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Report on the Master of Sacred Music Written Project Submitted by  
SUSAN BERKSON

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Investiture

MAX HELFMAN: A STUDY OF HIS MUSIC

The master's thesis submitted by Susan Berkson on Max Helfman and his compositions was a well prepared, well thought out evaluation of that important Jewish composer, with a fine overview of his musical life and compositions.

Susan's research relies mostly upon interviews with a number of people whom Helfman taught and with whom he worked. They all had significant careers in Jewish music and spoke glowingly about their mentor.

Though her analysis of his music occasionally lapses into oversimplifications and generalities such as "beautifully harmonized chords" - or "gorgeous coloratura lines", I found the paper interesting and successful. She certainly accomplished quite nicely the goals she set. Perhaps one could have had more detailed analysis of his "rich harmonic accompaniments" or "modern harmonic sounds". Nevertheless her extensive research and intelligent discussion of the many musical texts reproduced, reflect the loving care and devotion she has lavished on this project.

I am pleased to recommend the acceptance of Susan's thesis toward the degree of Master of Sacred Music.

MAX HELFMAN: A STUDY OF HIS MUSIC

Susan K. Berkson

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
Requirements for Master of Sacred Music Degree

Hebrew Union College--Jewish Institute of Religion  
School of Sacred Music  
New York, New York

March 27, 1989  
Cantor Lawrence Avery  
Dr. Geoffrey Goldberg



## INTRODUCTION

I chose to research the composer, Max Helfman primarily because I have always treasured the beauty of his compositions. Certain nuances and phrases of his music would remain in my ear for weeks after listening to them. As a beginning student in cantorial nusach, I met several disciples of Helfman who could only fondly remember their times and experiences with such a man. As a lyric soprano, many of Helfman's compositions fit my voice like a glove. So it is no surprise that I chose to perform his pieces and to study the intricacies of his writing and arranging.

This process involved interviewing many people who knew the man and worked or studied with him. I discovered from this process that he was a trail blazer and yet at the same time a man with a wide and intense personality. Many of my teachers and colleagues chose to become cantors because of their involvement with Helfman. This led me to find out how he reached and inspired all of them.

I am grateful to Cantors Charles Davidson, Ray Smolover, William Sharlin, Murray Simon and Jerry Grodin, Mr. Jack Gottlieb, and my coach Cantor Lawrence Avery for all of their time and help in preparing this project. Their wonderful stories and recollections about their experiences with Helfman are unique to him alone. Each of these people were very fortunate to have known him and to have been guided by such a gifted and inspiring individual.



## CHAPTER ONE

Max Helfman's career was multi-faceted, encompassing many fields. His expertise was evident in his composing, conducting, singing, teaching and accompanying at the keyboard. Perhaps he was a natural in all these fields due to growing up in a home where his father was a hazzan. As a young boy, he sang in the choir of his father's synagogue in New York. Born in Radzin, Poland, on May 25, 1901, he was brought to the United States at the age of eight. Even though his father was a hazzan and teacher, Max Helfman's home life was not stable due to his father who, it was said, was an eccentric and restless man.

A voracious reader even as a boy, Helfman did whatever he could to educate himself. In fact, he worked at a confectionery to buy books. He was interested in a wide variety of subjects, including such diverse topics as philosophy, science fiction and current events. He was also known to have been a lively and brilliant conversationalist on just about any topic. Though he did not go to an undergraduate liberal arts college, his voluminous reading made him the literate intellectual he was known to be.

He furthered his musical studies while attending the Mannes College of Music in Manhattan. From 1929 to 1931, he was a student at the Curtis Institute of Music in

Philadelphia, where he studied composition, conducting and piano. It was at Curtis that he developed his exceptional talents in these three areas.

His talent at conducting proved to be the catalyst for his public recognition as a composer and arranger. He was conducting both amateur and professional synagogue choirs in New York City as well as in New Jersey. One of the first opportunities he had to conduct was in 1928 when he became choir director and organist at Temple Israel in Washington Heights, a then-predominantly Jewish neighborhood in northern Manhattan, at the behest of Cantor David Putterman. It was at this synagogue, that Helfman introduced new melodies and actually wrote special compositions for Cantor Putterman. Helfman worked at Temple Israel until Putterman left in 1929.

Helfman's experience as a conductor carried him through many decades. He worked with choirs that had up to several hundred members. It is said that people stood in awe of him while under his baton. His dynamic character would pour through while he would be rehearsing his choirs. He worked with several choirs simultaneously. He not only worked with synagogue choirs, but also led the Workmen's Circle Chorus, a chorus affiliated with the immigrant aid organization, which sang mostly in Yiddish. When he was with this group, he also proved himself as a skillful arranger.

After Helfman left the position at Temple Israel, he became the choir director at Temple Emanuel in Paterson New Jersey in 1929. The choir at this temple was amateur and not only performed at services but also at concerts. He stayed at this post until 1940. He then worked at Sha'arei Tzedek Synagogue as choir master in New York with Cantor David Roitman. He stayed for only a short time until the event that was to be the beginning of his ascent to nationwide fame as a music director and conductor.

Helfman received a call from the well-known Rabbi Joachim Prinz of B'nai Abraham in Newark, New Jersey, to become the temple's music director. Not only was the temple one of the most renowned conservative congregations in the nation, it had an outstanding cantor, Abraham Shapiro, who inspired Helfman to write for him and the choir.

Helfman regularly composed compositions and services for the choir and the cantor. The premiere of his Shabbat Kodesh, a major sacred work, published in 1942, occurred during his tenure with B'nai Abraham. After this work was performed, there was demand for other works commissioned by other synagogues to be composed by Helfman. He left B'nai Abraham in 1952 in order to work for the Brandeis Institute in Los Angeles.

Helfman's position at B'nai Abraham was instrumental to his career as a composer in the Jewish music circuit.



Shabbat Kodesh was performed by other choirs in New York and this led to him being commissioned to write other works that also made their mark. It was in the mid 1940's when Helfman was at the height of his career.

The next arena where he was a key figure was his position at the Brandeis Camp Institute in 1944. When he first went to Brandeis, he was still the music director at B'nai Abraham, since Brandeis operated only in the summer. However, he loved his involvement with the Camp so much that he left his permanent post at B'nai Abraham in 1952 to work at Brandeis full time. It was Shlomo Bardin, one of the camp's directors, who selected Helfman based on the merit of his work at B'nai Abraham as well as many high recommendations about his work. The function that he played was complex as the camp had its overall function as well.

The objective of this camp for college youth was to give them a sense of their Jewishness and not being ashamed or embarrassed of it. The camp was developed after World War II, when Jews were confused about their place in the world after the Holocaust:

Helfman was to be the composer in residence as well as spiritually guide these young people so that they would return to their Jewish roots with pride. It was at this institution that Helfman searched and dug for music from

Israel that would touch these young people. 1

Helfman was a human dynamo at this time in his life. He was sought after by well-known people in the country who knew he had enthusiasm and the ability to spread it to others.

Helfman summed up the role of Brandeis by saying,

Many of our Jewish young men and women are atrophied emotionally. They have lost their will for passionate living as Jews. Some think there is a wall between Jew and Gentile; but the real wall is between the Jew and himself: the young American Jew who has been running away from his heritage and in doing so has turned his back on a rich creative past. Tell them about the problems of the Jew and your solution, and they will argue with you-but you cannot argue with a song or with a dance, they are non-arguable things. 2

Helfman created a Brandeis Shabbat evening service and a Havdalah service for the camp as well. He also, in 1949, arranged a collection of songs for the camp based on Israeli composers' works.

Helfman was fulfilled while he was involved with Brandeis. He viewed this opportunity as developing a

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1Philip Moddel, Max Helfman: A Biographical Sketch, (Berkeley, California: Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, The Jewish Museum of the West, 1974), p. 36.

2Ibid., p. 36.

Jewish Tanglewood. The Institute ran for five summers from 1948 to 1952. Its goals were to

train gifted Jewish youth for artistic leadership in the cultural life of the Jews in America. To create and make available programs and material truly expressive of our ethos and answering the cultural need of our people today. 3

Helfman's impact on Jews of this generation was great. It was this environment and the man that saved those Jews who may have lost touch with their faith. Many rabbis and cantors in the field today have admitted that it was Helfman who influenced their decision to study for the rabbinate and for the cantorate.

