES GOD PRAY?

Does God pray? The rabbis in the Talmud (B'rakhot 7a) ask precisely such a question. In one of their imaginative discourses, Rabbi Yochanan proffers a biblical proof text that God indeed prays. The rabbi cites a verse from the prophet Isaiah (56:7) in which God declares, "Even then will I bring them to my Holy Mountain and make them joyful in

my House of Prayer." It is not written in "their" House of Prayer, but in "my" House of Prayer. Therefore, God prays.

But if so, what does God pray? (*mai m'tzei*.) What does God, who lacks nothing, pray for? Rabbi Zut'ra ben Toviya speculates that the following is the essence of God's prayers: "May it be my will that my mercy may suppress my anger and that my mercy may prevail over my other attributes, so that I may deal with my children in the attribute of mercy and, on their behalf, stop short of the limit of strict justice." God serves as the exemplary model to be emulated by the human being created in the image of God. As God prays, so should the human worshiper—not for the acquisition of things, but for the control of his emotions. Pray to strengthen the quality of mercy over judgment. When we gather in the synagogue during the High Holy Days, we seek to overcome our sense of alienation from God. To expiate for the transgressions that distance us from godliness, we seek forgiveness (*s'lihot*). We confess our transgressions and yearn for reconciliation. We appeal to that character of godliness that enables us to draw closer to God, whose quality of mercy makes genuine reconciliation possible.

God does not want to execute strict justice. God is not desirous of punishment, but wants repentance. According to a telling rabbinic Midrash, King Manasseh placed a pagan idol in the Temple of the Lord. When later the same king came to pray for forgiveness, the angels protested: "Should a person as evil as this man be able to repent?" They then locked all the windows and doors to the heavens to block the king's prayers from God's ears. But God dug out a small hole beneath His Throne of Glory in order to hear the king's repentance. God is not a vindictive judge, but a compassionate Father who rejoices in the capacity of His children to change.

God hears. God loves. God pardons. God forgives. And we mortals are the emulators of God. Whom then do we forgive? Whom do we pardon? Or do we think that the *s'lihot* relationship between God and us runs only one way

from His high position and that it is sufficient unto itself. But that tradition is wary of such a vertical relationship. The rabbi declared, “Those transgressions between God and the individual, the Day of Atonement atones for; but those transgressions between the individual and his fellow human beings, the Day of Atonement does not forgive, until and unless one personally appeases the other and seeks forgiveness.”

God is not to be segregated from the world of men and women. If prayer, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation are left in God's court alone, then our prayers appear irrelevant. If all is left to God, then the human moral initiative and execution of forgiveness and repentance and reconciliation are of no consequence. But in Judaism the purpose of prayer is not the adulation of God by the imitation of God, not the admiration of God, but the emulation of God's ways.

Between God and us lies a moral correlation: “As God is merciful, be thou merciful; as God is compassionate, be thou compassionate.” *S’lihot* opens the preparation of the heart. *S’lihot* is meant to move us out of our seats into the arena of human relationship. The worshiper who asks forgiveness and awaits reconciliation with the Father who creates us all is mandated on the eve of the Days of Awe to seize the moment, to overcome the impasse, break through the silent stubbornness, initiate the first call, penetrate the stone wall, reach out to those with whom the conversation has been cut off. To emulate God who prays to master His anger means to act out the courage of seeking forgiveness and of forgiving. *S’lihot* carries in its prayers a moral mandate: Sacrifice pride, stubbornness, and anger. There are friends and members of the family with whom we have not spoken because of alleged insults, slights, and wrongs, but the courage in Jewish ethics is to make a friend of an enemy. Consider the precedent of reconciliation recorded in the Bible. Jacob and Esau meet after years of brutal anger: “Esau ran to greet him. He embraced him and, falling on his neck, he kissed him; and they wept.” (Genesis 33:4).

