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With Liberty and Sabbath for All

The field of Jewish liturgical music embraces a wide variety of styles and orientations. From the eastern European–based *hazzanut* of American experience to the divergent and sometimes experimental expressions found in contemporary popular idioms, the music of American Jewish religious experience reflects the range of way in which Jews of various backgrounds choose to observe the most basic and arguably most significant sacred time, the Sabbath.

This month, the Milken Archive's two new albums explore these wide-ranging styles and reflect the arc of Jewish liturgical music over 100 years.

The two-album set *Music for the Sabbath* is the latest installment in [Volume 4: Cycle of Life in Synagogue and Home](#).

The first several tracks trace a path from Abraham Wolf Binder through Jack Gottlieb, William Sharlin, Charles Davidson, and Debbie Friedman. Davidson has been a significant voice in Jewish music for decades, at once on the forefront of innovation and deeply rooted in tradition. Friedman's foray into Jewish music grew out of an epiphany. She was riding a bus one day when a melody came to her and the only words she could think to use came from the Ahavta prayer. Thus was born "And Thou Shalt Love," and, later, a revolution that would change Jewish liturgical music for generations to come.

Relate



From Adler to Fromm to Adler. **Samuel Adler discusses** his father's influence on **Herbert Fromm**.

Roll Back



Tonight in Toronto: **Simon Spiro** performs his **new one-man show** about Moishe Oysher.

Rock On



Catch the new **Jews, Rock & Roll Pop-Up Museum** in New York and 18 cities around the world! Begins **May 26**.

Five settings of *V'shamru* open the second album. Two by Cantor William Sharlin bear echoes of traditional *hazzanut*, but more closely resemble modern art song and choral music. The settings by Samuel Adler, Herbert Fromm, and Zavel Zilberts are more reminiscent of a Central European approach, featuring a cantor and choir accompanied by organ.

Fromm, along with Samuel Adler's father, Hugo Adler, belonged to a generation of composers who spearheaded an American renaissance in Jewish liturgical music in the early–mid-20th century after fleeing Germany in the 1930s. Much of the Jewish liturgical music outside of the folk-oriented repertoire owes its existence in part to this renaissance. While figures like Binder, Fromm, and Adler set the stage for American innovations in Jewish liturgical music, artists like Friedman soon took it over.

Thus, while it might seem at first glance that the world of Jewish liturgical music is divided between the traditionalists and the folkies, this obscures the abundant diversity that exists. For it's a field large enough to accommodate an *Adon olam* by Sol Zim that sounds like it came straight out of a Persian night club, alongside one by Robert Stern that is dreamlike, ethereal, and invokes the close-interval harmonies of Bulgarian choral music. It is a field that welcomes the idiosyncratic stylings of Max Janowski, the modern classical orientation of David Schiff and Samuel Adler, and the popular approach of Friedman and Craig Taubman. It's a field that, arguably, could have only developed to such richness in America.

Learn more, sample and explore

Volume 4: Cycle of Life in Synagogue and Home

Albums 7 & 8: Sabbath Eve

Now available from the Milken Archive