Helfman was more than just a song leader or a music instructor. His influence was not so much a moving force on the orthodox core of his students, but he made a tremendous impact on the peripheral Jews, the more or lost generation. Both musically and spiritually, he "won souls," he changed lives. He directed and channeled the career of many students into the Jewish field, students who otherwise might have severed contact with their heritage. 4

Max Helfman was also on the faculty of Hebrew Union College's campuses in Los Angeles and New York in the mid-1950s, and the University of Judaism in Los Angeles. He has been noted as a fine instructor and will always be

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3Ibid., p. 38.

4Ibid., pp. 39-40.



remembered by his pupils. His greatest contribution to the Jewish musical legacy is that his compositions are used widely today in American synagogues. They still remain unique today. Helfman will remain popular for generations to come due to the fact that his compositions retain those qualities that reflect his kindness, zeal, enthusiasm, and love for life.

## CHAPTER 2

There are certain elements in Helfman's compositions that make them fresh and original. Whatever he composed remained authentic to the text and his interpretation retains this quality. He was an innovator in establishing harmonies that were modern; however, they remained well within the boundary of acceptable harmonies in the synagogue. Regarding Helfman's writing, Cantor Ray Smolover mentioned that his compositions created an impact that is still felt today because

he had the ability to retain a traditional sound but was able to provide this sound with modern harmonies. He did not manifest harmonies to make them modern harmonic tones. Helfman wrote what he felt. 5

There were certain nuances and qualities in Max Helfman's writing that were intrinsic and unique to him. There were certainly other major liturgical composers of his era that produced much as well, such as Fromm, Binder, Freed and Weinberg. What made Helfman stand out and become superior to these will be discussed.

His setting of the Chatzi Kaddish from his service Shabbat Kodesh definitely retains the flavor of the Kaddish and yet melds into unusual and lush harmony sections. Cantor William Sharlin said that his construction of this

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5Interview with Cantor Ray Smolover, December 1988.

work is one of the best from the entire service of the Shabbat Kodesh. He said this is primarily because the structure of the Kaddish controls how the composer will write for it. 6

The thematic phrase with which the piece starts returns a number of times in the piece, building each time. An unusual move which Helfman employed was to raise the sixth, which is representative of the Ukrainian Dorian mode. This device initiates a departure from the original Kaddish theme. He employs this element during two different sections of the piece. Each time it is used, the piece builds and then finally resolves. During the final time when used at the ossia, this device initiates a culmination or climax of the piece. Immediately following these two sections, the choir sings the response, "ba-a-ga-la." These are mellow, lighter sections that follow the more intense harmonic sections.

Helfman's ability to compose for as controlled a text as the Kaddish resulted in a piece which creates a beautiful mood and which can captivate its listeners. Cantor William Sharlin mentioned that Helfman was incredibly imaginative. "He would try to reach out for something fresh and different," Sharlin noted. 7

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6Interview with Cantor William Sharlin, June 1988.

7**ibid.**



Helfman composed for various situations--for the Cantor and choir of a synagogue, the camp at Brandeis, for choruses in New York and also for shows. The wide variety of his composing led to the imaginative style which entered his works. Richard J. Neumann regards his compositions as "spontaneous," each time to be interpreted with a fresh feeling. His music does not consist merely of tones, harmonies, and rhythms--even though it was notated--but has a vitality that inspires reinterpretation. 8

It is no accident that the now-classic Sh'ma Koleinu has become the classic it is today, Cantor Ray Smolover believes. Smolover also mentioned that Helfman learned to distill or give the essence of a dreidel. "He did not have to dress up a piece nor did he need to gush," he said. "Helfman was able to provide the central emotion within his piece." 9

This is also evident in the piece, Eloheinu, Velohei Avoteinu, R'tsey. Helfman includes sections within this piece that produce emotive responses. At first glance, the R'tsey appears fragmented and awkward. After studying this piece, it is remarkable as to how each section is superbly crafted and connected to each other.

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8Philip Moddel and Richard J. Neumann, "Max Helfman: The Man and His Musical Legacy," Musica Judaica Vol. VI, No. 1, 1983-84, p. 69.

9Smolover, op. cit.

The piece is unmeasured, except for the second, or nigun section. It begins with an octave leap in order to create attention. This occurs also in the Sh'ma Koleinu. When it finally moves to the interval moving of a fifth, which occurs three times in the first three phrases, there are beautifully harmonized chords to accompany the melody and gorgeous coloratura lines in between the intervals of a fifth. It begins in the Magen Avot mode, and moves to the relative major in measure four.

Obviously, the text of V'taher Libenu must have been special to Helfman because he set this part of the prayer to a memorable tune, a nigun--a table song often sung by Hasidim. This is the only section that has a meter. It is an obvious tonal contrast to the free sections of the piece. It also serves a dual purpose because the section is in the middle of the prayer and balances the structure of the piece. The fact that this section is repeated shows that Helfman found this part of the prayer to be of significance.

The culmination of the piece occurs immediately after the V'taher Libenu section. This is a recitative section; the text reads, "And give us as our inheritance, Adonoy our God, in love and in pleasure Your holy Sabbath." 10 The musical line is a lyrical one and creates a beautiful

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10 Rabbi Avroham Davis, ed., The Metsudah Siddur, (New York: Metsudah Publications, 1983), p. 277.

sentiment. This is then tied back to the beginning motif of the repetitive interval of a fifth at the beginning of the phrase.

The attention-getting device of the leaping intervals of the fifths against the rich harmonic accompaniment of the ninth chords, blends the piece's traditional melodic line with some modern harmonic sounds. The composition of each section is so well set here and yet it is tied together without the piece feeling artificial. This is a musical example of a prayer that does not have a controlled sense within it and yet Helfman's compositional style makes it seem as if there was some control of the structure of the prayer text. This analysis proves that Helfman could compose cohesively and successfully for any liturgical text.

Comparing the V'shamru from Helfman's Shabbat Kodesh with the V'shamru from Isadore Freed's Hasidic Service shows Helfman's compositional style to be original and unique.

Helfman's main theme, which begins the piece and is also used again at the end of the third verse, is easily sung and sets a peaceful and tranquil mood. Helfman uses a recitative for the second verse of the V'shamru and an imitative setting for the third verse. The recitative actually appears to be spontaneous when it is sung, thanks to his setting of it. However, there is a taste of the main theme interspersed throughout this



section and in the fugal section. This approach characterizes Helfman's composing. He highlights and enhances the main theme in subtle ways but never loses sight of it.

The V'shamru in Freed's Hasidic Service is vastly different from Helfman's because of a variety of each composer's techniques. Freed's V'shamru is in the Ahava Rabah mode. In this mode, less can be altered or shifted to include different sounds. Helfman's V'shamru is written in the key of G-minor and shifts successfully into several different keys in the recitative section. Freed also shifts from the main theme on the "beini u'vein" section. However, he never leaves the Ahavah Rabah mode, except that the sixth is raised, which shifts it to the relative major. This is the only place where Freed chose to shift from the main theme. By not varying most of the rhythmic ideas, Freed's composition lacks variety. The changes he makes are very slight and the altered section does not sound that much unlike the rest of the piece.

Helfman's creativity can be seen in his style of including a fugal-like section, a very free recitative, and two similar thematic sections within one liturgical piece. Perhaps Freed's style of writing in the context of a Hasidic service could have posed some limitations in terms of setting this piece. However, these two composers lived and worked during the same period of time and obviously

were influenced by many different factors.

CHAPTER 3

The craft of arranging was Helfman's great strength. His talent of arranging pieces from choral works to Israeli folk pieces to liturgical pieces proves that he was without constraints in his selections. It is this area that makes him considered an exceptional talent.

Ani Ma'amin, a statement based on Maimonides' summary of Jewish creed, is a choral work that remains a classic today. Helfman used the melody sung by Holocaust victims on their way to death in the gas chambers. Helfman's arrangement begins with the tenors and basses singing a counter-melody. The sopranos and altos follow the tenors with this melody when the basses and tenors then sing the original melody. The original melody continues to be sung by either the male section or the female section. In measure 23, an adapted motive of Ani Ma'amin introduces or suggests a wailing or cry. This is set against the original melody of the piece. Helfman's device of transferring the melody between the female section and the male section produces different colors within the piece. The wailing effect of the Ani Ma'amin melody creates even more of an emotional charge than this already emotional melody has.

