

July 21, 2015

## Theodore Bikel (1924–2015)

### Legendary Actor and Singer Has Died

The Milken Archive is saddened to learn of the death of veteran actor and singer, Theodore Bikel.

Bikel will probably be remembered amongst Jewish audiences most as Tevye the Milkman, the endearing and enduring character he played more than 2,000 times in *Fiddler on the Roof*. But Tevye was just one of many roles the Vienna-born actor played in his long and varied career. Bikel also originated the role of Baron von Trapp in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music* ("Edelweiss" was written specifically for him), and played multiple supporting roles in film. Appearing alongside Sydney Potier and Tony Curtis

in *The Defiant Ones*, Bikel earned an Oscar nomination for his performance as the Sheriff.

His many television appearances included such roles as a Scottish policeman in *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, Henry Kissinger in *The Final Days*, and his 1988 Emmy-winning title role in PBS's *Harris Newmark*.

As a folk singer, Bikel recorded several albums of Jewish folksongs and was a cofounder of the Newport Folk Festival, with Pete Seeger and George Wein. Known for his unique and commanding voice, Theodore Bikel is featured as a narrator in some of the Milken Archive's most significant recordings (see below for a complete list).

Our deepest condolences go out to the Bikel family and the legion of fans whose lives he touched.

**Milken Archive recordings featuring Theodore Bikel as narrator:**

**[Gimpel the Fool](#)**

David Schiff

**[Di Naye Hagode](#)**

Max Helfman

**[Ahava—Brotherhood](#)**

David Diamond

**[Cantata of the Bitter Herbs](#)**

Ernst Toch

**[Psalm 126](#)**

Philip Glass