Joseph, dealt with treacherously by his brothers, finally triumphs over the temptation for vengeance and can no longer restrain himself: “I am Joseph your brother. Does my brother live?” With that, Joseph embraced his brother Benjamin around the neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. He kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; only then were his brothers able to talk to him (Genesis 45:14–15). Those tears, those kisses, and those embraces are sacred keys to be revered and emulated. They are not only stories of the biblical past but imperatives for our present and future relations.

To forgive is not to forget. To forgive is to be liberated from the anger that consumes life and embitters human relationships. Forgiveness does not eliminate the memory of the pain and the anguish of the felt injury. A rabbinic sage likened sin to the pounding of nails into a wooden chest and likened forgiveness to the removal of the nails. The nails may be removed, but they leave scars. Forgiveness is not amnesia. Even after forgiveness, the relationship may never be the same as it was before the insult. The holes do not disappear, but the possibilities of a new relationship are opened. The conversation can be resumed, and a deeper dialogue can begin. The nails that tear at the soul and tear families and friends apart can be extricated. This is the power of prayer—to heal and to fashion a better life. Prayer refines our character and stimulates our moral will.

S’lihot is the season that prepares the heart and encourages the will to exercise the dignity of the human spirit. During the penitential period, the sound of the shofar is heard—a sound that includes the sobbing staccato of broken notes (*shevarim*) to remind us that nothing is more whole than a broken heart and nothing more healing than repentance that leads to reconciliation. The very curvature of the shofar is bent to teach us to direct our heart away from hardness toward reconciliation. As God prays, so do we: “May it be our will that our mercy prevail over our anger and our compassion over our pride and stubbornness.”

▲ 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 descendant of the 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 *rebbe*s (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—then 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*.



CANTOR IRA BIGELEISEN is a graduate of the Yeshiva University Belz School of Jewish Music, The Juilliard School American Opera Center, and the Boston Conservatory. In 1997 he founded the Los Angeles Zimriyah Chorale, a mixed

chorus that specializes in Jewish composers from the Los Angeles area. Since 1993 he has served the pulpit of Congregation Adat Ari El in North Hollywood.



Founded in 1985 by its present music director and conductor, Neil Levin, New York-based **SCHOLA HEBRAEICA** is the world's only fully professional male-voice chorus devoted to Jewish and Judaically related music. The ensemble's celebrated hallmark timbre derives in part from its battery of distinctive idioms and stylistic features once typical of traditional synagogue choirs—especially in America, as well as in communities within the British Commonwealth. Its repertoire, however, ranges from classical liturgical and cantorial works to Yiddish folksong, and also to contemporary settings in a variety of other languages.

Schola Hebraeica made its public debut at Madison Square Garden at a ceremony commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto uprising on its fortieth anniversary. Since then, in addition to its many appearances in





Conductor Neil Levin (bottom center) with Schola Hebraeica.

the greater New York area, it has toured regularly throughout the United States and Canada as well as abroad—including four visits to Great Britain. Its London debut was in 1990 at the Royal Festival Hall, in the world premiere of *Voice of Jewish Russia*. In the United States it has sung with most of today's leading cantorial artists, and the choir

made its Lincoln Center debut in 1997 in a program entitled *Voice of Ashkenaz*. In the summer of 1999 Schola Hebraeica was the only Jewish choir invited to appear in England at the international choral festival Sacred Voices Music Village, where it gave more than a dozen performances in venues throughout Greater London. The group is also featured on several recordings and is the resident chorus of the International Centre for Jewish Music. Donald Barnum has been its chorumaster from its inception.



NEIL LEVIN has been the musical director and conductor of Schola Hebraeica since its founding. A Chicagoan since early childhood, he began piano studies at the age of four. During his teen years he was a pupil of the legendary Swiss pianist, conductor, composer, and pedagogue Rudolph Ganz (1877–1972), under whose tutelage he won local and national competitions and played at the Ravinia Festival—the summer home of the Chicago Symphony. He went to New York to study piano with Adele Marcus at The Juilliard School and simultaneously earned his liberal arts degree from Columbia University. There, he studied conducting with Howard Shanet and composition with Jack Beeson and with Otto Luening, who became one of his mentors and encouraged him to nurture his evident interests in Jewish music.