The middle section (measure 31) includes unison among sopranos and tenors within a four-part homophonic texture.



The bass again has the counter-melody which initiated the piece. Helfman slightly changes the original melody in this section. The sopranos and tenors carry the altered melody. This is such a subtle change and yet it fits into the parameters of the harmonic structure of the work. The change also creates interest because the piece would sound repetitive if the same melody was played or sung each time. In the "v'af al pi" section (measure 35), again the original melody is altered slightly to fit the mood of the piece. This is Helfman's stroke of genius. His great gift was his ability to weave in separate melodic themes to a well-known melody. In this case, Ani Ma'amin was developed during the Holocaust.

In addition, Helfman skillfully handles the placement of the original theme. By using such counter-themes, the emotional effect of the original melody is far greater. The piece returns to the initial counter-melody or wailing idea. It then leads to a point of culmination and builds to a climax. He had the ability to build on a theme, expand the theme or adapt the theme and remain within the confines of the original theme. This tightly knit work is an example of how Helfman worked as an arranger.

Many of the pieces from the Brandeis Song Collection are good examples of how he arranged Palestinian folk songs. Helfman beautifully arranged the piece Halichah L'keysariah, set to a melody by David Zahavi and a powerful

poem by Hannah Senesh. The piece begins with a dissonant interval which reflects the internal struggle that the poet faced when writing the text. (Senesh, who spied for Britain during World War Two, was captured by the Germans on her first mission, over Hungary. She was later executed.) Helfman's arrangement is very sensitive.

The accompaniment Helfman composed for this piece is far more than a basic chordal accompaniment. The unusual but beautiful harmonic colors that flow in the piece are what set apart his serious work from other standard accompaniments.

Richard Neumann stated that within the Brandeis Collection, Helfman elevated the folksong to an art song. 11 Helfman used several techniques when he arranged this piece. In the fourth complete measure when b flat and d sharp are introduced, these sudden harmonic changes make for unusual and diverse colors in the piece. These are sounds that could easily be dissonant, but are not. Afterwards, they resolve to a non-dissonant chord. Helfman used these unusual chords to highlight the text and show the internal struggle which Senesh faced. Neumann stated "...that by providing these coloristic qualities, this

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11Neumann, op.cit., p. 79.



arrangement touched the [Brandeis] campers' souls and captured the pastoral nostalgia of the Senesh text." 12

A second illustration of Helfman's arrangement of an Israeli folk song is titled "Shir Haavodah," composed by Nahum Nardi with lyrics by Nathan Alterman. Nardi, born in Kiev, Ukraine, in 1901, studied composition and piano at the Kiev, Warsaw and Vienna conservatories and moved to Palestine in 1923. The Arab Bedouin and peasant songs and Sephardic and Yemenite melodies influenced him as a composer. Nardi is also known for developing an original style of piano accompaniment. He composed for not only Nathan Alterman's poetry, but also for Bialik, Kipnis and Navon.

The Hebrew poet, Nathan Alterman, was born in 1910 in Warsaw, Poland and settled in Tel Aviv in 1925. Alterman achieved distinction as a poet on two levels: as the author of popular satirical verse which reflected the political aspirations of the Yishuv in its struggle against the policies of the British authorities in the 1940s and as a sophisticated modern poet who was recognized as one of the leaders of the country's literary avant garde. 13

"Shir Haavodah" (Work Song) is a stunning setting of the Hebrew poem. The sentiment of the poem comes through

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12Ibid.

13Meyer, Michael, "Alterman, Nathan," Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 2, col. 773-774.



very clearly in the piece. Helfman's setting blends sensitively with Nardi's beautiful melody. The arpeggiated phrases which Helfman discretionatly used add a great deal of warmth and cohesiveness to the piece. The playfulness of the syncopations he added for the second verse illustrates the hopefulness and joy the people felt about being workers in a beautiful country.

The piece "Sadot Shebaemek" is an example of a folk song which Helfman elevated to the stature of an art song. The poem, written by Levi Ben Amati, speaks of the fields as well as the fragrance of the new-cut grass. Ben Amati, born in Bielorussia in 1901, emigrated to Palestine in 1920. He became a member of Kibbutz Deganyah Bet in 1925 and worked there first as an agricultural laborer and then as a teacher. He wrote books of poetry and Sadot Shebaemek was a title of one of them, published in 1950.

The melody, by E. Ben Chayim, is thoughtful and serious. Helfman's setting adds even more solemnity and gives the piece a definition toward the art song style. Helfman's setting of the piece ties it into an artistic unit. It is from such a setting that the singer may emote.

The piece "HaGez" is playful and light in contrast to "Sadot Shebaemek." The lyrics are by Sara Levi and the melody by E. Pugotchov, also known as Amiran. His songs are among the most important contribution to the Israeli

folk style. 14 Born in Warsaw, Poland, Amiran moved to Palestine in 1924. In addition to composing Israeli folk music, he also wrote choral, orchestral and piano music. Helfman's arrangement parallels the playfulness of Amiran's melody. The rhythmic figure at the beginning of the piece of the sixteenth notes with the eighth notes introduces the playful theme in the piece. Helfman's setting is another example of how he accentuates the composer's artistry and builds on the composer's musical ideas.

"R'u Hevenu" composed by Yedidiah Admon, born Gorochof, was born in the Ukraine and went to Israel in 1906. He studied in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. He also studied theory and composition in the United States. Admon as a pioneer in the field of Israeli song. He was one of the first Israeli composers and one of the earliest to create a new style which served as a model for other composers. This style blends four elements: the music of the Oriental Jewish communities, especially the Yemenite and the Persian, Arab music, Hasidic music, and Bible cantillation. 15

"R'u Hevenu" contains elements of Yemenite music. The rhythms are sheer examples of this trait. The sixteenth

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14"Amiran, Emanuel," Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 12, col. 680.

15Shmueli, Herzl, "Admon, Yedidiah," Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 2, col. 292.



note figure which is consistently written on the third beat is a typical compositional trait from Yemenite or Oriental music. Helfman's setting allows these characteristics to continue to be a part of the piece while he elaborated lightly on the Yemenite theme. The accompaniment or setting expertly sets a mood for the preparation of Shabbat which is the underlying message within the poem.

Helfman's arrangements of the Workmen's Circle choral pieces are again examples of how he arranged the folk music expressing socialist themes. Dedicated to the promotion of progressive Yiddish culture, the Workmen's Circle developed a broad spectrum of cultural activities, including publication of books, adult education, and singing and dramatic clubs. 16

The piece "Flichtling Lid" (Worker's Song) was written by Louis E. Miller. Miller was very involved in the political life of socialist and other labor organizations. He was born in Vilna, Lithuania, in 1866 and fled from Russia at age 14. He participated in emigre revolutionary circles in Berlin. It was in New York that he helped found the first Jewish shirtmakers union. Miller was most influential as editor and writer in Yiddish. Among many publications that he was involved was Die Arbeiter Zeitung

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16 Sherman, C. Bezalel, "Workmen's Circle," Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 16, col. 635.



and Daily Forward. He founded his own paper in 1905, Die Wahrheit, which stressed Jewish national aspirations.

The melody and setting of "Flichting Lid" captures a mood which depicts the workers. The text expresses the pain of how tough it is for the workers in America in the early 20th century. There is a pathos that is expressed clearly in the text. It states, "Who can measure our suffering or our torment? No one will be able to understand our pain and our cry." The introduction of the piece begins with a choral humming, which outlines the scale of the Ukrainian Dorian mode. The hum creates a feeling of pathos or brooding. By arranging this section of the piece for only two parts, rather than four separate parts, there is a void or emptiness that reflects the text's pathos.

The dynamic section of the piece begins when the text speaks of "have the towers opened up." At this point, the piece is written for four voices. This follows the melancholy theme and it is in this section that the piece becomes dramatic. Helfman captures these two distinct and separate moods very well in this setting.

The song "A Shnaiderl's a Vaib" has text by Y.L. Cahan. Cahan was born in Vilna, Lithuania, in 1881. His family moved to Warsaw eight years later. In 1901, he left for London, and moved to New York three years later. While Jewish immigrants were entering London and New York from Eastern Europe, Cahan was able to develop his folklore

collection. In Warsaw in 1896, Cahan began collecting folksongs. At the turn of the century Yiddish folklore was very well accepted by the younger generation which kept Cahan's folksong collection growing.

