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# The Sound of Judaism Evolving in America

The U.S. Constitution is considered a living document, subject to the interpretation of the courts and thereby reflective of the times in which it is upheld. The Torah takes that one step further, opening it to the interpretation of every individual choosing to uphold its tenets, thus including them in the greater community rather than relegating them to the outskirts. Combine the spirit of America with the spirituality of the Torah, and you get an evolution like no other.

The Milken Archive's [Volume 3: SEDER T'FILLOT —Traditional and Contemporary Synagogue Services](#) explores the varying styles of worship in the different times and affiliations of American Jewry through music. Featuring the musical dimensions of synagogue services in the three principal branches of American Jewish religious life,

**Watch**



Milken Archive artist **Alberto Mizrahi** on “Sanctuary”

**Listen**



to Artistic Director **Neil W. Levin** discuss 7 classic **High Holiday melodies**

**Learn**



about **Gerard Schwarz** and **Paul Schwendener's All-Star Orchestra**

Volume 3 includes: an **Orthodox/traditional S’lichot** (penitential) service; a **traditional Rosh Hashana mussaf service** typical of the classical Conservative movement approach ([coming soon](#)); a **post-classical Reform (1940s–1970s) Sabbath eve service**; a contemporary, combined post-1970s **Reform Yom Kippur afternoon–yizkor**—concluding, service; and a **modern Torah service**.

Music has always been a vital part of Jewish worship, and for good reason. Rabbis who long ago established the order and content of the Jewish prayer services knew that such rigid structures could lull congregants into routine repetition. And in the Jewish tradition, prayer without *kavanah*—the passion of the moment—is meaningless. Music, however, is the enemy of mindless habit, the antidote to mechanical recitation; cast as song, every prayer holds the promise of heartfelt supplication.

You can hear that depth of feeling throughout this volume. And you can also hear how the musical tastes of the American Jewish community have evolved over time, from the strongly European-flavored Orthodox synagogue services of the immigrant era to the distinctively American sounds of the postwar Reform movement.

However your own musical and spiritual tastes have evolved over time, we at the Milken Archive of Jewish Music: The American Experience wish you and your families a *Shana Tova B'Simcha!*

Learn more about the music, the artists and the traditions in

## [Volume 3: Seder T'fillot](#)

And start your High Holy Days on the right note