After earning his B.A., Levin spent a year in Israel, where he studied Judaica and Jewish music and began to engage in field research. Returning

to New York, he earned an M.A. in music at Columbia, and then his doctorate in Jewish music at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where Hugo Weisgall played a central role as his teacher, advisor, mentor, and—when Levin joined the faculty in 1982—his senior colleague. Levin was also profoundly influenced by private study with two distinguished Jewish music historians and musicologists, Eric Werner and Albert Weisser.

Levin studied choral conducting in Robert Page's master classes and workshops at the Aspen Music School and Festival in the 1970s. From 1973 to 1978 he directed the Chicago Zimriya Youth Chorus, and since 1967 he has conducted choirs in many synagogues in both the Chicago and New York areas and in England. In addition to Schola Hebraeica, which he has conducted on many tours throughout the United States, Canada, and England, he also directs the mixed-voice ensemble Coro Hebraeica, which appears on many of the Milken Archive recordings. His London conducting debut was in 1988 at St Johns Smith Square, and in 1990 he made his debut at the Royal Festival Hall in London. He is also the creator of *Vanished Voices*—a musical *Kristallnacht* commemoration incorporating his research into the musical traditions of German-speaking Jewry—which was performed under his baton in 1996 at London's Barbican Centre and in Los Angeles. His Lincoln Center debut was in 1997, and in 1999 he directed more than a dozen concerts (with Schola Hebraeica and other ensembles) in Great Britain.

In addition to his artistic directorship of the Milken Archive, Levin is a professor of Jewish music at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, director of the International Centre and Archives for Jewish Music, and vice president of the International Association of Jewish Music Institutions, based in Paris.

The former editor of *Musica Judaica*, the journal of the American Society for Jewish Music, Levin has published numerous articles and monographs on Jewish music, several archival recordings, and books, including *Z'mirot Anthology* (1981) and *Songs of the American Jewish Experience* (1976). He has also organized and directed six international academic conferences and festivals devoted to Jewish musical topics.





The New West End Synagogue in St. Petersburg Place, Bayswater, one of London's oldest orthodox Ashkenazi synagogues and the recording venue for the Milken Archive *s'lihot* service. Constructed in 1877, this beautiful house of prayer was consecrated in 1879.

S'LIHOT SERVICE**S'lihot Service: CD 1**

Track 12, *Zohalim* (Lind)

Publisher: Dale Lind

Track 15, *P'ne na* (Bigeleisen)

Publisher: Ira Bigeleisen

All other tracks: unpublished manuscripts

Recording: New West End Synagogue, London, UK, July 2000, July 2001

Recording Producer: Simon Weir

Recording Engineers: Morgan Roberts, Campbell Hughes, and Bertram Kornacher

Recording Product Manager: Neil W. Levin

S'lihot Service: CD 2 – Tracks 1 – 12

Track 3, *Sh'ma Kolenu* (Rumshinsky)

Publisher: Music Sales Corp.

Track 2, *T'vi'enu*, and Track 7, *Rahamana* (Lind)

Publisher: Dale Lind

All other tracks: unpublished manuscripts

Recording: New West End Synagogue, London, UK, July 2000, July 2001

Recording Producer: Simon Weir

Recording Engineers: Morgan Roberts, Campbell Hughes, and Bertram Kornacher

Recording Product Manager: Neil W. Levin

Pierre Pinchik: *Mar'eh kohen*

Sholom Secunda: *Yir'u eineinu*

Meyer Machtenberg: *R'tze*

***Untanne tokef*, as sung by Moshe Koussevitsky**

Publisher: MS

Recording: New West End Synagogue, London, UK, November 1998

Recording Producer: Simon Weir

Recording Engineer: Campbell Hughes

Recording Product Manager: Neil Levin

Photo credits: Page 10 (right): courtesy International Centre and Archives for Jewish Music.

Page 29: courtesy of Neil Levin.

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