Cahan published two volumes of Yiddish folksongs in 1912. After these were published, his career was firmly established. Almost every anthology of Yiddish folksongs were chosen from his collections. Cahan was a founder of Yivo and was chosen to head its folklore committee.

"A Shneiderl's a Vaib" tells the story of a tailor's wife who is ill and her husband who does not believe her. He asks her to feed their children instead. The story is very undetailed and the music that Helfman arranged for this story and also unadorned. The various rhythmic changes constitute the actions of the people in the story. The only actual spot of dramatic intensity is in the middle section when the tailor asks his wife to get up. Having the rhythmic sections explain the text and the piece's echo effect in measure six at "shtei oif," add to the excitement and interest of the piece. This work is actually a light folk-tune. However Helfman developed it into a skillfully constructed choral piece.

The three short folk songs of Drai Miniaturen, which Helfman arranged, are also three unusual arrangements or settings. "Ba Main Mamen" (At My Mother's) is the first folk song from this group. This arrangement by Helfman is



very effective in terms of showing the yearning and sadness of the text. The text states that this person was very important at their mother's house and that they are saddened that they had to leave their mother. By setting this in the treble clef, these feelings are effectively felt.

The harmonies blend together very tightly and create a warmth which allows for an empathetic feeling to emerge. A similar technique that Helfman used here and also used in "A Shnaiderl's a Vaib" is beginning a motif in one voice and having it echoed in a different voice. In measure 11, the alto begins with "az och" and the soprano then repeats this phrase. The actual device he uses is not having the echo repeat the exact same melodic line; instead the soprano echoes this line in the interval of a fifth and the alto begins the line in the interval of a fourth. This technique sets up a clear change within the harmonic structure and creates an interesting line in the piece.

The second piece in the trio is "Oy a Nacht a Sheine" (Oh, Such a Beautiful Night). Helfman's strength again is exhibited in this piece by the way he sets the voices in direct contrast rhythmically and harmonically to the melodic line. In measure eight, the alto, tenor and bass sections are all written rhythmically alike and yet are all in complete contrast to the soprano or melody line. This again is a special technique which adds a dimension to the



character of the piece. The sound is somewhat dissonant to the melody, but Helfman's skill at grouping voices together allows these parts to fit well together.

In the third piece of the three folk songs, "Forn M'chutonim" (The In-Laws are Coming), the complexity of the arrangement is such that to divide the piece and separate all of the themes would be fruitless. Helfman's arrangement utilizes "bim bams" and "las," and the melody is a part of each voice at one time or another. Helfman's skill and talent at setting the different rhythms and syncopations displays his success at arranging a particular piece.

"Zai shtoltz af dain arbet" (Be proud of your work), which was written by Morris Rosenfeld with music by Helfman, is from the Workmen's Circle Collection. Rosenfeld was the most popular of the sweatshop poets. He was also the most popular Yiddish poet ever to write in the United States. Rosenfeld had a gift for dramatic rhetoric as well as for dramatizing the sufferings of the Jewish immigrant. Rosenfeld came from the Jewish masses and wrote "Jewish-social" outcries, authentic outpourings of the immigrant experience. 17

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17Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg, eds., A Treasury of Yiddish Poetry (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston), 1969, p. 20.

Rosenfeld was born in Russian Poland in 1862 and grew up in Warsaw. He was a tailor in London, and when coming to New York in 1886, he worked in a sweatshop as a presser for ten years. His first collection of socialist poems appeared in 1888. His sweatshop songs were sung by laborers in the factories.

Rosenfeld's most famous poems communicate a sentimental eloquence and force. He was the first Yiddish poet to achieve fame beyond the Jewish world. Another of the Yiddish poets, Moshe Leib Halpern remarked about Rosenfeld, "Rosenfeld is in the blood of every one of us." 18

Rosenfeld wrote poems on proletarian, national and romantic themes. His proletarian poems and national songs stirred the Jewish masses during their early days in the new world.

"Zai shtoltz af dain arbet" reflects the socialists' cry to take pride in their work. The worker was to be aware of his or her value. The melody is set to a powerful marching rhythm which intensifies the power of the text. The mood and feeling of the piece is steadfast and at the same time exuberant. The piece sends off a feeling of union among each of the workers.

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18Howe, op.cit., p. 21.



Helfman's artistry in the arrangements of each of these Workmen's Circle pieces is a skill or craft that involves abilities that are apart from composition. The ways in which he effectively balanced four moving lines and yet has each line capture the intent of the text, the nuances and suggestive ideas which he employs that add to the creativity of the musical lines, and certainly the ingenious methods at allowing rhythms to actually narrate the text or story are some of the characteristics about his arranging that make him a master. There are so many other compositions that could be looked at and explored, however these pieces are the models of how Helfman adeptly used his talent and how others can learn from him.



#### CHAPTER FOUR

Many people who had studied with Helfman became cantors and rabbis partially because of his influence. While interviewing some of his former students I learned that Helfman was a kind and gentle man who could also be strong and dynamic. People remained spellbound by him which suggests that he affected people in all kinds of ways.

Cantor Jerry Grodin from Redwood City, California who is now retired, called his relationship with Helfman as a tremendous blessing in his lifetime of experiences. Cantor Grodin studied nusach with Helfman at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles and spoke of Helfman in this way:

Max was a dedicated and devoted Jew. His writing was his own expression of his interpretation of the text. He was a true interpreter of the text. He was a remarkable personality. 19

Cantor Grodin told me about one class he took from Helfman, and said that when they received music from Helfman during class, the ink was drying on the page. He remembered that Helfman wrote the pieces immediately before their class.

It was in the 1950's when 13 Los Angeles-area cantors made a recording of all of Max Helfman's music. Cantor Grodin was asked to keep tabs on Helfman during the period

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19Interview with Cantor Jerry Grodin, June 1988.

of time around the recording. Cantor Grodin was asked to pick Helfman up for the rehearsals and to also make sure that Helfman got home safely. Cantor Grodin fondly remembered that there were many re-recordings of the music because Helfman wanted perfection from all of the 13 cantors. He remembered that Helfman had a magnetism about him and was incredibly intense when choral directing or teaching.

Composer and Cantor Charles Davidson studied with Helfman for six weeks at the Brandeis Camp Institute in the mid 1950's. Cantor Davidson sang in a choir while he was a high school student and was already familiar with Helfman's music prior to attending Brandeis. He remarked that Helfman was a major influence in his choice of career and in his compositional work. He stated that Helfman's music was as colorful and dramatic as Helfman was. He mentioned as well that Helfman had a great ability to invoke passion in people. He fondly recalled that Helfman was a warm person who loved his students and embraced them. Cantor Davidson also mentioned that Helfman had a great facility for doing things on the spot.

Rabbi Gerald Goldman of Temple Sholom, Plainfield, N.J., was a camper at the Brandeis Camp Institute in 1957. He mentioned that Helfman's capacity to make people want to sing was remarkable. He especially remembered how inspirational the melodies were that Helfman composed,



especially the Birkat Hamazon and the Havdalah service. 20

Cantor Raymond Smolover met Helfman in 1946. Cantor Smolover was asked to come to the Brandeis Institute in 1948. It was in 1949 when Cantor Smolover directed the second camp institute in Henderson, North Carolina. He remembered that Helfman was the combination of a philosopher and a humorist at the same time.

Cantor Smolover knew Helfman very well and their families became very close. He remembered that Helfman wrote his now-classic "Sh'ma Koleinu" in one night. He made it very clear that this piece was not written for the opera star Jan Peerce, but after it was published, Helfman dedicated it to Jan Peerce.

Cantor Smolover mentioned that Helfman was a profound humanist where on one level, he was joyful, funny and humorous and on another level he had deep emotional responses. In addition he stated that Helfman was the kindest man and an original enabler. He was deeply interested in helping talented people nurture their own talents, be it singing or composition or conducting. 21

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20Interview with Rabbi Gerald Goldman, September 1988.

21Smolover, op.cit.



### CONCLUSION

This project has been very informative for me because I was able to focus on Helfman's compositional style and his flair for arranging, areas I was not familiar with before.

His ability to set a prayer such as the Kaddish in such a tight frame reveals his unique ability and craft that divides him from other composers of his era.

It also was valuable for me to meet with those who knew Helfman. Each of them provided me with their fond recollections and happy moments with him, as well analytical discussions of his work.

It is encouraging to realize that Helfman's impact was so intense and positive that many of the students who attended the Brandeis Institute became Rabbis and Cantors. I know of few teachers that have been that influential.

And through my research, Helfman has strengthened my own vocal work. My in-depth study and analysis of his compositions and the musical details which he employed in many of his pieces have aided me in my own performance of these works.

It would have been fortunate and valuable if I had been able to know and work with such a man.





# KADDISH

33

1  
Con devozione tenero 2 3 4

CANTOR

Yis-ga - dal — v<sup>e</sup>-yis-ka - dash sh<sup>e</sup>-mē ra - bo —

ORGAN

*p*

5 6 7 8 *poco a poco*

C

b<sup>e</sup>-o - l' - mo di-vro chi-ru-sē — v<sup>e</sup>-yam-lich mal-chu-sē — b<sup>e</sup>-cha-yēy -

*p semplice*

S

o - men

*p*

T

B

9 10 11 12

*cresc.*

C

chon uv-yo-mēy - chon uv-cha-yēy d<sup>e</sup>-chol bēys yis-ro - ēl

*mp* *mf* *rit.*



13 14 15 16

ba - a - go - lo ba - a - go - lo u - viz - man ko - riv v<sup>a</sup> - im -

ba - go - lo ba - go - lo u - viz - man ko - riv

*sempre pp*

u u u u u

*pp*

17 18 19 20 21

ru -

*...mpre legatissimo poco cresc.*

o - mēn. Y<sup>a</sup> - hē sh'mē ra-bo m'vo - rach l<sup>a</sup> - o - lam ul-ol-mē

*pp*

o - mēn. Y<sup>a</sup> - hē sh'mē ra-bo m'vo - rach l<sup>a</sup> - o - lam ul-ol-mē

*pp*

*pp sempre legatissimo poco cresc.*

Kaddish -

C

S

A

T

B

ol - ma -

ol - ma -

C

bach - v<sup>a</sup> -

OSSIA

C

dar -

dar -

*<mf>*

Kaddish -



22 23 24 25

C *dim.* Yis-bo - rach — v'-yish-la

S A ol - ma - yoi yis - bo - rach.

T *poco marcato* ol - ma - yoi yis - bo - rach.

B

26 27 28 29 *poco a poco cresc.*

C bach - v'-yis - po - ar v'-yis-ro - mam — v'-yis-na - sē — v'-yis-ha-

30 31 32

OSSIA

dar — v'-yis - a - leh v'-yis - ha - lol — sh' - mē d'-kud - sho;

C *con fuoco* dar — v'-yis - a - leh v'-yis - ha - lol — sh' - mē d'-kud - sho;

Kaddish -



C  
 S  
 A  
 T  
 B

v<sup>e</sup>  
 mo

Musical score for "The Rose Tree" featuring vocal parts (C, S, A, T, B) and piano accompaniment. The score is in 2/4 time and G major. The vocal parts are arranged in a SATB format. The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand and a left hand. The score includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 2/4. The vocal parts are marked with "v<sup>e</sup>" and "mo".

C  
 S  
 A  
 T  
 B

Musical score for "The Rose Tree" featuring vocal parts (C, S, A, T, B) and piano accompaniment. The score is in 2/4 time and includes a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The vocal parts are arranged in a five-part setting, with the Soprano (S) and Alto (A) parts having lyrics. The piano accompaniment is shown at the bottom, featuring a treble and bass clef.

**Kaddish -**

41 *meant to think in 4/2* *let it flip up* *messia voce* *hook* 43 4:1

C *mo*  
v<sup>a</sup>-im - ru - v<sup>a</sup>-im - ru -  
S  
A  
T  
B

*mp* >

C *45* *46* *47* *48* *49*  
o - mēn.  
S *pp*  
o - mēn.  
T *pp*  
o - mēn.  
B *pp*

Kaddish -



# R'TZĒ

## (ELŌHĒNU VĒLŌHĒ AVŌSĒNU)

SABBATH CHANT

MAX HELFMAN

*Calmly*

*legato*

*7 nearly*

*mf*

E - lō-hē - nu vē - lō - hē a - vō - sē - nu,

*mf*

*p*

r' - tzē, r' - tzē vim - nu cho - sē - nu

*p*

*3 yang - yang*

kad' - shē nu b' - mitz vō - se - cho

7

4

*mf* *light* *mp* *separate* 3

v'-sën, v'-sën chel - - - kē - nu b'-sō - - -

*mf*

*mf* *triple* *syncop*

- - - ro - se - cho. Sa - b'ē - nu mi - tu - ve - cho,

*mf*

6

*spiritedly* *ay* *Schwanitz* *calmly*

v'-sam chē nu, v'-sam chē - nu bi - shu -

*f*

7

8

With a gentle swing

o - se - - - cho.

*p*



*gently* 9 10 11 4 12 13

V'-ta-hër, v'-ta-hër li - bẽ - nu 1' - ov-d' - cho, 1' - ov-d' - cho

14 3 15 16 15

1. 2.

be e - mes, mes.

17

V'-har, - chi-lẽ - nu A - dõ-noy e - lõ-hẽ - nu b' -

7

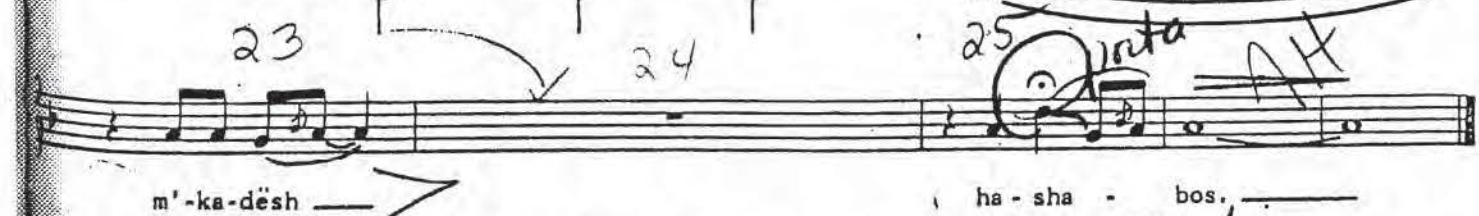
*warmly* *Climax* *gently* *don't stop air* *18 accented gently*

a - ha - vo - uv - ro-tzõn - sha - bas - kod-she-cho. V'-yo-nu - chu

sh



Congregation ad lib. 21





# Hear Our Voice, O Lord

Sh'ma Kolënu

MAA HELLMAN

Text Adapted by J. F.

Moderato solenne

With fer

Sh' - ma ko - lë -  
Ac - cept our pray'r, O

nu, A - do - noy e - lo - hëy - nu,  
God, and our sup - pli - ca - tion.

chus v' - ra -  
Hear us, hear our voice, O

chëm o - lëy - nu, o - lëy - nu; v' - ka - bël b' - ra - cha - mim, b' -  
Lord, look gra - cious - ly up - on us; and grant Thy lov - ing kind - ness, Thy

ra - cha - mim uv - ro tzon es t' - fi - lo - sê - nu.  
mer - cy and for - give - ness to us who stand be - fore Thee.



In free cantorial style

*mf* 21 22 23 24

Ha - shi - vē - nu A - dō - noy - e - le - cho, ha - shi - vē - nu e - le - cho v' - no - shu - voh;  
 Lead - us back to Thee, O Lord, in re - pentence, lead us back to Thee, O Lord, in re - pentence;

*mf*

25 26 27 28 29

cha - dēsh yo - mēy - nu, yo - mēy - nu k' - ke - dem.  
 par - don us, O par - don us, re - new our days as of yore.

*mf*

34 *mp* 35 36 *oh*

Al, al tash - li - chē - nu,  
 Do not turn Thy face from us,

*p* più mosso molto espr. *sfp*

37 38 39 40 *mf* 41 42

al, al tash - li - chē - nu,  
 do not turn Thy face from us,

*sfp*



43

44

45

46

47

48

while the years are fleet-ing and our

broader Not loud  
molto appassionato 49

50

morendo poco a poco

51

los strength ko is chē wan - ing; al, do not, al, do not,

Tempo I

56

57

al do ta - az - nu. do not for - sake us.

Sh' -  
Ar -

Tempo I

58

59

60

61

ma cept ko - lē - nu, our pray'r, O God, A - do - noy e - lo - hēy - nu, pli - ca - tion.

*mf* 64 65

chus v' - ra - chēm o - lēy - nu, c - lēy - nu, v' -  
 Hear us, hear our voice, O Lord, look gra-cious-ly up - on us; and

*mp*

67 68 69 70

ka - bēl b' - ra - cha-mim, b' - ra - cha-mim uv - ro - tzon  
 grant Thy lov - ing kind - ness, Thy mer - cy and for - give-ness to

*colla voce*

71 72 73

es t' - fi - lo - sē - nu.  
 us who stand be - fore Thee.

433-4

שמע קולנו, יי אלהינו, חוס ורחם עלינו,  
 וקבל ברחמים ובכח אהבה את תפלתנו.  
 השקנו יי אליה ונשובה, חודש ימינו כקדם.  
 אל תסליכנו לעת זקנה, ככלות כחנו אל תעובנו.



V<sup>e</sup>SHOM'RUALTO SOLO or CANTOR (Baritone)  
Andante pensieroso

2

3

4

ORGAN

V<sup>e</sup>-sho-m<sup>e</sup>-ru b<sup>e</sup>-nëy yis-ro-ël es ha-sha - bos la - a -

5

6

7

8

sos — es ha-sha-bos l<sup>e</sup>-do - ro-som b<sup>r</sup>is o - lom b<sup>e</sup> - ris o -

9

10

11

SOPR.

V<sup>e</sup>-sho - m<sup>e</sup> - ru b<sup>e</sup> - nëy yis-ro-ël es ha - sha -

lom.

ALTO

Ha -

sha -

T

V<sup>e</sup>-sho - m<sup>e</sup> - ru es ha - sha -

B

V<sup>e</sup>shom - ru b<sup>e</sup>-nëy yis - ro - ël

bos

S  
A

bos

T

bos

B

es ha-

CANTOR or T

S  
A

lom..

T

lom.

B

lom.

C  
or T

nëy-

V<sup>e</sup>shom'ru -



12 13 14 15

bos la-a - sos es ha-sha - bos l<sup>e</sup>-do-ro - som b'ris o -

S A

bos laa - sos b'ris o - -

T

bos laa - sos es ha-sha - bos b'ris o - -

B

es ha-sha-bos la - a sos es ha-sha - bos b'ris o - -

16 17 18

CANTOR or TENOR SOLO

*mp* Bëy - - ni u - vëyn b<sup>e</sup>-

lom.

S A

lom, b<sup>e</sup>-ris o - - lom.

T

lom.

B

lom.

*mp*

19 20 21

*mf*

C or T

nëy- yis - ro - - ël os hi

*mf*



22 23 24

C os hi l' - o - - - lom, l' - o -

25 26 27

C lom.

ALTO I Ki she-shes yo - mim o -

ALTO II Ki she-shes

T Ki she-shes yo - mim o - so a -

B Ki she-shes yo - mim o - so a - do - noy

SOPRANO 28 29 30

so a - do - noy Es ha - sho - ma - yim, es ha - sho - ma -

A yo - min sho-ma-yim ha - sho - ma -

T do - - noy es ha - sho - ma -

B o - - so ha - sho - ma -

V' shom'ru -

yim -

S A yim -

T yim -

B yim -

Come pr  
U - va

S A *p*

T

B

V' shom'ru -



31 32 33 34

S A yim— v<sup>e</sup>-es, v<sup>e</sup>-es ho - o - retz.

T yim— v<sup>e</sup>-es, v<sup>e</sup>-es ho - o - retz.

B yim— v<sup>e</sup>-es, v<sup>e</sup>-es ho - o - retz.

mf mp

yo - mim o -  
Ki she-shes

Come primo 36 37 38 39

S A U - va-yom ha - shvi-i ha - shvi - i sho -

T U - va-yom ha - shvi - i, ha-shvi - i sho -

B U - va - yom — ha-shvi - i, ha - shvi - i

p

V<sup>e</sup>shom'ru -



32

40 41 42 43

vas, sho - vas, sho - vas va-yi-no - fash.

vas va-yi-no - fash, va-yi - no -

vas, sho - vas va-yi-no - fash

sho - vas, sho - vas va-yi-no - fash

CANTOR

ORGAN

44

CANTOR *calmato* 3

45

46 47 48 49

*p* Sho - vas va - yi - no - fash.

*pp* - fash

*p* va - yi - no - fash.

*pp* va - yi - no - fash.

*p* va - yi - no - fash.

*pp* va - yi - no - fash.

*p*

*pp*

C  
 S  
 A  
 T  
 B

*p* *semplice*  
 o - men

Musical score for the song "Chon" from "The Song of the Shugborough". The score is written for voice and piano. The voice part is in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked "Andante". The lyrics are "Chon". The score includes dynamic markings: "cresc." (crescendo) for the voice and "mp" (mezzo-piano) for the piano. The piano part features a prominent bass line with a descending eighth-note pattern.



## V'SHAMRU

Andante espressivo

CANTOR *tenderly*

1 2 3 4

V' - sha - m - ru — v' - nei yis - ra - el et ha - sha - bat, —

5 6 7 8

et ha - sha - bat, la - a - sot — et ha - sha - bat l'do - ro - tam — b' -

9 10 11

rit o - lam.

CHOIR *pp*

V' - sha - m - ru — v' - nei yis - ra - el

V' - sha - m - ru — v' - nei yis - ra - el

V' - sha - m - ru — v' - nei yis - ra - el

*pp*



S A et ha - sha - bat, et ha - sha - bat, la - a - sot —

T et ha - sha - bat, et ha - sha - bat, la - a - sot —

B et - sha - sha - bat, et ha - sha - bat, la - a - sot —

15 16 17

S A et ha - sha - bat l'do - ro - tam b' - rit o - lam.

T et ha - sha - bat l'do - ro - tam b' - rit o - lam.

B et ha - sha - bat l'do - ro - tam b' - rit o - lam.

Poco più mosso  
CANTOR

18 19 20 21

Bei - ni u - vein b'nei yis - rael ot - hi l' - o - lam,

C ot —

C sah

CHOIR

S A U.

T U.

B U.

S A sh

T sh

B sh



22 23 24

C  
ot — hi l' - o - lam. Ki — she - shet, ki she-shet va - mim a -

26 27 28 29

C  
sah A-do-nai et ha-sha - ma - yim v' - et ha - a - retz.

CHOIR tenderly 30 31 32 33

S  
U - va - yom — ha-shvi - i, u - va - yom — ha-shvi - i

A  
U - va - yom — ha-shvi - i, u - va - yom — ha-shvi - i

T  
U - va - yom — ha-shvi - i, u - va - yom — ha-shvi - i

B  
U - va - yom — ha-shvi - i, u - va - yom — ha-shvi - i

*p tenderly*

34 35 36 rit. 37 pp

S  
sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash, sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash.

A  
sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash, sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash.

T  
sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash, sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash.

B  
sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash, sha - vat — va - yi-na - fash.

*rit.*



# SONG OF FAITH

ANI MAAMIN

Choral Setting  
MAX HELFMAN

① Solemn, march-like 2 3 4 5 6

*p* *mp*

TENOR *p* 7 8 9 10

BASS A - ni ma - a - min, ma - a - min.

SOPRANO 11 12 13 14 15

ALTO *p* A - ni ma - a - min, ma - a - min. A - ni

T B *mp* A - ni ma - a - min, a - ni ma - a - min, a - ni ma - a - min, a - ni ma - a - min.

*mf*

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16 17 18 19 3

S  
A  
ma - a - min, ma - a - min. Be - e - mu - na sh' - le -

T  
B  
A - ni ma - a - min, a - ni ma - a - min. A - ni

20 21 22 *mp* 23

S  
A  
ma, be - e - mu - na sh' - le - ma. A - ni ma - a - min,

T  
B  
ma - a - min, a - ni ma - a - min. B' - vi - at

24 25 26

S  
A  
a - ni ma - a - min, a - ni ma - a - min.

T  
B  
ha - ma - shi - ach, B' - vi - at ha - ma - shi - ach a - ni ma - a - min,



4 27 28 29 30

S  
A  
A - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma - a-min.

T  
B  
B'-vi-at ha-ma-shi-ach, b'-vi-at ha-ma-shi-ach a-ni ma-a-min,

31 32 33 34 V'-

S  
A  
A - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma - a-min. V'-  
A - ni maa - min, ma - a - min. V'-  
A - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma - a-min.

T  
B  
A - ni ma - a - min, ma - a - min.

*appassionato*

35 36 37 38

S  
A  
Af al pi she-yit-ma-me-ach im kol ze a - ni

T  
B  
Af al pi im - kol ze a - ni

*mf*



9 *poco rit.* *allegro* 40 41 5

S A  
ma - a - min A - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma-a-min,

T B  
ma - a - min B' - vi - at ha-ma-shi - ach b' -

*poco rit.* *f allegro*

42 43 44

S A  
a - ni ma - a - min. — A - ni ma-a-min,

T B  
vi-at ha-ma-shi-ach a-ni ma - a - min, B' - vi - at

45 46 47 *poco rit.*

S A  
a - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma - a - min,

T B  
ha-ma-shi - ach b' - vi - at ha-ma-shi-ach a-ni ma - a - min

*poco rit.*



48 49 50

S A T B

*f* A - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma-a-min a - ni ma - a -

*atempo* A - ni maa - min, ma - a -

A - ni ma-a-min, a - ni ma-a-min a - ni ma - a -

*f* A - ni ma - a - min, ma - a -

*atempo* A - ni ma - a - min, ma - a -

*molto appassionato*

*ff atempo*

min, 51 a - ni 52 ma - a - min. 53

*allarg.*

min, ma a - a - min.

min, a - ni ma - a - min.

*allarg.*

min, ma a - min.

*allargando*

### אונזער גלויבן

און שרייט דאס הארץ  
דורך שייטערהויפן-פלאטען,  
ווי לאנג נאך  
וועט העלער טאג פארזאמען?  
קומען מוז די נעגארטע צייט,  
ווען אונזער פאלק וועט אויפשטיין  
אויסדערליווע, באפרייט!  
ס'וועט דער גלויבן אונז דערהויבן  
הויך איבער ביזן יאמערטאל,  
פעסטער פון אייזן, שטארקער פון שטאל!

מאקס העלפמאן

אני מאמין, מאמין.  
אונזער גלויבן, אונזער גלויבן  
פעסט איז ווי אייזן און שטאל,  
אונזער גלויבן אונז בארויבן  
קאן אונזער שונא קיינמאל.  
שטארקער פון יסורים און פון גוים  
און אפילו שטארקער פון דעם שוים!  
קומען מוז די נעגארטע צייט,  
ווען אונזער פאלק וועט אויפשטיין  
אויסדערליווע, באפרייט!  
ס'וועט דער גלויבן אונז דערהויבן  
הויך איבער ביזן יאמערטאל.



good

# HALICHAH L'KEYSARIAH

73

Words:  
Hannah Senesh  
Melody:  
David Zahavi

Setting:  
Max Helfman

Expressively *mp* 2 3

E - li E - li she -

*mp*

4 5 *p* 6 *poco...a...*

lo yi-ga-mer l' - o - lam ha - chol v' - ha -

*p* *poco...a...*

7 *poco cresc. mp* 8 9

yam rish - rush shel ha - ma - yim, b'

*... poco cresc. mp*

The musical score is written for voice and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system contains measures 1-3, with the vocal line starting on a whole note 'E' and the piano accompaniment on a half note 'E'. The second system contains measures 4-6, with the vocal line moving to 'lo yi-ga-mer l' - o - lam ha - chol v' - ha -' and the piano accompaniment providing harmonic support. The third system contains measures 7-9, with the vocal line continuing 'yam rish - rush shel ha - ma - yim, b'' and the piano accompaniment. Performance markings include 'Expressively', 'mp' (mezzo-piano), 'p' (piano), and 'poco...a...' (poco andante). Measure numbers 1 through 9 are indicated above the vocal staff.



74

10

11

12

mf f

rak ha-sha- ma- yim tfi- lat ha-a-

mf f

13 14 15

dam. ha- chol v'- ha- yam rish-

16 17 18

rush shel ha- ma- yim B' rak ha-sha-

19 20 21

dim. p - poco rit.

ma- yim tfi- lat ha-a- dam.

dim. p - poco rit. pp



# SHIR HAAVODAH

Blue, the sea's water  
Pleasant is Jerusalem  
Radiance from heaven  
Is on Megev and Galilee.

Oh sun light us, give light.  
Oh ploughshare pass over and over  
Ploughing the furrows and returning  
Till nighttime falls.

## Refrain:

Sing, sing, let's go now!  
Beat out with hammers melody  
Sing of the ploughshares  
Not the end but beginning of song.

# SHIR HAAVODAH

Words:  
N. Alterman  
Melody:  
N. Nardi

Setting:  
Max Helfman

כחל ים הים,  
נאות ירושלים.  
אודים השמים  
על נגב וגליל.  
השמש, אודי לנו, אודי,  
בחרשה, עברי עברי,  
הרשי בתלם וחורי  
עד לילה - ליל יאסיל.  
שיר, שיר, עלה - נא  
בפסיעים נגן, נגנת,  
בחרשות רננת,

Flowingly *mp* 1 2

Ka - chol yam ha -

*mp* *legato*

3 4 5

ma - yim na - va y' - ru - sha - la - yim o -

6 7 8

rim ha - sha - ma - yim al ne - gev v' - ga -



Handwritten musical score for a song in Hebrew. The score is written on ten staves, with the first five staves for the vocal line and the next five for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 written above the vocal line. The piano part includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like *mf* (mezzo-forte).

lil — ha — she — mesh o — ri la — nu

o — ri ha — mach — re — sha — iv — ri a —

vo — ri chir — shi ba — te — lem va — cha —

zo — ri ad lai — la le — yi ya — a — fil —

18

19

don't  
brighten

77

20

*f* Shir shir a - le - na ba - pa - ti shim na - gen na -

*f* ge - na ba - mach - re - shot ra -

*p* *cresc. poco*

23 *sf* *a tempo* ne - na ha - shir - lo tam hu rak mat -

*a tempo*

25 *chil* *2.* *chil*

*gliss* *sfz*



yellow

# SADOT SHEBAEMEK

35

Words:  
Levi Ben Amati  
Melody:  
E. Ben Chayim

Joe Nass

Setting:  
Max Helfman

in F#

Thoughtfully

1/2 (quicker)

2

*p* Sa - dot she-ba-e-mek kid - mu-ni ha-lay-lah b -

rey-ach ha-ze-vel ni - cho-ach cha - tzir. ha -

lai - lah la-e - mek a - ni a - za-me-rah

lai - lah la-e - mek a - ni a - za-me-rah



Ki (Wah)

36

8 hall

9

3:

mf ki - a - sher ba - a - ni v' - che - sed

10 11 rit. 12 atempo 13 1 2 3

ha shir. Ra - tzah go-ra-li ki a -

14 3 15 slower 16 3

shu-va ey-lei cha mey-e-tzev ha-ma-vet me-e-res-has

17 18 4

kol mi - kol cha-sa-dim li

KAWL



19 20 21 37

u-shar-ti ba-ye ga; lig-mo-a meymechapitchale-e.

rit. 22 Diff. feeling as at first. lighter 23 24

chol. As fe-ni e-le-cha, e-sof k'-shi-bo-let, shi-

25 26

bo-let la-go-ren b'-chagha-ka-tzir. Ha-

27 28

lay lah la-e-mek a-ni a-za-me-rah

38 Ki (watch)

30

3

3 3 29

3 3

ki — *3* *3* sher ba — a — ni

31 32 33 34

*dim molto sostenuto*

*W* - che - sed ha — *p* Shir. —

*dim molto sostenuto*

*p*

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*Excellant.*

# HAGEZ

*hanel cymbals*

31

Words:  
Sarah Levi  
Melody:  
E. Pugotchov

Setting:  
Max Helfman

*Flute  
cello  
piano*

*Delicately* 1 *mp* 2

La-kiv-so zam-ru-na ze-mer  
BA HA KA YITZ KIV SA TI —

3 4

shir la-gez v' shir la-tse-mer  
ED - RA-TECH NA HIT-PASH-TEE

gō - zu gez

5 6

go - zu gez tze-mer ke-ves tze -Mer

*legatissimo*

*cello*

7

piano 8

*p playfully*

ez ya-ha go-zu go-zu go-zu gez go-zu gez gozu gez

9

go-zu go-zu go-zu gez go-zu gez go-zu gez

10

11

Ha Hi

little trill

Flute



Good

# R'U HEVENU

55

Words:  
N. Benari  
Melody  
Y. Gorochov

Setting:  
Max Helfman

Allegretto. In pastoral style

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The third system also continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto. In pastoral style'. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. Handwritten numbers 1 through 8 are placed above the vocal line, and a handwritten 'Turn' is placed above the vocal line in the third system. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

*mp*  
R' - u he-ve - - nu a-mal ya-mey nu a-  
mal ya-mey - nu el mif-tan ha-sha - bat ha-sha-bat. Har -  
*mf* beh a - si - nu, ach lo ki-li - nu ach lo ki-li - nu b'-

10

11

3

vo yom ha-sha-bat. Da - loh da - li - ru mi-

12

13

ber cha - yey - - nu mi - ber cha - yey - - nu -

14

15

rit

16

shal-vat yom ha-sha - bat ha - sha - bat. *pp*

*rit* *pp*

R.H.

p. 85



# Flichtling Lid

Working Song 45

Tekst: L. Miller

Max Helfman

SOPRANO  
ALTO

TENOR  
BASS

PIANO

güet but wüdeß <sup>6</sup> ~~expies~~ <sup>7</sup> ~~what does this mean?~~  
shtil, ober mit tifn oisdruck

hm

mit patos

1. Ver ken mes - tn - un - zer um - glik  
2. Shlecht ge - ven iz - in mitz - ra - yim



13 14 15 16

hm

ver ken mes - - tn - un - zer vei  
un - ter pa - - res - shve - rn yoch

17 18 19 20

*mf* mit patos

1. vet gor kei - - ner - nit far - ne - men  
2. o - ber unz iz - er - ger, er - ger

*p*

hm

21 22 23 24

un - zer pain - le - chu ge - shrel.  
toi - znd mol iz unz er - ger noch.

hm

FLICHTLING



25 26 27 28

Fun di fla - men in di chval - yes velf unz yo - gn in - ge - loif

29 30 31 32

e - fnt oif far unz di toi - rn, e - fnt, e - fnt, e - fnt oif,

33 34 35

e - fnt, e - fnt, e - fnt, e - fnt e - fnt zei oif

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

FLICHTLING



# A Shneider's a Vaib

105

Folkmotif  
Antnumen fun  
Cahan's Zamlung

Muzik: Max Helfman

Andantino lugubre

1 slowly

2

A Di shnai-de - ris a vaib iz krank ge - vo - rn, der  
vaib hot zich ge - ma - tert un iz ge - shtor - bn, der

pp hm hm hm

3 4 5 a

man gloibt ir nit shtei oif shtei oif shtei  
man gloibt altz nit

hm hm hm shtei oif shtei oif

hm hm hm shtei oif shtei oif main vaib di

6 7 a

oif kin - der vi - ln e - sn un du gist zei  
di kin - der vi - ln e - sn a a

kin - der vi - ln e - sn un du gist zei nit

8 9 10 a

nit un du gist zei nit shtei oif shtei oif

mp



## Drai Miniaturen

Fun dem Folk-lider Album

## 1. BA MAIN MAMEN

Bäarbeting: Max Helfman

lightly style  
Allegretto /  
Laicht einfach  
mp

2 3 4 5

bamain mamen bin ich ge-ven cho-shiv un ta-yer cho-shiv un

pp staccato

bamain mamen ba main mamen bamain mamen bamain mamen bamain mamen

6 7 8 9 10

ta-yer ba main ma-men ein-tzi-ker dra-yer

mp legato

bamain ma-men a-zoi vi ba an o-ri-man an ein-tzi-ker dra-yer az

11 12 13 14 15 16

az och un vey tzu mai-ne yo-rn hob ich ba-darft, hob ich ba-

och un vey oy vey tzu mai-ne yo-rn tz'vos ich, hob ba-darft fun der

17 18 19 20 21 22

darft a-vek fo-rn, az och un vey tzu mai-ne yo-rn

heim a-vek tzu fo-rn, az och un vey oy vey tzu mai-ne yo-rn

23 24 25 26 27

hob ich ba-darft hob ich ba-darft a-vek fo-rn

tz'vos ich hob ba-darft fun der heim a-vek tzu fo-rn



# 2. OY A NACHT A SHEINE

107

*very light & quick*  
Zeler flüchtigart ①

Bearbeitung: Max Helfman

*mp* ②

Oy a nacht a  
oy a nacht a  
oy a nacht a  
Oy a nacht a shei-ne oy a nacht a shei-ne

③ ④ ⑤ *pp*

shei-ne di nacht iz ge-ven zei-er shein di  
shei-ne di nacht iz zei-er shein di  
shei-ne di nacht iz shein di  
oy a nacht a shei-ne nacht iz shein di nacht, di

⑥ ⑦ ⑧

nacht iz ge-ven zei-er shein of a ben-ke lo zeinen mir ge-  
nacht iz zei-er shein zeinen mir ge-ze - sn  
nacht iz shein zeinen mir ge-ze - sn  
nact iz shein di nacht zeinen mir ge-ze - sn

⑨ ⑩ *morendo* ⑪

ze - sn di le - vo - ne hot ge-nu-men a - vek gein  
zei-nen mir ge-ze - sn di nacht, di nacht iz ge - ven a - zoi shein  
zei-nen mir ge-ze - sn di nacht, di nacht iz ge - ven a - zoi shein  
zei-nen mir ge-ze - sn di nacht, di nacht 'zge - ven, iz ge-ven a-zoi shein



## 3. FORN M'CHUTONIM

Freilach, klezmerdik

Baarbetung: Max Helfman

1 2 3 4

*mp* la la la la la la la la

*mf* Bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

5 6 7 8

la la la la la la la la

Fo-rn m' chu-to - nim i-ber a - le ga - sn

bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

9 10 11

*mp* Zeler shurf

la la la la la la

fre-gn ba reb lei-ze rn a toch-ter tzn far-kna - sn

bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

12 13 14

*mp* nein main toch-ter cha-she-le iz tzu der chu-pe klein

*mf* zagt der ta-te ye

15 16 17

*mp* zagt der ta-te ye

*mf* klein

nein main toch-ter cha-she-le iz

ye zagt di ma-me nein



7

18

19

20

21

109

*mp*

tru der chu-pe klein la la la la la la la la

tru der chu-pe klein

bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

22 23 24

la la la la la la la la la la la la

fo rn m' chu - to - nim i - ber a - le ga - sn

bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

25 26 *poco a 27 poco cresc.*

la la la la la la la la la la la la

fre-gu ba reb lei-ze m a toch-ter tzu (ar-kna-sn) la la la la

bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

28 29

la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

la la la la la la la la la la la la

bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

30 31

la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

la la la la

bim bam bim bam bim bam bim bam

ti - dl - da - dam

pom pom pom pom pom pom



# Zai shtoltz af dain arbet

Tekst fun  
M. Rozenfeld

Muzik: Max Helfman

Mit shtoltz

Zai shtoltz af dain ar - bet, zai shtoltz, zai shtoltz, zai shtoltz af dain ar - bet, zai shtoltz, zi git dir dos recht, - zi git dir dos recht - di frucht fun der velt tzu ge - nis - an zai shtoltz af dain ar - bet, zai shtoltz, zai shtoltz, zai shtoltz af dain ar - bet, zai shtoltz, zai mu - tik, zai mentch - lach, un zai nit kain knecht, dain vert un dain ort zolt - tu vis - sn. Mit vos dich ba - loi - nen ven a - les iz dain? I'u



6 19 20 21

flai-si-ke hand mit dem ham-mer, tzu dir ge-hert a-les, dos

22 23 24

broit un der vain, dos ai-zn dos gold un der mar-mor der-

25 26 27

far meg-stushtoltz zain un ne-men mit recht altz-ding vos dainhartz kon far-

28 29 30 31

lan-gen. Zai mu-tik, zai hel-dish un zai nit kain knecht un shmid nit un trog nit kain

32 33 34 35

tzan-gen. zai mu-tik, zai hel-dish un zai nit kain knecht un shmid nit un trog nit kain

36 37 38 39

*cresc. al fine* zai shtoltz

tzan-gen zai shtoltz, zai shtoltz, zai shtoltz.

*cresc. al fine* zai shtoltz,

zai shtoltz, ZAI SHTOLTZ 2



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